

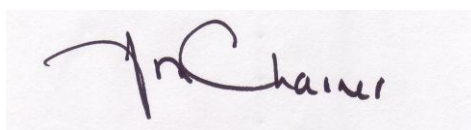
# Forms, Fields and Forces: an exploration of state governance relating to the creative industries in South West England

Submitted by Julie (Jules) Channer to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Geography, March 2013 for examination.

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I certify that all material in this thesis, that is not my own work, has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'Julie Channer'.

## ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores the forms, fields and forces that relate to state governance of 'the creative industries' in South West England (1997-2010). Focusing on regional agencies that were involved in delivering Labour's agenda for a 'creative economy and elements of *Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al.*, 2008), questions of multi-scalar governance, spatial-temporal 'fix' and re-scaling state space (Goodwin *et al.*, 2005; Jessop, 2007) are examined. Despite the reported economic importance of 'the creative industries' (The Work Foundation, 2007), 'joined up' governance at the regional scale proved difficult to manage. A congested and turbulent institutional landscape at national and regional level was compounded by lack of fit between cultural and economic policies (Jayne, 2005; O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005). Towards the end of Labour's rule, Government fiscal reform and economic recession further threatened both economic and cultural 'state spaces' (Brenner, 2004) and by mid 2010 the regional experiment was over.

Using a multi-level and in-depth case study approach, the thesis looks at how 'historically specific configurations of state space are produced and incessantly reworked' (Brenner, 2004: 76). Following discourse on 'new state space' (Jones and Jessop, 2010), a political geography of a state landscape is explored. Of particular significance, and highlighting the problematic interface between the economic and cultural spheres, are Culture South West, South West Screen and the South West Creative Economy Partnership. An argument is made that state bodies are both reactive and proactive mediators, whose 'imaginaries of power'; such as 'the creative industries', are hegemonic devices that evolve over time and space. Whether intentional or serendipity, the effects of structural and processual inter-relations are occasional 'moments' (Jones, 2009a) coherence when governance success prevails. These moments are critical to state bodies for (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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First and foremost, I thank my husband Guy and our three children (Alice, Henry and Louis) who never doubted my academic aspirations, and equally never understood what I was studying! Their efforts to get to grips with my research topic became a regular family quiz game and proved as entertaining to them as it was testing to me.

I want to express my appreciation of the University of Exeter for its supportive and intellectually stimulating environment. Having returned to academic study as a Masters student in 2007 within the Department of Geography, I now complete my educational odyssey in the larger scale College of Life and Environmental Sciences. Special thanks to two people in particular who helped make the journey worthwhile and inspirational – my supervisors, Professor Mark Goodwin and Associate Professor David Harvey.

I wish to express gratitude to the many busy people who took part in the research, including interviewees, people who provided information and advice, and the many colleagues whose opinions provided stimulus. In particular, may I single out the staff and board members of South West Screen who opened their doors and allowed me unhindered access to the organisation and its archives. During a period (2008 to 2011) of extraordinary economic, political and organisational change, I am indebted to them, and other public sector employees, for their continued participation in my research. And finally, thank you to the various ESRC-funded support workers who enabled me to undertake and complete this PhD project.

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## DEFINITIONS

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The thesis makes use of terms that are germane in human geography literature and, where appropriate, are defined for the sake of clarity. Some key words are defined below to ensure the reader is aware from the outset of how they are applied here.

**Governance** refers to ‘the process of social and economic co-ordination, management and “steering”’. Most commonly, however, governance refers to forms of inter-organisational co-ordination modelled neither on hierarchies nor on markets but on networks, especially where these are “self-organizing”. (Gregory *et al*, 2009: 312-13). The author specifically draws on Bob Jessop’s definition that points to ‘the self-organization of interorganizational relations’ (Jessop, 1997: 59).

**Spatial territorial** terms mirror those in governmental and policy documents and are used as shorthand. Thus, **national** refers to the United Kingdom as a whole country unless otherwise stated (as in the nations of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales); **region** refers to Government Office Regions of England including the South West formed in 1997 (see fuller discussion in Investigation chapter), and **local** indicates a local council area or to infer a small area of proximity.

Explanation of the terms the **creative industries** and **creative economy** is discussed in Chapter 4. There are considerable variations to definition and use of these terms in both governmental and academic texts and this very issue forms part of the thesis’ exploration. Thus, both terms are placed in inverted commas to indicate their contested nature. Generally, ‘the creative industries’ refers to a governmentally defined group of activities that generate creative products and services (DCMS, 1998, 2001a). A ‘creative economy’ refers to an economy where the major inputs and outputs are ideas and one that combines creativity, knowledge and innovation (Howkins, 2001).

Throughout the thesis, **state body** is used as shorthand to describe a public-funded organisation or individual who is involved in developing and delivering



policy including that related to ‘the creative industries’ (see above). These bodies include regional and local governmental bodies, Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB), and policy advisors, and non-constituted partnerships of public bodies. Different types of state body are briefly discussed in the Institutional Arrangements chapter, and in the case studies of three state bodies (see Chapter 6).

Various name changes were made to state bodies during the lifetime of the project. For example, Arts Council England South West changed its name to Arts Council England and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) merged with other departments to become the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Wherever possible minor name changes have been disregarded for the sake of consistency. A full list of acronyms and abbreviations is provided in the next section.

**Policy** is understood here to mean a political course of action, decision or strategic intervention that is articulated in documents produced by government and state bodies. This thesis concentrates on policy related to, or with impact on, state governance of ‘the creative industries’ in South West England between 1997 and 2010. Other policies, historical periods and the wider European context are invoked only when relevant to the discourse. As a situated piece of research, the study does not seek to make comparisons with policies in other English regions, other national policy areas or European countries or indeed compare state governance arrangements in other industrial sectors. The situation is primarily the administrative zone of ‘the South West’ region at a particular historical period.

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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ACE	Arts Council of England
ACE-SW	Arts Council England South West
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BERR/ BIS	UK Government Departments for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform/ Business, Innovation and Skills
BFI	British Film Institute
CAS	Complex Adaptive System
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSO	Case Study Organisation
DCLG	UK Government Department for Communities and Local Government
DCMS	UK Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DCSF	UK Government Department for Children, Schools and Families
DIUS	UK Government Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
DTI	UK Government Department for Trade and Investment
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
GOR	Government Office Region
GO-SW	Government Office for the South West
GVA	Gross Value Added
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LA	Local Authority
NDPB	Non Departmental Public Body
Nesta	National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ONS	Office for National Statistics

QUANGO	Quasi Non-Governmental Organisation
SME	Small or medium sized enterprise
SRA	Strategic Relational Approach
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SW	South West
SW CEP	South West Creative Economy Partnership
SW RDA	South West Regional Development Agency
UK	United Kingdom

*[ ] on the one hand, the operation of the economic imaginary presupposes a substratum of substantive economic relations as its elements; on the other, where that imaginary is successfully operationalised and institutionalised, it transforms and naturalises these elements into the moments of a specific economy. For economic imaginaries identify, privilege and seek to stabilise some economic activities for the totality of economic relations and transform them into objects of observation, calculation and governance*

(Jessop, 2005b: 145)

### 1.1 Overview

The thesis is submitted for examination and is the culmination of an ESRC-funded doctoral research project (grant reference ESRC/G011222/1) undertaken at the University of Exeter. Its focus is state governance of an economic grouping known as ‘the creative industries,’<sup>1</sup> and the policy environment in which it emerged. At the turn of the twenty-first century, ‘the creative industries’ was almost unknown to politicians and policy-makers in the United Kingdom and yet, within thirteen years, it was the object of national, regional and local ‘observation, calculation and governance’ (Jessop, 2005b: 145). How does something so amorphous and ill-defined as ‘the creative industries’ become an object of state governance and over such a short period of time? What does that process say about how state bodies manage to govern (or not) and particularly at a time of rapid economic and political change? These questions lie at the heart of this thesis and are explored through case studies set in South West England and framed by Labour administrations in the United Kingdom between 1997 and 2010.

This doctoral study seeks to make an original contribution to research that addresses the intersection between state theory, regionalism and the notion of economic imaginaries. A complex theoretical literature will be navigated and an

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase ‘the creative industries’ is placed in inverted commas throughout this document, to indicate its contested status as an industrial grouping. Furthermore, the phrase is described in the single tense rather than plural, to indicate its place here as an object of discussion, while recognising the plurality and complexity of such a concept (for a full description see Chapter 4).

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equally complex research context of fluid and interconnected spaces of regional governance and the interplays between the policy environment and institutional arrangements that evolved in relation to ‘the creative industries’. Drawing on extensive professional experience of working as a state intermediary during the Labour years, and an ‘insider’ position taken during fieldwork, the author will develop a unique and intimate account of state governance practices. A blend of personal and empirical insights will be woven together to provide a rich understanding of regional state dynamics. By taking a researcher-practitioner stance, the author aims to make a broader and distinct contribution to state theory (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 2002, 2007) and notion of the ‘peopled state’ (Jones, 2011). Specifically, analysis will address questions of multi-scalar governance and the re-scaling of state space at the micro level (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones *et al*, 2004).

A few personal reflections on state intermediation and ‘peopled’ organisations are pertinent here. Jules Channer has considerable experience of working in, and with, state-funded agencies during the Labour era (see Appendix One: Researcher’s Biography). As a senior manager, she was closely involved in developing a regional delivery mechanism for ‘creative industries’ policy and particularly the formation of South West Screen. As academic researcher, she was not only able to re-visit this *terrain* but also witnessed the disappearance of all three case study organisations and transformation of the regional state landscape. Prior knowledge and a network of relationships enabled the author to gain extraordinary access to key state bodies and to observe their decision-making processes. At times, their conversations were highly confidential and relied on mutual trust and discretion. This unusual positionality and level of personal confidences were a valuable research resource and help make this study an original contribution to governance studies (Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2010) and research of so-called ‘elites’ (Cormode, 1999).

Having worked as a state intermediary, the author is acutely aware of a disconnect between what people think state bodies do and the reality of how statecraft is practised on the ground. Professional experience and doctoral study support the view that public and academy alike hold overly negative

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perceptions of what are pejoratively called ‘quangos’ (an acronym for quasi non government organisations). Ranging from directly accountable regional bodies (such as Regional Cultural Consortia) to semi-autonomous specialist ones (such as Regional Screen Agencies), state bodies are more often construed as ineffectual and failure prone (Jessop, 2003). Less is known about how state bodies operate at the mundane and inter-personal level and how governance success sometimes occurs.

Trust in the UK’s political system at every level has fallen to record low levels. Findings from The Hansard Society’s Audit of Political Engagement (2012) show only twenty-four percent (24%) of the British public think that the UK’s system of governing works reasonably well. Public trust is further undermined by regular ‘quango bashing’ by in-coming UK administrations (Pratt, 1997a). This involves accusations of their incompetence, unaccountability, ineffectiveness, and a burden on tax payers in order to justify a tranche of abolitions (Flinders, 2008; Gash *et al*, 2010). The abolished bodies often turn out to be the ones set up by the previous political administration as in the case of the UK Film Council and Regional Development Agencies in July 2010! Set up by Labour in 2001, these bodies were immediately abolished by an in-coming Coalition Government.

Leaving aside justified constitutional and institutional reforms, this thesis aims to develop a situated analysis of how state bodies, who were located in an administrative area (South West England), managed to deliver policy in relation to Labour’s goal of a ‘creative economy’. It provides an opportunity to engage with contemporary debates on concepts of governance success and failure (Jessop, 2007; Jones and Jessop, 2010) and the nature of economic imaginaries such as a ‘creative economy’ (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013b; Pratt, 2009b; Taylor, 2013). A significant Labour policy was *Creative Britain: New Talents for the New Economy* (DCMS *et al*, 2008) and will be cited throughout the thesis. For many people working in state-funded organisations, with remits covering cultural and economic development of ‘the creative industries’ (such as the arts and media agencies and Regional Development Agencies), expectations for *Creative Britain* were high. The document’s multiple departmental authors promised the first ever national policy dedicated to ‘the creative industries’.

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Admittedly, the document's publication status was downgraded from a Green Paper to a 'strategy' and its release delayed since June 2007.<sup>2</sup>

Since Labour's election in 1997, the primary political goal had been economic growth and a knowledge-economy for the new 'digital age'. Indeed, the 'spin' of New Labour in the cultural policy world was all about 'new' and creativity, and 'the creative industries' concept neatly fitted that state project (Hesmondhalgh, 2002). By 2008, it was time to move beyond the hyperbole of 'cool Britannia' and get down to coherent and practical policy. What state bodies expected from *Creative Britain's* three sponsoring Whitehall departments was a policy statement, political direction and a set of funded intervention programmes.<sup>3</sup>

Reading *Creative Britain* for the first time was, for many state personnel, both disappointing and intriguing. Disappointing, because the document offered little more than political rhetoric and short term opportunism; and intriguing, because the document gave few clues as to Government's specific policy for a 'creative economy' and how the goal of 'making Britain the world's creative hub' (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 6) was to be achieved. Unforeseen by ministers and delivery bodies were the remarkable economic and political changes that unfolded from 2008 onwards, and that were to have significant impact on institutional arrangements in the English regions. Apart from global and national economic recession, major public spending cuts, a General Election in May 2010 and a new Coalition Government of Conservative and Liberal-Democrat parties, the most unexpected change was the rapid disappearance of regional state bodies. Based on a dual academic researcher-professional practitioner perspective to 'thinking state/space' (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jones and Jessop, 2010), the thesis presents a historical human geography of the forms, fields and forces of state governance during the Labour years and through the lens of 'the creative industries'.

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<sup>2</sup> UK Government policy and accompanying legislation is usually developed through a process of public consultation and Parliamentary debate. A Green Paper sets out the relevant department's proposals and invites feedback from inside and outside Parliament. A White Paper is the next stage in a policy's development prior to formal presentation as a Bill to Parliament (see <<http://www.parliament.uk/site-information/glossary/green-papers/>>).

<sup>3</sup> *Creative Britain: New Talents for the New Economy* was jointly sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS).

## 1.2 Rationale

Before embarking on the main work, an introduction to the rationale for the research project will set the scene for the reader. From start to finish, it was founded on two motivational forces. First and foremost, the author was motivated by a long held ambition to undertake doctoral study and specifically to examine the geo-politics of 'creative industries' governance. In terms of scholarly debates, the author was drawn to statist explanations of the 'art of governance' (Brenner *et al*, 2003) and Michel Foucault's 'technologies of power' and their applicability to 'the creative industries' as a policy object-subject. Under the telescope were, therefore, state bodies who had delegated responsibilities for developing and delivering governmental policies. In other words, state governance was to be examined from the perspective of those who *do* the governing and not from those who *are* governed. Also, it is worth pointing out that the author recognises the contested nature of the 'South West region' as a bounded geographical space (Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jones, 2009a), and although briefly examined in Chapter 3 as a Government Office Region (GOR) administrative area, its utility here is to provide a research case site.

Of key influences on the project's scope and research hypothesis, the scholarship of Bob Jessop, Martin Jones, Rhys Jones and Mark Goodwin were significant (Goodwin *et al.*, 2005, 2006; Jessop, 2002, 2007; Jones *et al.*, 2004) and particularly their work on spatial-temporal 'fix', re-scaling state space, the 'peopled state' (Jones, 2011) and economic imaginaries (Jessop and Sum, 2001). Drawing mostly on state theory literature (Brenner, 2004; Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 1997, 2002, 2007), and the principles of a complex adaptive system (CAS) from complexity theory as represented by Walter Buckley (Buckley *et al*, 2008) and Eve Mitleton-Kelly (2003), the research project developed a theoretical and conceptual base on which to explore the explanandum (discussed fully in Chapter 2 Theorisation).

An extensive literature review helped to consolidate the project's area of study and pinpoint the research problem. It also helped to raise more fundamental questions about the author's professional practice and preconceptions of how policy delivery was enacted. At the macro level of nation-state and a cultural



political economy, state theory offered explanations but was less concerned with the micro level. This led to questions of: how independent are regional state bodies in a self-organising system of governing?; how exactly do state bodies manage to interpret, translate and deliver policy when the governance *terrain* is constantly changing and policies are not always clear or compatible?; can 'creative industries' be understood as a 'technology of power' and if so, what role do regional agencies play in their construction and implementation. Starting on familiar *terra firma*, the *terrain* proved a tricky one to navigate before *terra cognita* began to appear. The author's journey is, therefore, best described as one of multiple discoveries that collectively form an account of state governance in time and space and place.

A second motivation for the study was to produce a 'public geography' (Fuller and Kitchin, 2004; Martin, 2001; Ward, 2006; Ward and Jones, 1999) that engages academics, policy and decision makers in debates about the role of state bodies (as actors and organisations) in shaping state space, and to understand the effects of such activity on policy development and delivery. As the reader will discover, 'the creative industries' continues to be an object of interest to national and local policy-makers and, therefore, lessons learned from the past thirteen years may well prove useful in future planning. Post May 2010, a shrinking public sector and reduced level of state intervention have implications for how cultural and economic policies are understood and implemented now and in the future. With a long history of devolved state powers in the UK, there are potential lessons to be learned from closer examination of Labour's regional delivery mechanism and its effectiveness in delivering a 'creative economy'.

To this end, the author's mode of fieldwork encouraged collaboration between academic researcher and state interlocutors that tapped into their different perspectives on the production of knowledge (Castree, 2005). Undoubtedly, the author's situatedness and positionality aided the process because of: (1) her background as a fellow intermediary and pre-existent relationships with state personnel (2) a two-way exchange approach that differed from the more usual interventionist one taken by researchers in 'creative industries' studies; (3) her study's historical timeframe and site of engagement that over-lapped with

researcher and interviewee's shared interests in exploring regional issues. The author was able to engage in free-flowing conversations and observational work based on 'interaction and reciprocity' (Ward, 2006: 499).

Thus, academic and professional considerations formed the nascent rationale and motivations for the research project. New policies and state apparatus will inevitably evolve in response to altered circumstances – for example, to renewed fiscal reforms and localism under the UK's current Coalition administration, or to other spatial doctrines in the future. Whatever changes may occur, the author's empirical study adds depth to 'thinking space' (Amin and Thrift, 1994) and 'thinking state/space' (Jones and Jessop, 2010). In addition, the study demonstrates a way of embedding 'reciprocity' into a 'public geography' of state power that might otherwise be considered too politically sensitive (Cormode, 1999; Ward and Jones, 1999) and unsuitable for an 'insider' approach. Both researcher and interviewees were aware of acute political and organisational change at the time and took the opportunity for a retrospective look backwards.

### 1.3 Aims and objectives

The project's aims and objectives crystallised as a result of preliminary reflections and literature review. Overall, the author sought, in Foucault's words, to 'ask questions about the "how" of power' (Foucault, 1983: 216 cited in Burchell *et al*, 1991). Applied to state governance of 'the creative industries', the study's objectives stemmed from the question of 'how do state bodies manage to do what they do?'. Four core inter-connected questions were suggested:

1. How and where is state power organised and operationalised in the complex governance spaces of an English region?
2. By what means is state power exercised over a diverse spread of cultural-economic activities captured within 'the creative industries' concept?

And thinking about the policy articulated in *Creative Britain* of 'making Britain the world's creative hub':

3. How does governmental policy develop around an invented industrial sector?

4. To what extent is governmental policy coherent and effective at the regional scale of the UK's system of governing?

Ultimately, the aim was to explore empirically the structures, processes and practices enacted within, and between, state bodies in the performance of governance. To this end, a situated study was envisaged of spatial-temporal relations vis-à-vis 'the creative industries' in an administrative region - South West - and their impact on the (re)formation of state spaces. Through critical and ethnographic engagement with a range of state bodies involved in aspects of 'creative industries' governance during the Labour years of 1997-2010, and with textual discourse analysis of policy documents, the result was a thesis on the complex and relational nature of state power.

Starting from a professional intermediary's perspective, the 'how' questions were inspired through literature review of contemporary debates on the 'peopled state' and the actualities of 'multi-scalar' governance and re-scaling state space (Goodwin, 2006; Goodwin *et al.*, 2006; Jones, 2009a; Jones and Jessop, 2010; Jones and MacLeod, 2004). These relational geographies opened up new ways of looking at the nature of state power that led on to the author's ever-widening and inter-disciplinary exploration. Of particular relevance were notions of power flows – 'hollowing out' the state, 'filling in' space and 're-scaling' space – and their resonance with fluid spaces of regionalism. From discourse on space shaping and power relations, there came recognition of the 'peopled' state (Jones, 2011) and role of state personnel as shapers. While this aspect of governance theory is at an early stage, it offered fertile ground for the author to test ideas about the selectivities and performativities of state bodies.

An initial impression of 'new state space' theory explanations (Brenner, 2004; Jessop *et al.*, 2008), and particularly those framed in a UK context, was of a remarkably sceptical attitude to the effectiveness of state bodies and a narrow focus on certain types of state organisation. Notably, empirical studies of state space favour Regional Development Agencies (RDA) and the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Looking at governance and 'creative industries' literature, few studies address the role played by sector specialist agencies in the development and delivery of cultural

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policy. This omission is surprising given the prominent role assigned to regional cultural agencies in, for example, *Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al*, 2008). Now that New Labour's regionalism has been abandoned, a retrospective and in-depth study, founded on state theory principles, of state bodies involved in this experiment from beginning to end, seems an apposite and timely contribution to the theoretical and empirical episteme.

Much attention in governance studies is given to problematic discontinuities and disconnections of government processes at the macro level (Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Jayne, 2005; Jessop 2003a, 2010b). Less attention is given to the micro dynamics of state power as practised at regional and local government level (Harding, 2000; Jones *et al*, 2004; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2010). With notable exceptions (Harvey *et al*, 2011; Hesmondhalgh, 2005; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Pratt, 2005), little is known about the *modus operandi* of state bodies involved in developing and delivering cultural policy and political objective of a 'creative economy'. By sharing her prior knowledge of state intermediation as practitioner, the author makes a valuable contribution to this field of research.

Another major influence on the author's formative work was a growing academic and political interest in the concept of a 'creative economy' (Garnham, 2005; Hartley, 2006; Howkins, 2001; Pratt, 2004a, 2009b). Indeed, over the past decade, 'creative industries' studies have become a distinct and popular area of UK and international scholarship and 'think tank' commentary (O'Connor, 2007; Nesta, 2006b; Oakley, 2006; Pratt, 2009a). Much of this literature provided an epistemic foundation for the author's ruminations on 'the creative industries' as a policy object and economic imaginary. While the concept *per se* is not the focus of study, the epistemologies voiced in definitional debates became an important part of the author's investigation of economic imaginaries and role played by state bodies in their construction (see Chapter 4). Knowing the difficulties associated with definition and quantification of 'the creative industries', she was able to re-assess this material from a state theory perspective and particularly its semiotic dimension (Jessop and Sum, 2010). Having never viewed 'the creative industries' as a malleable political imaginary, the author radically shifted her stance on definitional models. From

engaging in definitional debates as an exercise in ‘proof of concept’, the problem became the very meanings and meaning-makings that are embedded in the models’ construction. This shift in perspective was the start of a process of re-interpreting familiar aspects of state intermediation and their connectivity. What had appeared to be straightforward instruments of measurement, and sequences of events, became complex ‘technologies of power’ and spatial-temporal ordering.

Turning to what is meant by a state body, there are many different types that operate across policy fields in the UK. The term is understood in this thesis to be a state-funded organisation or individual actor who is delegated powers to undertake tasks on behalf of Government. In the UK, they are sometimes known as ‘arms length bodies’ (ALB) or state intermediaries to indicate distance from a sponsoring Whitehall department and ministers, and a mediating role between politician and policy object.<sup>4</sup> Of state bodies associated with Labour’s ‘creative economy’ agenda, they included cultural development councils or agencies, economic and skills development agencies, strategic multi-organisation partnerships, local councils and policy advisory organisations. Such state bodies remain central to the UK’s devolved system of governing and operate at many different scales but few remain with a ‘regional’ label (Gash *et al*, 2010; Flinders, 2008, 2012).

This initial description does not imply a top-down relationship between central Government and state body, or a neutral or passive position for the latter. Akin to Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of a ‘new cultural intermediary’ (Hesmondhalgh, 2006) and Justin O’Connor’s idea of a ‘cultural facilitator’ (2004), an argument is made for state bodies (actor and organisation) associated with ‘the creative industries’ to be similarly understood. Indeed, state personnel who were

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<sup>4</sup>. There are different types of ‘arms length’ public bodies that are officially classified by the UK Government’s Cabinet Office. For example, listings are given in the web resource *Public Bodies 2009* at <<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/resources/ndpb>> (accessed 10 November 2011). Many public-funded cultural councils and economic development agencies are classified as Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB). According to Cabinet Office, (2009, point 2.2) ‘NDPBs have a national or regional remit and carry out a wide range of important functions’. Examples are: Arts Council England, UK Film Council, Regional Cultural Consortia and Regional Development Agencies. Set up by a government department (with charitable or not-for-profit status), a NDPB’s day-to-day decisions are made independent of ministerial or civil service interference, but are ultimately accountable to their sponsoring department and minister.

interviewed as part of the research used similar words to describe themselves such as *facilitator*, *conductor*, *interpreter*, *broker* and *connector*. This self-assigned 'in-between' role contrasted with their resistance to accept *governor* or *powerful body* as labels and alerted the author to the 'intermediary' position taken by 'creative industries' governance bodies.

A range of state bodies were involved in the research study, including the following categories:

- civil servants (working in central Whitehall departments and Government Office for the South West and responsible to ministers),
- Executive Non Departmental Public Bodies (semi-independent departmental bodies, appointed by and with direct responsibility to, a minister),
- Non Departmental Public Bodies ('arms length' organisations whose chief executive officer is appointed by its lead sponsoring Whitehall department, with set objectives and an agreed budget allocation);
- local council officials (public sector officials employed in local councils who are responsible for policy delivery to Whitehall departments through Public Service Agreements and budget allocations and to local council elected members);
- policy advisors (independent 'think tank' organisations and consultants who specialise in public-funded research and development for Whitehall departments, NDPBs and local councils).

From this brief taxonomy, it is clear that some state bodies are more accountable to ministers than others and some more privatised than others (Flinders, 2008; Thynne, 2004). The diversity of categories and multi-scalarity are an important aspect of the study's exploration.

Project aims and objectives remained much the same as those in the original submission to ESRC in April 2008. Certainly, the writing of a Master in Research (MRes) dissertation on local cultural partnerships and this project's literature review helped to refine them, and gave the author time to consider more carefully the research questions and exactly what was to be tested. Central to the thesis is the relational nature of state governance as played out at the regional level and far from Whitehall (in terms of structures, processes and

practices), and the effect of such power dynamics. Taking ‘the creative industries’ as the object of policy attention, South West England as a case study site, and different state bodies and policy documents as data sources, the author developed a historical and geographical picture of everyday governance. From a state practitioner perspective, the author experienced the state landscape as problematic but manageable as long as threats and opportunities were identified and acted upon. Building on an organisation-centric and instrumental outlook (that was commonly adopted by cultural and economic development agencies), the author developed a more nuanced and theory-based understanding of power dynamics. The latter was not an artificial or temporary contrivance but a gradual and intellectual shift in ‘thinking space relationally’ (Jones, 2009a). The thesis will show that the system of governing ‘the creative industries’ underwent major evolutions between 1997 and 2010. Taking a retrospective view of some of those changes, the author will draw on her prior knowledge whilst seeing it through a scholar’s lens....

#### **1.4 Research proposition**

Underpinning the thesis is the proposition that state bodies with delegated powers, operating at the regional scale, seek to control – in this instance, witnessed in South West England - through ‘*imaginaries of power*’, that are complex, multi-directional and hegemonic devices. Furthermore, state bodies, as ‘peopled’ organisations (Goodwin *et al*, 2006; Jones *et al*, 2005), are motivated more by multiple socio-political expediencies, than a single policy directive, such as ‘making Britain the world’s creative hub’. Sometimes the effect of these structural forms and processual relations and forces is that of governance success and a spatial-temporal ‘fix’ occurs; and sometimes the effect is failure. Triggered by deliberate acts or chance events, ‘fixes’ are critical to (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals.

#### **1.5 Thesis structure**

The logic of the thesis’ structure is based on an expansive and textured narrative that gradually builds into a comprehensive account of state

governance in relation to ‘the creative industries’. Rather like an assemblage in social theory (DeLanda, 2006; Law, 1991), the thesis is the sum of many parts of a complex, and sometimes chaotic, process of enquiry. Of course, it would be untrue to say that the resulting report is a discrete ‘whole’ with a neat beginning and end, because like any assemblage, it was born out of other writings and exits into new ones. Nonetheless, the thesis attempts to offer a logical, readable and stimulating account from the unusual dual perspectives of researcher and state practitioner.

Running through the discourse are the themes of coherence and incoherence, imaginaries and spatial-temporal ‘fix’ that act as threads to bind together a story of state power dynamics. Overall, the thesis is divided into eight main chapters that are each sub-divided into sections. So far, in this **Introduction** chapter, sections have covered background to the project’s origins and rationale. An overview is given of aims and objectives, followed by a brief explanation of the research proposition. Some personal reflections are made by the author on her professional experience as a state intermediary and her prior knowledge of policy delivery (albeit from a practitioner’s perspective rather than a scholar’s). This section summarises the thesis structure.

### **Theorisation**

Based on extensive literature review and subsequent reading, seminars and writing of conference papers undertaken throughout the project, Chapter 2 discusses the theorisation that underpinned the research. It sets out the philosophical and theoretical stance adopted by the author, and introduces the scholarship used to construct an appropriate conceptual framework. This extensive literature review informed every stage of study including investigative methodology, interpretation and conclusions. Beginning with an orientation and outline of literature review method, a critical realist-interpretivist philosophical paradigm is developed. Drawing mostly on state theory, and particularly the work of Bob Jessop, Neil Brenner and Martin Jones (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 2002, 2004a, 2007, 2010a; Jones and Jessop, 2010), theoretical principles and key concepts are identified that most related to the author’s area of study. Importantly, governance success and role of imaginaries as ‘technologies of power’ are highlighted as problematic and under-researched in



the governance literature. This gap raised questions of: do state bodies manage to achieve governance success and, if so, how? What role do imaginaries play in governance success? At this point, the chapter introduces a Strategic Relational Approach (SRA) that has been developed by state theorists as an analytical framework (Jessop *et al*, 2008; Jones and Jessop, 2010).

Having critiqued state theory and a SRA approach for a study of governance dynamics at the micro level, the author turns to complexity theory and principles of a Complex Adaptive System (CAS). A blended SRA-CAS framework is then developed as a way of addressing a regional system of governing. Their respective theoretical and methodological approaches are shown to be mutually compatible and applicable to the research project. With this eclectic theoretical and conceptual mix in mind, the chapter concludes with a summary of the theoretical and conceptual framework.

### **Investigation**

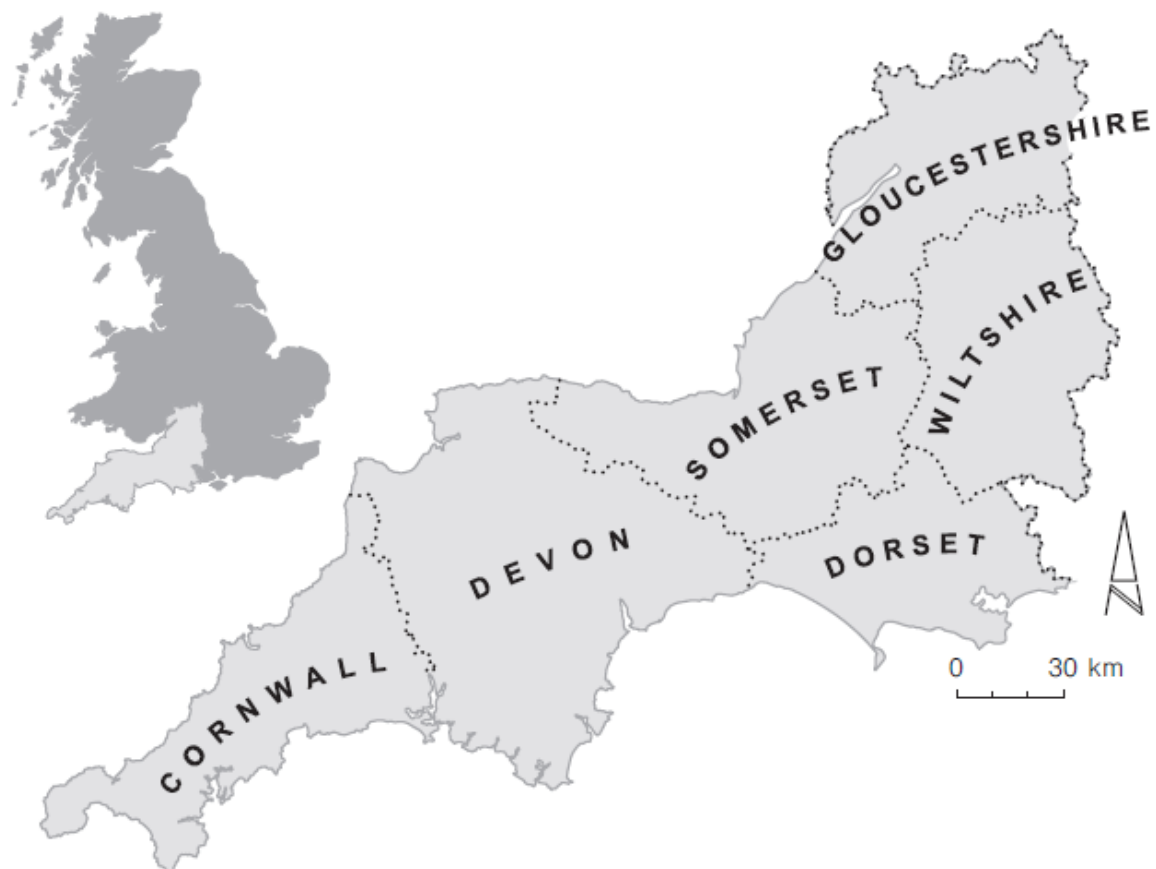
In Chapter 3 the research methodology and design are set out. An overview is followed by discussion of induction, deduction and abduction, and a practical application of a SRA-CAS lens. Research questions and proposition are introduced, followed by sections that describe the various investigative methods, including research strategies, type of data collection methods, data management and analysis procedures, timescale and limitations of the research design. This chapter ends with the author's critical reflections on positional and ethical considerations that informed the final methodology and also guided her conduct.

### **Definition, Policy Environment and Institutional Arrangements**

These three chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) contain the substantive empirical findings and are based on data gathered from: desk-based research, policy discourse analysis, thirty-two semi-structured and informal interviews, ethnographic and observation work in three case study organisations and other information-gathering situations. They are presented as an ever-deepening insight into the 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of regional state governance in relation to 'the creative industries'. Starting with Chapter 4, the reader is introduced to conceptualisation of 'the creative industries' and various state-led

attempts to define and integrate this slippery cultural-economic political construct into national and regional political strategies. Historical and political moments are examined, before moving in **Chapter 5** to the policy environment in which 'the creative industries' evolved during Labour's administrations between 1997 and 2010. Next, an exploration is made in Chapter 6 of key state bodies in the state landscape of South West England (see Figure 1 to show the location of this administrative region in the UK) that focuses on their institutional arrangements.

**Figure 1: Map to show the geographical location of 'South West' region established in 1998**



Source: University of Exeter, Geography Drawing Office.

A series of three case studies are presented in this chapter to demonstrate the relational forms, fields and forces of state governance in an English region. These state bodies played a significant role in developing and delivering political strategies for a 'creative economy' in the South West region and *Creative Britain* in particular. The case studies are based on material gathered during desk research, interviews, ethnographic work in the organisations,

informal and *ad hoc* conversations and observations, and on the author's prior knowledge of them. Historical and geographical dimensions of each case study organisation are examined in turn, looking at structural and operational dimensions and position(s) in the governance networks. Key findings are summarised for each case study and flag the main themes that emerged during analysis.

## **Discussion**

This chapter draws together the empirical findings in a critical discussion that is organised under thematic strands. These themes capture the major issues that emerged during thesis write-up. Starting with a recapitulation of the research questions, proposition and thesis argument, Chapter 7 draws out interpretations from the project's findings. First, the themes of *structure* and *shaping* are discussed, looking at the nature and scope of power relations between state bodies. Next, the themes of *coherence* and its importance to the *effectiveness* of governance and re-configurations of state spaces at the regional scale. The idea of a *serendipity of governing* is introduced and the importance of *imaginaries of power* to how state bodies manage to govern 'the creative industries'.

## **Conclusion**

The thesis concludes in Chapter 8 with a review of the thesis as a whole and discusses its implications to extant scholarship and future research on economic-political imaginaries, re-scaling state space and the effectiveness of state bodies. Moreover, some implications of the findings are suggested to policy-makers who are involved in the on-going political strategy for a 'creative economy'. An outline is given of research issues that emerged during the project and that warrant further investigation. A look is also taken at the future of 'creative industries' studies in the light of, for example, a political shift in the UK from regionalism to localism, re-imagining the 'creative economy' and (de)regulation of state control in a shrinking state landscape.

In summary, this introductory chapter has set out the parameters of the research project and outlined the thesis structure. A number of appendices are

given at the end of the document as supplementary information for the reader as and when appropriate.

*Space too needs to be thought of as brought into being through performances and as a performative articulation of power. And, finally, we want to insist on the complexity and uncertainty of performances and performed spaces*

(Gregson and Rose, 2000: 434)

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the philosophical, theoretical and conceptual thinking behind the research project and lays the foundation for a methodological approach. Prior to the project's research design stage, an extensive and critical review (Saunders *et al*, 2009) was conducted of available literature on the geographies of scalarity and state governance, as well as reading material on 'creative industries' and regional studies. A critical and open attitude was adopted to the literature review task in order to gain a thorough understanding of past and present theoretical and empirical perspectives on the topic area, to identify potential gaps and refine the problem for investigation. Guided by advice from Boote and Belle (2005: 4), the literature review:

[ ] sets the broad context of the study, clearly demarcates what is and what is not within the scope of the investigation, and justifies those decisions.

It also situated extant literature in a broader scholarly and historical context, and suggested appropriate research methods, and lines of enquiry.<sup>5</sup>

A theoretical framework for the research gradually developed as a result of a systematic process of literature review, as well as through discussions with academic colleagues, supervisors and feedback on conference papers. In terms of a review strategy, the author was primarily interested in state theory and was looking for the principle protagonists, complementary relationships with other relevant theories and the findings and methods used in empirical studies that substantiated (or not) those theories. Rather than advancing a new theory, the

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<sup>5</sup> Literature review involved general database searches and taster reading that provided further signposts, or what some call 'animal tracks' (Massey, 1996). Early stage reading of scholarship also provided useful signposts to other references, bibliographies and keywords. Relevant academic electronic journals were sourced through online databases including EBSCO, JSTOR and Web of Knowledge. Use was also made of working papers, conference papers and doctoral theses. Publications by governmental bodies, 'think tank' commentators and independent researchers were also read to widen and enrich the source material (see Bibliography and policy documents listed in Appendix Two).

author's intention was to contribute empirical insights to state theory and a Strategic Relational Approach (Jessop, 2007) through testing the phenomenon of state governance and intricacies of power relations at the micro level of an English region. The framework is set out in the following sections.

A theorisation begins with literature that establishes a philosophical foundation on which to think about state power and spaces of inter-action. With reference to theory, the author uses the word in a conventional sense to mean 'a descriptive and explanatory framework that focuses researchers on what they presume to be the most salient processes, relationships, or issues in any given case' (Castree, 2010: 33). There follows an overview of literature on state theory and governance discourse in relation to 'thinking state/space' (Jones and Jessop, 2010) including ideas about the role of imaginaries and semiotics. A brief overview is given of Jessop's analysis of different systems of governing. At this juncture, a moment is taken to reflect on notions of compossible and impossible in social research and the philosophical principle that 'not everything that is possible is impossible'. Having contemplated the fundamental problem of partiality in social research, and the possibilities of Jessop's Strategic Relational Approach (SRA), a review then follows of complexity theory and Complex Adaptive System (CAS) and its synergy with state theory and a SRA. Thus, the resultant theoretical and conceptual framework for the research project is based on two main theories (state theory and complexity theory) and an inter-disciplinary approach to investigation.

## **2.2 Philosophical paradigm**

The importance of a philosophical paradigm to academic research is made clear in much of the literature reviewed. Derek Gregory *et al* (2009: 518) provide the wise advice that 'a paradigm shapes what scientists think about something before they think it'. For the author, who was relatively unfamiliar with the abundance of 'isms' in human geography scholarship and modes of research, the problem was finding the words to best describe her outlook without over prescribing a way of looking at the focus of study. In the natural or 'hard' sciences of, for example, physics and chemistry, research is often associated with a reductionist outlook in which the researcher observes a research subject

in an objective and positive manner – that is, a positivist stance (Johnston, 2006). Such science primarily develops knowledge through testing theory in a way that is repeatable and verifiable by other scientists. By contrast, research in the social sciences of, for example, sociology and human geography, is studying society, people, human spaces, social relations and forces from a more qualitative and, some argue, less objective perspective, and whose results are not so easily and exactly repeated and validated.

Debates on the nature of human geography as a ‘spatial science’ and the credibility of its explanations are well rehearsed (Cloke *et al*, 1991; Dear, 1988; Limb and Dwyer, 2001; Massey, 1999) and need not be reviewed here. Relevant to this discourse, however, is a rationale for the author’s settlement on an eclectic philosophy.

Having rejected Eyles and Lee’s (1982) assertion that a researcher must choose a single outlook from one of three main groups (positivist, humanist/hermeneutist, structural), various philosophies were contemplated. Of paradigms, Guba and Lincoln (1994) synthesise four categories: positivism (as mentioned above), realism, critical theory, and constructivism. Each has sets of ontology, epistemology and methodology for the researcher to consider (Healey and Perry, 2000). Reluctant to accept the confines of any one of these categories, the author settled on a critical realist-interpretivist label, as well as tapping into a range of social theories and concepts. Certainly, there seem to be overlaps and similarities between some paradigms (Cloke *et al*, 1991) but muddled logic is not what the author is advocating.

Turning briefly to a critical realist-interpretivist ‘fit’ with ‘thinking space’, such an outlook understands social reality as stratified layers as well as the sum of symbolic meanings. This resonates with ideas about multi-level state space and imaginaries, although ‘stratified layers’ was initially misunderstood as suggesting top-down hierarchical or ordered layers. According to Andrew Sayer (2000: 2), critical realists believe ‘there is a world existing independently from our knowledge of it’ and ‘independence of objects from knowledge immediately undermines any complacent assumptions about the relation between them’. This introduces a human and non-human aspect and complex inter-

relationships to social reality. According to *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (Gregory *et al*, 2009), critical realists (Bhaskar, 1997; Sayer, 2000) draw distinctions between layers of understanding; the empirical (events that we experience), the actual (events that happen whether we experience them or not) and the real (a deeper dimension of objects, structures and mechanisms that produce events). This multi-dimensional way of understanding the social world seemed to chime with the intricacies of state governance that would require more than just empirical observation.

Also, a critical realist philosophy overcomes erroneous ideas of an objective researcher who is somehow supposed to disengage from the social reality in which s/he is working-living-studying and produce infallible knowledge. The approach validates an element of subjectivity to research and allows the social world to be understood 'as it is' – in her case, the geographies of state power relations and political imaginaries of a 'creative industries'. To study such a social phenomenon from a critical realist perspective enabled the researcher to perceive situations and to make sense of that phenomenon as both objective observer and subjective practitioner. This position does not diminish the resultant meanings and interpretations derived from the stance, because the influence of personal values is unavoidable. The important point is that the author was acutely aware of her values as an integral part of the discovery process (see Appendix One: Researcher's Biography).

Thinking about how to understand a volatile and fluid system of governing, critical realism offers some useful principles. Dismissive of positivist causalities and regularities, critical realists are concerned with underlying mechanisms that generate particular events actually taking place within open systems and not the closed ones of science laboratories. While there may be causes at work in a system:

Causes are thus best thought of as tendencies of objects, with distinctive powers in virtue of their essential structures, to act in certain ways. However, it is contingent whether and how those powers are activated in different combinations in different contexts to produce varying effects (Gregory *et al*, 2009: 622).



When later set alongside state theory, this philosophy on the dynamics of power makes the researcher's task less daunting. For the author, the task ahead was one of exploration and search for underlying layers of social reality that would not be observable.

Through retroduction and abduction, the mechanisms and events of state power would be revealed (Wuisman, 2005). Translated to a more basic language, the important philosophical steer was not to reduce everything to individual parts of a system because the social world is an inter-connected one.

Another important distinction made by critical realists is between necessary and contingent properties and relationships - the former are those relationships that are required by virtue of what they are ('each requires the other in order to be what it is'), whereas the latter are contingent on other factors. Thus, a process of abstraction is advocated to 'disentangle' necessary from contingent relationships in a structure/network of relationships. As we will discover, this resolves the conundrum of 'everything is related to everything' trap of a relational study. That is, social phenomena (in this study, state governance) should be examined as distinct but inter-related properties and relationships.

Of interpretivism, this philosophy complements a critical realist perspective with its focus on making sense of the world through meanings and underlying mechanisms. As Schwandt (1994; 222) says:

The constructivist or interpretivist believes that to understand this world of meaning one must interpret it. The inquirer must elucidate the process of meaning construction and clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language and actions of social actors. To prepare an interpretation is itself to construct a reading of these meanings; it is to offer the inquirer's construction of the constructions of the actors one studies.

Applied to enquiry of state bodies and the 'peopled state' (Jones, 2011), the author's interpretive approach was to examine, analyse and interpret political-economic imaginaries as the construction and tools of state actors. An inter-subjective perspective was particularly helpful to the author who was acutely aware of her unusual position – that is, as both academic researcher and 'insider' state actor. An acceptance of subjectivity was both empowering and

intellectually enriching (a positionality and discussed more fully in the next chapter).

It is said that a researcher's philosophical position makes a difference to how literature is evaluated and how the research is conducted and, to some readers, the credibility of the results. Bearing in mind the philosophical stance that is described above; the following sections discuss the literature that was reviewed for the research.

### **2.3 Thinking state and space**

Taking Foucault's advice to 'ask questions about the "how" of power' (Foucault, 1983/1991: 216), and his philosophical writing on *ensembles* and 'technologies of power', a critical and inter-disciplinary literature review was undertaken of state space and relational scholarship. Based on the fundamental question of 'how do state bodies manage to do what they do at the micro level, and to what effect?', an eclectic theoretical base evolved that draws on both post-structuralism and structuralism, social theory, and notably parts of state theory (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, 1990, 1997, 2007), and complexity theory (Byrne, 1998; Mitleton-Kelly, 2003; Paasi, 2004) as well as notions of 'phase space' (Jones, 2009a; Jones and MacLeod, 2004), spatial-temporal 'fix' and semiotics (Jessop, 2002, 2004c, 2007).

Review of these relational expositions, with their philosophical roots in critical realism (Bhaskar, 1997; Sayer, 2000), both resonated and dissonated with the author's professional experience of state intermediation. This tension, between philosophical principles, episteme and prior knowledge proved a stimulating point from which to embark on a situated geography of state governance of 'the creative industries' in South West England during the New Labour era.

The phrases 'thinking space relationally' (Amin, 2004; Massey, 2005) and 'thinking state/space' (Jones and Jessop, 2010) are perhaps becoming over-worked in contemporary human geography. They encapsulate, however, a distinct and relational governance literature. This is evident in regional studies (Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Goodwin *et al*, 2006, 2012; Harvey *et al*, 2011,

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2012; Jones, 2009a; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2010) that emphasise the inter-related and multi-level nature of state space. From a critical realist mode of social scientific research, scholarship confirms the usefulness of exploring the geo-political world in terms of complex layers (mentioned above) in which mechanisms, events and experiences are meshed together (Jones and Jessop, 2010).

A major influence on a relational way of thinking about power dynamics and governmentalities is Foucault's writings (1978/1991, 1980). Rather than a 'thing' in itself, power is taken to be relational, multi-dimensional and 'omnipresent'. As in critical realism, power is structure and agency that emerges from interactions between different forces. Sayer's ideas on causal powers are pertinent here. They are necessary and contingent on social relations (Sayer, 2000). Foucault's relationality suggests that the social world is a mass of inter-connections between related forces and at all levels. With such complexity and fluidity, there is no one force or simple relationship that can be said to either impose, or result in, the exercise of power. Applied to a study of state governance, this leads to the conclusion that power relations must be explored beyond, for example, a central Government department's directive (as in *Creative Britain*) and a cause-effect binary. Thus, power produces relations and at the same time emerges from a series of relations and cannot be reduced to any one force or simple binary relationship. An empirical study of state governance in a particular place and time was, therefore, never going to capture the whole set of dynamics but would elucidate some of them.

A Foucauldian perspective encouraged the researcher to look beyond a single structural layer and simple cause-effect in her search to explain and understand how spatial shaping occurs and the power relations therein. Importantly, the world of state governance would need to be seen as one of multiple inter-dependent forces, and inter-sections of different layers in place, space and time. The conceptualisation pointed to causal powers as elements of a structured whole, whose connections could not be directly observed but understood in terms of underlying and evolutionary mechanisms. Like other social phenomena, there was a need to set the process of regional state governance in the wider context in which it takes place. With critical realist-

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interpretivist principles and a structuralist relationality in mind, the author was able to move to a consideration of state theory and governance studies.

## 2.4 The Proposition

A research proposition was constructed that tried to avoid normative and pre-formed assumptions about state power and the universal truisms that 'everything is related to everything' and 'institutions are complex'. Based on a critical realist-interpretivist paradigm, combined with state and complexity theories, and lessons learned from extant scholarship, a proposition is advanced in this thesis. Rather than concluding this chapter with the proposition, the author posits it here. That is,

State bodies seek to control and regulate an object - such as 'the creative industries' and witnessed in South West England - through 'imaginaries of power', that are complex, multi-dimensional, multi-directional and hegemonic devices. Furthermore, state bodies at a regional and local scale, and acting as 'peopled' organisations (Goodwin *et al*, 2006), are motivated more by multiple socio-political expediencies, than a single de-centralised policy directive, such as 'making Britain the world's creative hub' (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 6). Sometimes the effect of structural and processual interactions is spatial-temporal 'fix' and governance success occurs, and sometimes the effect is failure. Triggered by deliberate acts or chance events, 'fixes' and fluidities are critical to (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals.

The following sections discuss the theoretical and conceptual framework that was developed and on which the conjecture is founded.

## 2.5 State theory and state governance

State theory and the 'new state space' literature provided the main theoretical background to the proposition and subsequent research (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, 1990, 2002, 2007; Jones, 2009a; Jones, 2011; Jones *et al*, 2004; Jones and Jessop, 2010). From a state theory perspective, the state is viewed not as a discrete entity, or 'power container', but a complex system of social relations and forces that historically and geographically change over time and

space. Furthermore, the state is perceived as having different effects on political and economic strategies, some of which are privileged over others, and, at the same time, interactions between strategies result in the exercise of state power. These complex dynamics are what Jessop calls the 'strategic relational approach' (SRA) (1990; 2007) and is described more fully below.

Several caveats to how Jessop's structuralist-regulationist theory is applied in this thesis are pertinent here. First: the thesis does not attempt to critique the entire corpus of Jessop's theoretical work on statehood and his major concern with macro dynamics of modern capitalism and globalisation in a 'new political economy' (Jessop, 2002, 2007, 2010b). The bigger picture of nation-state and supra-national formations and processes of capital accumulation are briefly mentioned but as background to 'thinking state/space' at the micro level.

Second, Jessop uses the words 'macro' and 'micro' to indicate geo-political spheres of operation and their influences and are similarly used here. Clearly, concepts of 'multi-scalar' governance and 're-scaling' imply different macro and micro layers that inter-connect through multiple strategies, techniques and procedures. However, for research purposes, this site-specific study captures only part of a larger system of governing in order to test ideas about 'technologies of power' and spatial-temporal 'fix'.

In the end, the notion of a spatial-temporal 'fix' derives from Marxist political economy theory and relates to the temporary fixing in time and space, of dynamics of capital accumulation and state regulation including economic imaginaries (Jessop and Sum, 2001). Whilst not ignoring the possibility of fixity at the macro level of a capitalist regime or global supra-nation, the focus here is on the possibility of 'fix' at a more mundane level. To clarify, the thesis is concerned with spatial-temporal fixing in state governance of an economic imaginary ('creative industries' and 'creative economy') at the micro (or partial) level. Does coherence emerge and how? According to a 'phase space' analysis (Jones, 2009a), coherence is understood as the momentary inter-section, in time and space, of a specific set of socio-political relations and forces. Arguably, governance success is the outcome of a moment of spatial-temporal 'fix' when dimensions of time, place, scale, network (and semiotic) connect. Given the

complex and multiple possibilities involved in any one event, different moments will be the result of deliberate or unexpected acts. *Ergo*, if no fixing occurs, there is inchoateness (Jones, 2009b). Because coherence and governance success are social constructions that are time and space sensitive, they clearly cannot be predicted and the circumstances will not be repeatable. In other words, there is no simple cause-effect formula to producing governance success such as time+place+scale+network+semiotic = governance success.

Of a possible-impossible dilemma for the researcher, Jones and Jessop conclude:

This affects the general deployment of socio-spatial concepts (what seems possible from a one-sided concern with territoriality, for example, may prove impossible when its articulation with other socio-spatial dimensions is considered (Jones and Jessop, 2010: 1144).

Looking at the concept of governance success at the regional scale, this conclusion allows for its possibility as long as multiple dimensions are considered. That is, failure may not be the only outcome if a systematic SRA analysis is applied to what state actors *do*. Following this logic, governance success in the complex world of statehood may seem an impossibility, as state theorists suggest (Jessop, 2007; Jones and Jessop, 2011), but 'the empirical' may prove it compossible. Theoretically, the researcher should take account of every set of TPSN (and other dimensions such as semiotic) possibilities and collect a definitive amount of data from the entire system of governing in order to validate a proposition. This is clearly impractical (and arguably impossible).

Third: state theory promotes a structured and ordered view of a state *terrain*, of layers and 'first order' dimensions (territory, place, scale and network), whose configurations shape and are shaped by social relations and forces. A dominant force in statist explanations is one associated with economic activity such as capital accumulation and globalisation (Jessop, 2002, 2007). However, a relational approach suggests a 'fuzzier' differentiation between layers and spatio-temporal dimensions. Certainly, recent work by Jones and Jessop (2010) introduces a less rigid and broader conceptualisation of 'the State' whilst maintaining notions of hierarchical macro and micro layers and notions of 'first order' and 'second order' dimensions. Given the relational geographer's onus

on inter-connectivity and inter-dependency to an understanding of statehood, it seems illogical to over-structure, separate out and privilege one or more dimension (or layers) and not others. An over structured and ordering view of state governance is, therefore, rejected whilst agreeing that such dimensions and layers are co-existent. Also, research practicalities suggest empirical study of a complex system in its entirety is impossible, and, therefore, some selectivity is necessary (a point discussed more fully below). In taking a relational approach to a specific scalar governance *terrain*, the author views it as more bounded than some human geographers suggest (Amin, 2004) but ‘fuzzier’ than a structuralist’s notion of state space.

Turning to the semiotic dimension of state governance, critical social theorists explore language through ideas of semiosis (Fairclough, 2003; Jessop, 2010b; Jessop and Sum, 2001, 2010), prosaic dialogics (Painter, 2006) and spatial grammar (Amin *et al*, 2003) to explain the discursive and articulated nature of state power and space shaping. Indeed, Foucault refers to the state as a ‘mythical abstraction’ (1979/1991: 20). Of policy discourse, a translation of Foucault’s essay reads:

[ ] there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse (Foucault, 1980: 93).

Policy discourse is, therefore, pivotal to a critical understanding of power relations and their effect in a state context. According to Foucault:

[ ] discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it (1980: 101).

This connection between verbal and written discourse and state power was an important line of enquiry that will become more evident as the thesis progresses.

Surprisingly, a semiotic dimension does not feature in Jessop’s SRA ‘first order’ dimensions of TPSN. However, there are ‘second order’ or *nth* dimensions and semiotic is presumably one of these (Jones and Jessop, 2010: 1127). Indeed,

there is little empirical material on state imaginaries based on state theory and a SRA. In theorising a Cultural-Political Economy, Jessop explains:

While semiosis initially refers to the inter-subjective production of meaning, it is also an important element/moment of 'the social' more generally. Semiosis involves more than (verbal) language, including, for example, different forms of 'visual language' (Jessop, 2010b: online version).

For Jessop, meanings and meaning-making constantly change in the socio-political world alongside the extra-semiotic conditions in which they evolve. The importance of this dimension (and connectivity to the other dimensions) suggests a fertile ground for empirical study of an economic imaginary.

Relevant to theorisation here is the role of 'technologies of government' or, in Foucauldian terms, 'technologies of power' (Foucault, 1979/1991). That is, these involve selection and retention by state bodies of specific imaginaries in time and space and place. Jessop argues:

Technologies have a key role in the selection and retention of specific imaginaries insofar as they provide reference points not only in meaning-making but also in the coordination of actions within and across specific personal interactions, organisations and networks, and institutional orders. In this sense they are important meaning-making instruments deployed by agents to translate specific social construal into social construction and hence to structure social life. Policies, policy decisions techniques, policy instruments and policy evaluation are important technologies in this regard because each, in its own way, contributes to the selection and retention of its associated policy discourses, often transforming them at the same time (Jessop, 2010b: online version).

It is this argument that is key to the author's exploration of power dynamics and interpretation of the 'the creative industries' as an imaginary of power.

As economic imaginaries, 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy' and related policy discourse are understood as tools that help evolve and articulate the socio-political world. As crucial components of 'state projects' (Jessop, 2007), they are used by state actors to produce 'hegemony' (Jessop and Sum, 2010). Such tools include policy documents and speeches, state programmes and models, reports and seminar presentations. The implication here is that



imaginaries are the 'voice' of power and, as such, reinforce particular fields of relations and forces. Given the curious appearance of 'the creative industries' as a policy object (discussed fully in Chapter 4), and its prominence in *Creative Britain* that triggered this research project, a semiotic dimension is a critical dimension for investigation.

Jessop's approach to semiosis and policy discourse analysis is succinctly explained in this quote:

A concern with the semiotic and extra-semiotic mechanisms that together shape the variation, selection, and retention of particular imaginaries in a continuing dialectic of path-dependent path-shaping (Jessop, 2010b, online version).

To understand an imaginary beyond its taken-for-granted meaning is said to require a multi-dimensional and multi-directional analysis of its semiotics and the extra-semiotic conditions in which it evolved and is articulated (Jessop and Sum, 2010). Jessop argues, for example, policy discourse analysis involves examining more than just a few policy texts to understand an imaginary, and must be done in conjunction with other extra-semiotic material, events and experiences. Other writers too advise broader and more systematic approaches to policy discourse analysis (Wickham, 1987). A method of policy discourse analysis will be discussed more fully in the next chapter, but suffice to say here, this project's review of policy documents was substantive rather than extensive in a scalar sense. Jessop recommends making links from local through to global sites and forms but, like other research study practicalities, the author's policy discourse analysis will not extend to the global scale.

Consideration of imaginaries raises intriguing questions of 'where do they come from and to what effect?' and 'how are some imaginaries selected and institutionalised and others not?' In terms of newly emergent imaginaries such as 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy', these questions of selectivity and retention are pertinent. Jessop poses his questions in the context of macro capitalist economics and neo-liberalism:

In short, how do such imaginaries come to provide not only a semiotic frame for *construing* the world but also contributing to its *construction*? And, on the other hand, given the structural contradictions, strategic dilemmas, and

overall improbability of capitalist reproduction, especially during its recurrent crises, what role does semiosis play in construing, constructing, and temporarily stabilizing capitalist social formations at least within specific spatio-temporal 'fixes' and their associated zones of relative stability? (Jessop, 2010b, online version).

The principles of Jessop's explanation of semiosis, and particularly the evolution and institutionalisation of imaginaries, lend themselves to a creative industry study. Many academic and independent researchers have tackled quantification and definition of 'the creative industries' (Chapain *et al*, 2010; DCMS, 2001; Frontier Economics, 2006; Higgs and Cunningham, 2008 – see also Chapter 4), and the problematics of creative policy *per se* (Cunningham, 2007; Garnham, 2005; Jayne, 2005; O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005). Notwithstanding the contribution this literature makes to knowledge-building and policy development, few writers interrogate the semiotics of 'the creative industries' imaginary and the role of imaginaries in contemporary governance policy documents.

Most recently, the Association of American Geographers annual meeting in New York (24 February 2012) included a session titled Opening the Black Box of Creative Policies, but the majority of papers were more critical of policy's failure to deliver (and particularly on urban planning goals) than the political assumptions, meanings and semiotics that underpin such policies. There is much scope for contributing to a semiosis discourse on imaginaries and to testing state theory in the context of UK creative policies at a specific time and place.

Discourse on 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy' can be tracked back to the 1990s in cultural studies and further back to critical theory on notions of 'the cultural industries' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1979/44). A comprehensive discussion of 'the creative industries' conceptualisation is presented in Chapter 4, but a few points are relevant here for theorisation purposes and their use in this thesis. First, writers generally agree that 'creative industries' and 'creative economy' signify a political strategy to economise cultural production. This trend was accelerated under Labour administrations who sought to reform cultural policy and promote a 'knowledge based economy'

strategy (Jeffcut and Pratt, 2002; O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005). Debate continues in academic and independent 'think tank' discourses on the effects of such a radical reform of the cultural sphere and cultural policy frameworks. What is surprising, however, is that interest in 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy' has homed in on 'proof of concept', definition and quantification models (Frontier Economics, 2006; Hesmondhalgh, 2005; Howkins, 2001; O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2000; Roodhouse, 2006; The Work Foundation, 2007). The more fundamental semiotic dimension to this conceptualisation receives less attention, and particularly in terms of a role in 'construing, constructing and temporarily stabilizing' a state landscape in which imaginaries are articulated. It was this gap that led the author to consider the construction and role of imaginaries in state governance at a regional scale and their use as economic and political tools. Clearly, the 'creative industries' literature has much to say about the material side of a political construct (of cultural infrastructure and planning, and social formations) but it is the discursive practices of state bodies and their meanings that the thesis is concerned with.

A second aspect of semiotic analysis of relevance here is that of crises and the shaping of state space. For Jessop, a significant moment in the development of an economic imaginary is the emergence of crises that necessitate changes in the semiotic and extra-semiotic social relations and forces, and opens up space for strategic re-interpretation and opportunities to re-shape state spaces. He notes:

A significant moment in the development of economic imaginaries is the emergence of crises affecting economic identities and performance. Crises often create profound cognitive and strategic disorientation and trigger proliferation in interpretations and proposed solutions (Jessop, 2010b, online version).

This view of economic imaginaries partly resonates with the known proliferation of meanings developed for 'the creative industries' (Hesmondhalgh, 2007) and emergence of a new 'creative economy' in post-neoliberal capitalism (Taylor, 2013).

However, it is questionable whether imaginaries develop purely as a form of crisis management. As a 'floating signifier' (Jessop and Sum, 2010), an imaginary is said to be articulated in different ways and in different circumstances but there seems no reason why crisis should be the only trigger. A state theory interpretation of economic imaginaries is primarily concerned with their role as 'technologies of power' to stabilise macro level capital accumulation and signify a way forward out of financial crisis. While Jessop acknowledges many different ways to interpret social complexity, meanings and meaning-making, imaginaries arguably have more mundane roles to play in the everyday performance of governance – in a regional setting, for example. The thesis will examine the significance of 'the creative industries' as an imaginary at the micro level and the effects of semiotic changes. Whilst perhaps not 'crises' in a Jessopian sense, changes in a regional setting may reveal other motivations and opportunities for re-imagination and interpretation.

The theoretical *terrain* chosen by the author is mostly based on structuralist cultural political economy (CPE) literature as opposed to a post-structuralist political economy. While the two perspectives have much in common and particularly their emphasis on language in the construction of the social world, it is their differences that informed the author's preference. The choice should not, however, be read as an either-or decision. Notably, the author was drawn to structuralism's emphasis on the materiality of space and reality of ideas that together form a system of socially constructed meanings and meaning-makings. Thus, there are complex human and non-human interactions in a system of governing and capital accumulation (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 2007). In comparing structuralist and post-structuralist literature, Calvin Taylor argues:

Whilst cultural–political economy rejects determinism, it does argue that the intransitive objects of human knowledge are invested with powers and potentials, a position that anti-essentialist post-structuralism cannot accept (2013: 7).

Taylor goes on to argue a 'creative economy' can be similarly understood as a strategically selected assemblage, or spatial-temporal 'fix' and ordering (Jessop and Sum, 2001, 2010) in which state actors have the capacity to act and, at the same time, are subject to external forces. While post-structuralism has less to say about the structural aspects of a system of power, it highlights the

articulation of 'difference' and nature of multi-vocal and contradictory meanings that social actors construct (Larner, 2000, 2003). For the author, a structuralist interpretation over plays the structuring and regulating power of a system (Jessop, 2007; Jones and Jessop, 2010); whereas post-structuralism promotes an overly semiotic dichotomy between oppositional and hegemonic groups and their discursive practices (Larner and Le Heron, 2002; Larner and Walters, 2005).

Although state theorists focus primarily on a cultural political economy imaginary at the macro and supra nation levels of statehood (Jessop, 2007, 2010b), the principles have resonance with a 'creative economy' at the micro level. Jessop observes:

Economic, political, and intellectual forces [that] seek to (re)define specific subsets of economic activities as subjects, sites, and stakes of competition and/or as objects of regulation and to articulate strategies, projects and visions oriented to these imagined economies. Among the main forces involved in such efforts are political parties, think tanks, bodies such as the OECD and World Bank, organized interests [ ] in mobilizing elite and/or popular support behind competing imaginaries (Jessop, 2010b, online version).

Nonetheless, regional studies show that it is not just national and international bodies that are involved in the promotion and articulation of spatial and 'compelling' imaginaries.

Most notably, regional and 'creative industries' studies reveal the imagined and practised nature of 'the region' and 'city-region' at a very local level (Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jones and MacLeod, 2004). It is worth pointing out here that such literature was examined in terms of the discursive construction of an economic imaginary, rather than the material forms (of, for example, cultural infrastructure and creative clusters) that lie outside the thesis' scope. This leads to a consideration of 'the creative industries' as an object-subject of economic and cultural imagination that conveys more than a centralised dominant force. Taking the idea of the object-subject further, Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (2010) explore the duality in relation to 'the economy' as an imaginary. Looking at historical trends and political rationalities, including Thatcherism and Blairism,

Rose and Miller argue that 'the economy' has become an objectified and common sense thing that drives growth, prosperity and happiness in western countries. Such insights led the author to think about the 'creative economy' in similar terms. Certainly, extravagant claims have been made by politicians about 'the creative industries' in *Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al*, 2008) and readers may be familiar with the 'cool Britannia' hype of the early Labour years. To have purchase, however, an imaginary must be articulated and promoted by, for example, economists, policy-makers and government officials (O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005). For the author, it was important to look beyond the imaginary as a policy object and ask questions of 'why' and 'how' did it become so prominent in policy frameworks and in such a short space of time.

In considering 'technologies of government' and power relations as practice and agency, Rose and Miller (2010: 275) discuss the *construal* aspect of everyday political rationalities. They argue power relations are articulated and maintained through a range of different techniques, state programmes and strategies including policy documents (Miller and Rose, 2008: 45). This points to imaginaries as conceptual tools whose effect is the exercise of power in many different circumstances and brings dialogics in whatever form into the everyday practices of governance. It contrasts with Jessop's emphasis on the collective power of 'the State' that is articulated through imposed imaginaries (as well as recognising its effect). Whilst not entirely rejecting the latter's view, the author is drawn to Rose and Miller's analysis of different imaginaries and articulations that circulate at different levels. Arguably, there can be multiple articulations and roles that imaginaries play in multi-scalar governance and in the maintenance (or contestations) of power relations. Such an interpretation opens up possibilities of how imaginaries are used by state bodies to influence and control at an everyday level and not necessarily imposed by 'the State'. An argument will be made in this thesis that imaginaries (such as 'creative industries') are constructed at different levels including the micro level, and are used to shape and maintain power relations (such as those in South West England). In other words, imaginaries are structure and agency.

Looking at the grand scheme of a hegemonic cultural political economy (Jessop, 2007, 2010b), imaginaries that are articulated and implemented in a

regional governance context will be minor ‘technologies of government’. So too will be the state agencies who wield them. However, there is every reason to suppose that the same rationalities that operate at the macro level applies at a smaller scale.

At this juncture, it is useful to introduce Pierre Bourdieu’s writing on relationality and the notion of ‘field’ (1993). For Bourdieu, a ‘field of forces’ is:

[ ] a field of struggles tending to transform or conserve this field of forces. The network of objective relations between positions subtends and orients the strategies which the occupants of the different positions implement in their struggles to defend or improve their positions (i.e. their position-takings), strategies which depend on their force and form on the position each agent occupies in the power relations (Bourdieu, 1993: 30).

Again, power is understood as emerging in different contexts and environments, and experienced by people differently in time and space. Bourdieu’s notion of field and force are helpful for thinking about the situatedness and specificities of power relations. Depending on an agent’s position, Bourdieu argues they will be defending or challenging established societal norms. In other words, power is practised but is not predictable because of the changing dynamics in which it is exercised, and the different power relations that co-exist in that ‘field’. To explain the practice of governance in this way, opens up a ‘space of possibles’ for factors that constrain or compel a state body’s position-taking. As in other fields, conflicts and tensions will arise in the ‘field of power’ between those who either adopt or resist.

Interestingly, Bourdieu applied his theory to the ‘field of cultural production’ (of literature and art) and ‘field of struggles’ to explain competing views in society on the cultural as opposed to economic value of cultural products. Bourdieu observes:

[ ] the opposition between art and money [ ] is the generative principle of most of the judgements that [ ] claim to establish the frontier between what is art and what is not, between ‘bourgeois’ art and ‘intellectual’ art, between ‘traditional’ art and ‘avant-garde’ art. (1996/1992: 162, cited in Hesmondhalgh, 2006: 223).

While Bourdieu’s binary is expressed in terms of competing socio-economic

groups, his field theory could as well be expressed in terms of those who promote or resist notions of ‘the creative industries’ and modes of cultural production.

Certainly, debate in cultural studies has focused on the legitimacy of ‘the creative industries’ as a state-defined and economised model of cultural activities under Labour (Garnham, 2005; Hesmondhalgh, 2005, 2006; Jeffcut and Pratt, 2002; Pratt, 2005; Roodhouse, 2006; Selwood, 2001). However, such discourse often frames the struggles around those in the ‘field of cultural production’ versus those in the ‘field of power’. Does field theory provide explanation of power relations and contestations within the ‘field of power’? Empirical studies look at different forms of cultural production *per se* (Caves, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2006; Negus and Pickering, 2004) but not at the *doings* of those involved in its governance and particularly state interventions in ‘the creative industries’ policy.

Thinking about how state bodies might be interpreted, Bourdieu’s idea of a ‘cultural intermediary’ is suggestive. Agreed, his description is normally applied to people working in mass media and large-scale popular culture,

[ ] the most typical of whom are the producers of cultural programmes on TV and radio or the critics of “quality” newspapers and magazines and all the writer-journalists and journalist-writers (Bourdieu, 1984/1979: 325).

Clearly, state bodies are neither ‘creators’ of cultural content, nor are they consumers, advertisers or art critics. Rather, as Justin O’Connor suggests (2004: 40), they occupy hybrid positions of power as intermediaries, interpreters and commentators. State-funded regional cultural agencies (such as the case study organisations) describe themselves in these terms including “*translator*”, “*interpreter*”, and “*broker*”. David MacKinnon’s use of the phrase ‘institutional channels’ (2001: 823) perhaps comes closer to describing the position of state agencies in the ‘field of power’, acting as mediators and ‘filters’ of national political strategy and economic imaginaries. Taking this thought further, (and similar to state theory), conflicts and tensions between state bodies are likely to arise in the exercise of their powers and different articulations of ‘the creative industries’. Mindful of misconstruing Bourdieu’s analysis of ‘cultural intermediary’ (Hesmondhalgh, 2006: 225), the author will examine state bodies



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as 'institutional filters' *vis-à-vis* 'the creative industries'.

Returning to state theory and a structuralist perspective on a system of power, considerable emphasis is placed on 'the State' and de-centralisation of powers that, in spite of refutations, imply a higher source or level of power. Before taking up this criticism further, the dynamics of power and role of economic imaginaries need further thought. With imaginaries in mind, a cultural-political economy approach (Jessop 2010b) views state power as a 'discursively- and institutionally-mediated condensation of a changing balance of forces'. Thus, an economic imaginary can be viewed as a semiotic system that gives meaning and shape to an economic field through the (re)articulation of power relations. This means a 'creative economy' can be read as a distinctive semiotic system that articulates specific economic genres (for example 'the creative industries', creative class) and discourses of the day around a 'state project' (strategy, policy, programmes) and hegemonic vision (for example, 'making Britain the world's creative hub'). In turn, the imaginary affects diverse institutional orders in the public and private world (such as a state governance landscape).

Like Henry Wai-Chung Yeung (2005: 46), the thesis explores power as 'the emergent effects of social practice among actors, who have the capacity and resources to influence'. Yeung concludes 'some actors derive their capacity to influence from structural positions, whereas others experience power through relational practice'. Bearing in mind the thesis is leaning towards critical realism, and informed by state and complexity theories, it was important to explore power as multi-directional and multi-dimensional. An argument is made for power as not only practice and emergence, but that the greater the fit between what state actors do, and the structures and conditions in which their powers are exercised, the greater the likelihood of a spatial-temporal 'fix', and successful policy implementation. Undoubtedly, the reverse is also true but coherence and fixity are core to the exploration.

Yeung's analysis of power links to that of Foucault and Bourdieu, of power as effect and a proactive role for state actors in stabilising and de-stabilising, shaping and re-shaping state spaces. Rose and Miller argue:

Certain technologies of government are given a temporary institutional durability and brought into particular kinds of relations with one another. Posed from this perspective, the question is no longer one of accounting for government in terms of “the power of the State”, but of ascertaining how, and to what extent, the state is articulated into the activity of government: what relations are established between political and other authorities; what funds, forces, persons, knowledge or legitimacy are utilised; and by means of what devices and techniques are these different tactics made operable (Rose and Miller, 2010: 275).

The question of how certain ‘technologies’ are selected, developed and used, in space and time and place is one that gets to the nitty gritty of answering the question of how state bodies manage to do what they do.

Taking ‘technologies’ as the key word, the reader should note that Government in this thesis refers to an elected political administration at the national scale (that is, Labour during 1997-2010). As Jessop suggests, the exercise of power is no longer a matter of top-down monolithic government but a complex mode of self-organising governance (Jessop, 1998). In a Foucauldian sense, ‘technologies of government’ and ‘technologies of power’ interchangeably describe the imaginaries that are deployed in the ‘art of governance’ (Brenner *et al*, 2003).

Another imaginary that features in governance and regional studies literature is that of ‘the region’ (Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Allen *et al*, 1998; Amin, 2004; Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Harvey *et al*, 2011). Whilst ‘the region’ is not the focus of this thesis, the administrative area of South West England provides a spatial framework for the research study. Also, the scholarship offers some useful insights. For example, Labour’s regionalism policy for the UK’s ‘nations and regions’ is understood as a means to facilitate ‘modernization’ and a specific mode of governance (Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Goodwin, 2006; Goodwin *et al*, 2005). While Jessop talks of regionalism as hegemony (Jones and Jessop, 2010), other relational writers assert the openness and unbounded, but still politicised, nature of a de-centralising state and particularly the imagined ‘region’ (Allen and Cochrane, 2006, 2007; Amin, 2004). However, Allen and Cochrane are unclear about the extent of openness. They observe:

in an institutional setting where it is increasingly difficult to entertain a simple central versus regional government binary as more networked arrangements disrupt traditional, hierarchical forms of regulation and coordination, it becomes harder to pinpoint how governing agencies mobilise to secure, modify or translate their goals (Allen and Cochrane 2007: 1171).

The statement is rather ambiguous about whether the state is bounded or not, and whether the imaginary of 'region' is too weak or the resistance of state agencies too strong. Equally difficult to pinpoint is 'when' the processes and practices of state governance coalesce. The same problem applies to the imaginary of 'the creative industries' and its governance.

Thinking about contested 'regional' and governance space in the context of 'the creative industries', a recent ethnographic study by David Harvey and colleagues (2011) of creative clusters set in South West England concludes:

South West region emerges as a far from discrete and unitary object. Rather than a fixed and immutable 'subject' of governmental policy, the region emerges as a practised and peopled space (Harvey *et al*, 2011: 472).

Their findings on the non-linearity and openness of inter-actions between state bodies and 'peopled space' feed into the author's regional governance study, albeit looking at different imaginaries and practices.

Mark Sandford, writing about regional trends in 2005, identifies 'a distinctive system of governance [ ] developing in the English regions' (2005b: 2). Like John Allen and Allan Cochrane (2007), he argues New Labour's regionalism imposed an inter-dependent and relational political landscape of regional governmental bodies, regional development agencies, institutions and business networks. For Sandford, regionalism and state arrangements are not an impenetrable random tangle, but a deliberate Government tactic to ensure policy goals are more or less supported and delivered. This resonates with Jessop's notions of 'meta governance' (2004b) and multi-scalar governance that operate in complex systems, stretching far beyond any 'region' space. Allen and Cochrane's study (2007) of political assemblages operating in South East England, found what they call a 'politics of scale' exercise taking place. That is, in order to align with a regionalisation imperative, state bodies search for

territorial 'fix', and 'in doing so, they represent themselves as coherent, collaborative entities that must compete and learn' (2007: 1162). Thus, the *terrain* may appear 'muddled' and 'tangled', but a system of scalar governance rapidly evolves to fit a strategic imperative. This implies a proactive involvement by state bodies in shaping their world as well as being shaped by it. This dual conception of state actors is compelling. Less convincing is the influence of a single imperative, such as regionalism or localism. These re-scaling and adaptive tactics are worth investigation again in order to better understand how spatial-temporal 'fix' occurs and in what circumstances.

Furthermore, studies of the relational 'region' support social theorists' ideas about 'technologies of power' and imaginaries and their role in supporting and protecting the system. However, the 'distinct system' based on regional imaginaries that accompanied Labour's political doctrine of regionalism is radically changing. Since May 2010 and a new Conservative-Liberal Democrat administration, Labour's geographic regional boundaries have been dismantled and regional structures abolished. Does de-regionalisation disprove social theory's ideas about constructed and relational imaginaries or reinforce them? Regardless of political doctrine, be it regionalism or localism, social theory argues assemblages/networks change over time and space, and imaginaries too evolve in order to define, stabilise, support and protect the activities and interests of the group or network.

Fluidity and fixity are recurrent themes in governance studies and point to the kinetic processes of territorialisation and re-territorialisation, stabilisation and re-stabilisation. The literature suggests that at any one time or space, processes of state governance may be divergent and convergent, involving resistance and compliance, stabilisation and destabilisation. Brenner talks about 'how historically specific configurations of state space are produced and incessantly reworked' (2004: 76). In a Foucauldian sense, the manoeuvres of state bodies, as they attempt to make sense of their spatial environment, characterise 'the art of government'. Applied to regional governance, there is much to be learned about the formation and re-formation of state bodies in an institutional landscape - fixed at one moment but fluid when in transition and re-translation.

For state theorists, spatial-temporal ‘fix’ is mostly examined from a theoretical and macro political economy perspective (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 2002), and not as an empirical possibility. In referring to state bodies, Jessop observes:

The diverse ways in which localities and regions, or at least the alliances, regimes and blocs who seek to represent them, are actively *attempting* to forge a spatial-temporal fix (Jessop, 1997: 60, cited in MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999a –italics added).

In other words, state bodies try to establish coherence but fail. The author poses the question ‘is failure always the outcome?’. From a governmentality perspective, and drawing on Martin Jones’ notion of ‘phase space’ (2009), an argument is made in this thesis that spatial-temporal ‘fix’ is possible when a particular set of social relations and forces inter-sect in time and space. Hence, ‘different moments’ of coherence may emerge, regardless of how temporary or illusory. Thinking about delivery of policy set out in *Creative Britain*, which is mentioned in the introductory chapter, it is possible to conjecture governance success occurs as an imagined spatial-temporal ‘fix’.

At this point, it is useful to examine more closely Jones’ (2009a) notion of ‘phase space’ as a way of examining the multi-dimensional elements of socio-spatial relations in the context of state governance coherence. Taking an interdisciplinary and relational approach, he notes:

[ ] the “theory of ensembles”, phase space acknowledges the relational making of space but insists on the confined, connected, inertial, and always context-specific nature of existence and emergence. When applied to geography, phase space, among other things, expresses socio-spatial relations from a topological stance *but* insists on the compatibilities between, rather the mutual exclusivities of, flow-like (networks, etc) and more fixed (scales, territories, regions, etc) takes on space (Jones, 2009a: 3).

Jones goes on,

Constructed and always emergent space matters in influencing future trajectories due to path-dependent and path-shaping logics. The geography of different moments and their combinations within these spatial constellations merit more systematic phase space “mapping” analysis, tracing continuities and discontinuities (Jones, 2009a: 501).

In other words, a relational geography is not just an un-ending series of relational connections that lead to knowing not a lot about anything. Rather, the 'different moments' in a phase space analysis are spatial inter-sections that contribute to re-scaling state space. Jones' work (2009a) introduces the possibility of a 'moment' of spatial-temporal 'fix' and structural coherence whilst recognising its potential refutation – the 'not everything that is possible is compossible' conundrum. For the researcher, phase space offers an opportunity, as Jones suggests, to 'track multifarious spatial synchronizations and, when these are in sync [ ] they can be institutionalized as contiguous and symmetrical or territorial shapes' (Jones, 2009a: 14).

In terms of state governance and 'the creative industries' in an English region, an application of 'phase space' raises the question of what might spatial-temporal 'fix' look like? It is possible that at a historical moment, in a geographic space, a group of state governance bodies were able to mobilise, align their power relations and affirm a policy goal. This is not to imply coherence prevailed in other parts of that system or in other aspects of those bodies' multiple relations and multiple goals. But, 'fix' is a specific inter-connection. Together with Reece Jones (2009b) work on spatial 'inchoateness', theory points to the possibility of both governance success and failure. Delivery of *Creative Britain* suggested an opportunity to test the validity of such a conjecture.

The notion of re-scaling space is a major strand of work in governance studies (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones, 2009a; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2010). Arguing for a shift from government to governance in Western European countries, Jessop's (2002, 2004a) earlier work on 'hollowing out' of the state thesis, suggested state powers and functions were de-centralised, downwards to sub-national scales and upwards to supra-national scales. However, a less centric view is promoted in later writing (Jones and Jessop, 2010) to take account of more eccentric and multi-directional flows of state power in the modern state. For example, within the UK, de-centralisation is evidently manifest in the devolution of powers from central Government to national and regional administrations, state-sponsored intermediaries, and public-private partnerships. This presumes, however, that state powers emanate outwards

and implies a finite process that culminates in an empty centre. Processes of 'hollowing out' and 'filling in space' (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, 2002; Jones and MacLeod, 2004) are said to characterise the tactics of neo-liberal regimes whereby responsibilities are devolved away from the centre but without the centre ultimately losing control. These processes (and commentaries) are closely connected to ideas of territorialisation of state space and Labour's regionalisation project. Jessop's focus is primarily on the macro scale of nation-state and inter-national connections and transitions (Jessop, 2002; 2007; Jones and Jessop, 2010). Although mention is made of decentralisation and sub-national scales of governmental action, such as the 'region' and 'city region' (Jessop, 2007; Jones and Jessop, 2010), the implication is that the micro level is of less importance to that of national and global levels. In other words, the UK's system of governance is hierarchical and to be interpreted as such. Given Jessop's focus on a 'macro' political economy and globalisation, it is perhaps understandable that regionalisation and localisation receive less attention. This omission, however, provides an opportunity to explore governmentalities, and re-scaling at the grassroots.

Ontologically, writers argue that the process of 'filling in space' (Jones and MacLeod, 2004) was strengthened under New Labour by a political strategy of 'joined up governance' around a dominant economic growth policy agenda. Reading governance literature, and its transformations over recent years (Rose and Miller, 2010; Rutherford and Davison, 2012; Taylor, 2013), (post)neo-liberal narratives have spread across the policy spectrum including that of the cultural realm. Bearing in mind commentaries on economisation of cultural activities (Hesmondhalgh, 2006; Jayne, 2005; Jeffcut and Pratt, 2005; Pratt, 1997b, 2005; and mentioned above) and an increasingly popular interventionist discourse on 'the creative industries', there does seem to be an underlying neo-liberalisation to the UK's system of governing. Talk of aligning multiple policies and state resources, and public-private partnerships, highlights the increasingly complex geographies of governance that have evolved in England from the late 1990s onwards (Goodwin *et al*, 2005). Labour's regionalisation and regionalism provide the backdrop to the author's study but the fragility of this devolutionary experiment suggests 'filling in space' and re-scaling governance space are

entering a new phase. To speculate beyond regionalism is outwith the study period but political rhetoric suggests a resurgent localism.

Of significance to the author's theorisation was how to handle the plethora of state bodies and institutional arrangements that were germane to the study. Studies of dense networks of state bodies and a 'joined up' mode of governance, including that for 'the creative industries', prompted Mark Jayne (2005: 554) to note, that "for creative-industries development to be coherent [ ] projects and initiatives [ ] must be joined up and folded together [ ] across institutions'. But the process is by no means straightforward or easy to research. According to state theory, coherence is constrained by different state bodies that operate at different scales, spatial and temporal, that are constantly re-structuring, and in turn, inter-meshing with other governance structures and activities. Thus, the 'hollowed-out' nation state is 'filled-in' at many different scales by different state bodies (Goodwin *et al*, 2005). For this research project, there is the question of whether re-scaling at the micro level operates in a similar way. Although state theory should ideally be tested at the macro, meso and micro levels, such research is arguably impossible in practice. The strategy here is to concentrate on a microcosm of re-scaling and the lessons to be learned.

Research at the micro level of governance has led to more in-depth study of state personnel and the 'peopled state' (Goodwin *et al*, 2006; Jones, 2011; Jones *et al*, 2004; MacKinnon, 2001). This literature recognises an important human as well as non human side to the performance of statehood. Compatible with the critical realist stance developed so far, ideas from Bruno Latour (1987, 2005) and assemblage theory (DeLanda, 2006) are helpful to thinking about the human and 'person' side of social interactions between state actors and their use of 'technologies of power' within their organisations and networks. Furthermore, state theorists refer to state space as produced and incessantly re-worked' (Brenner, 2004). This suggests a complex mix of social forces (human and non human) are active in different fields, different territories and at different scales. For the author, it was important to not lose sight of the important place of state personnel in the shaping and meaning-making of



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governmental structures, processes and practices (Christophers, 2007; Jayne, 2005; Rose and Miller, 2010).

Reading Latour's (sometimes obtuse) semiotics, it is possible to understand an imaginary as both a force and a tool within a network. Notwithstanding the duality, Latour introduces agency to a non-human thing like an imaginary that can help define, stabilise and protect a network (or in this research project's instance, a system of governing). This is not to imply an imaginary is powerful in itself or immutable. Rather, it is an integral spatial-temporal part of an effective system. Significantly, Rose and Miller argue that 'inscription' techniques render imaginaries into 'calculable entities with a solidity and a density that appear all their own' (2010: 284). Does this apply to 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy' imaginaries? And in terms of the purpose, is the role of state bodies to act as 'experts of 'know how'? Writers have noted the proliferation of state-funded administrative structures in post World War II Britain. These bodies are said to have increased importance as 'experts' and 'exclusive and powerful enclosures' (Rose and Miller, 2010: 297) who render state space governable. The idea of 'enclosures' may well describe the territorialised spaces of state bodies who seek to claim expertise and hence powers in such spaces.

The analysis points to interesting similarities with the emergence of 'the creative industries' and those 'experts' and state 'enclosures' that helped establish it (O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005). This way of explaining the role of state personnel complements Jessop's views on a 'self-organising' state in which the individual is empowered to take greater responsibility for certain actions. Labour's policy discourse will be examined in Chapter 5, but suffice to say here, articulation of new imaginaries and state strategies (such as 'the creative industries' and *Creative Britain*) are indicative of a political rationality and mode of governance. To what extent state actors as intermediaries are passive translators of state ideology or active shapers of new meanings and meaning-making is less known. This was a crucial empirical question for the author. Given the central role of state bodies (individuals and organisations) in the governance literature, and later informed by the research findings, the author will argue for both a reactive and proactive role for these significant state players.

Returning to the theme of governance failure and success, state theorists emphasise the failure-prone and inchoate nature of scalar governance in spite of the theoretical possibility of coherence and spatial-temporal 'fix' (Jessop, 2003a, 2007; Jones, 2009b). Indeed, Jessop views the state actor as a 'public ironist' and concludes:

The law of requisite irony entails that those involved in governance choose among forms of failure and make a reasoned decision in favour of one or another form of failure (2003a, 9-10).

Jessop's analysis reinforces the widespread perception (held by many researchers, policy-makers and the general public) of state bodies as incompetent, inefficient, unaccountable and costly burdens on the taxpayer (Flinders, 2008; Gash *et al.*, 2010). While critical interpretations are valid responses to over optimistic claims about governance success and current public sector reforms, they ignore, deliberately or otherwise, signs of state coherence or other motivations. Research into 'peopled organisations' and re-scaling state space (Goodwin *et al.*, 2006; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2011) shows state bodies have a capacity to shape, as well as be shaped by, the state spaces in which they operate. In other words, they are significant players in the development and delivery of governmental policies and neo-liberalisation. Reflecting on regional studies and related concepts, it is logical to conclude that state bodies are able to enact complex roles as both proactive shapers and reactive messengers of the state. Contrary to *always* failure-prone, governance success needs to be explored on the basis that individual state actors and organisations do sometimes fail to achieve their political and social objectives but equally, they sometimes succeed.

## 2.6 Systems of governing

So far, the project's state theorisation has focused on the evolutionary and dynamic nature of socially constructed state spaces and their effects on modes of state governance. It is worth expanding, therefore, on explanations of state formation to help understand how a 'regional' system connects to a wider system of governing. Also, characteristics identified for the macro level may be applicable at the micro level.

Driven by the 'crises management' of capital accumulation and growing disjunction among 'historically specific institutional manifestations' of territory-place-scale-networks (Brenner *et al*, 2003), state regimes (in Western European and North American countries) are said to be constantly shifting their structures and mode of regulation. The motivation is a search for coherence and order. A reading of state theory literature raised the question of 'do explanations of spatial-temporal 'fix' and structural coherence at the macro level apply at the micro level?' The following points summarise the feasibility of such an endeavour.

At different structural levels, a 'nation' or 'supra nation' is said to be territorialised and de-territorialised into 'regions' or other spatial zones, or else re-territorialised into larger economic or defence formations such as the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Territorialisation at the micro level of, for example, an English region and its relationship to an economic imaginary (for example, 'the creative industries') can be similarly examined. Are the constructs and processes of decentralisation and territorialisation inter-connected and are their meanings and practices contingent on one another at this more mundane level? Jessop is adamant that 'states are more than "power containers", they are also power connectors, that is, nodes in a network of states and other political forces' (2011a: 5). At the micro level, regional studies demonstrate the networked nature of state bodies to other bodies and political forces (Harvey *et al*, 2012). This scholarship suggests more empirical data are needed, however, on 'how' state bodies operate at the micro level, including their capacity to territorialise and self-organise. That said, Jessop does allow for hybrid variations to how systems evolve and is unequivocal about his critical approach to 'new state spaces'. With territory, place, scale and network as primary SRA dimensions in play, the T is only one entry point to this conundrum of where and how state powers are configured and operationalised in a regional state governance landscape.

Of re-structuration and regulation of state spaces (including national, regional, local), Jessop refers to 'path-dependencies' that influence attempts to engineer shifts between one state formation and another. Although examples are given at the macro level, the principle of 'path-dependencies' is applicable to other

spatial formations. Structural change in a multi-level system of governance will clearly have effect elsewhere, and provides a way of managing economic and social policies far from the centre. Thus, the state is able to devolve responsibilities to governance bodies such as Regional Development Agencies (RDA) and 'city regions' (Jones and Jessop, 2010) that are tasked with managing the delivery of multiple state policies.

However, there is some confusion as to whether regional and local state space is or is not important in a modern system of governing. State theorists assert that the state is no longer a 'power container', but neither is it a redundant construct. Brenner notes:

[The state] is not a thing, container, or platform, but a socially produced, conflictual, and dynamically changing matrix of socio-spatial interaction. The spaces of state power are not simply 'filled', as if they were pre-given territorial containers. Instead, state spatiality is actively produced and transformed through regulatory projects and socio-political struggles articulated in diverse institutional sites and at a range of geographical scales (2004: 76).

While the 'nation-state' is given some agency, little is said of the agency of state governance bodies and power dynamics at other scales. As mentioned above, the thesis will argue for a more proactive role by state bodies as they seek to make sense of their world.

Looking at 'globalisation' and notions of 'multi-scalar meta governance', Jessop views higher level political directives as originating in ever-more distant, powerful centres away from the local level. Rather than regional and local governmental bodies becoming more powerful and self-regulating in a decentralised state, they are said to 'crisis manage' multiple and often contradictory economic and social policies. However, regional studies such as Pemberton and Goodwin's (2010) study in rural Wales and a study by Harvey and colleagues (2011) set in rural south western England, both elucidate an energetic engagement and resistant role played by state bodies to regional and local government spatial re-configurations. These studies support the view of state bodies meshed in multiple centres and operating at multiple scales, both proactive and reactive to socio-political forces. For the author, this refutes the logic of an all-powerful and reified supra-centre(s) of power and control. Setting

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aside the issue of supra-national states, the author's study too seeks to examine the movement of state powers at the micro level. The shift from government to governance suggests more dynamic multi-directional flows of power that do not necessarily converge or connect at the macro level (Rose and Miller, 2010).

Turning to the issue of 'rivalries and struggles' that are associated with a self-organising system of governing, literature review uncovered more polemic than empirical study. According to state theory, conflicts and tensions are deliberate or unintended effects of a manipulative system of governing. For example, Brenner says:

Within modern capitalism, statehood is configured in a geographically differentiated form; at the same time, as state institutions are harnessed to regulate the uneven geographies of political economic life, they engage continuously in the production and transformation of places, regions, territories and scalar hierarchies. As diverse social forces struggle to mobilise state institutions towards their own ends, state space is continuously reconfigured, whether through explicit projects to reorganise the geographies of state territorial organisation and state intervention, or as indirect outcomes of ongoing regulatory experiments and socio-political conflicts (2004: 111).

Jessop too views such actions in spatial-temporal terms as attempts to achieve structural coherence. While cautious of explanations that reify 'the State' and 'manipulative system', these explanations point to the role of state institutions/bodies and effects of their interventions and imaginaries. An examination of 'rivalries and struggles' between state bodies at regional level will provide an opportunity to see how tensions and conflicts arise and dissipate (or not). Also, the author was drawn to the related duality of compliance and resistance, and the deliberate and/or unintended consequences. Applied to policy delivery of, for example *Creative Britain*, in an administratively-defined state space (South West England), state theory suggests state bodies are constantly seeking structural coherence. If the state landscape is so volatile, then the question arises of 'how do state bodies manage to govern?'

Obviously, there are legal and fiscal devices that a central Government or supra-national body like the European Commission can impose to control state

bodies. But, over-regulation runs counter to contemporary political rhetoric (and academic discourse) of decentralism, devolution, regionalism and localism in the contemporary modern state. A self-organising system of governing suggests state bodies are able to manage their powers with a degree of autonomy with the possible outcome of governance success or failure. If this is the case, then how does it occur? In a relational sense, Jessop's notion of multi-scalar governance points to flows of power between, as he says, the 'tangled and shifting nature of dominant, nodal, and marginal levels of government in different areas' (Jessop, 2006: 151). To what extent state bodies who operate at different scales, are able to produce and reproduce hierarchies and (re)align multiple political goals, is less clear. Do these movements contribute to 'rivalries and struggles' or do they have other stabilising purposes? If structuration (spatial and temporal) is considered as a normalising process, then the idea of a single hierarchical and spatial-temporal 'fix' is tricky. On the one hand, power relations based on flows of delegated powers (to regulate policy and fund state interventions) from central Government outwards through stratified layers would seem to suggest a bounded territorial hierarchical structure. But, if the system is conceptualised as consisting of multiple centres and multi-directional relationships, that connect and re-connect over space and time, then the idea of a hierarchical 'fix' is problematic. Personal experience suggests state bodies appear to be operating within a bounded and territorialised governmental hierarchy, but the reality of statehood locates them in multiple hierarchies and multiple relations. A situated empirical study of state governance must look, therefore, beyond centre-periphery relationships to the multiple other relationships that criss-cross a state landscape.

Of neo-liberalisation, the concept is relevant insofar as it is said to have informed the underlying values and principles of Labour's policy rhetoric and measures. It is also a theme that runs through contemporary discourse on New Labour's mode of governance (Brenner, 2004; Castree, 2008; Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Jessop *et al*, 2008; Peck and Tickell, 2002). This is not to imply a self-contained and distinct era has come and gone because neo-liberalism is not confined to Labour. As Noel Castree observes:

[ ] there are rarely punctual transitions between one putative era and another. The traces of the recent past will inevitably continue to affect both the present and the short- to medium-term future (2010: 6).

Its importance here is the influence on a system of governing at an historical moment. Of particular relevance are Jessop's discourse on decentralisation of state powers and functions to, and re-scaling state space by, what Castree calls a 'shadow state' (2010) – that is, state bodies with delegated powers. As a state-led project, neo-liberalism is said to be characterised by privatisation, marketisation, deregulation and managerialism. These processes closely link to economisation of cultural activities under Labour, conceptualisation of 'the creative industries' and evolution of a mode of regional governance (Hesmondhalgh, 2002, 2005; Pratt, 2005). More in-depth discussion of these concepts and discourse is given in Chapter 4 because it was not only useful to theorisation but also later to exploration of Labour's cultural and economic political strategies.

## 2.7 Compossible and impossible

In developing a more multi-dimensional view of state power, Jones and Jessop (2010) discuss the philosophical notions of compossible and impossible spatial configurations and relations. This discourse informed the author's reflections on state power at the micro level and the possibility of co-existent coherence and incoherence in state governance. Drawing on critical realism (Brenner, 2004; Jones and Jessop, 2010), theorists explore the basic principle that 'not everything that is possible is compossible'<sup>6</sup>.

To explain:

Critical realism distinguishes the real, the actual and the empirical. In these terms research on compossibility goes beyond what is *possible* by virtue of *real* causal mechanisms and tendencies considered individually to focus on what is *compossible* at the level of the *actual* as diverse causal

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<sup>6</sup> According to the Oxford English Dictionary 'compossible' refers to the 'rare (of one thing) compatible or possible in conjunction with another'. Philosophically, compossibility was considered by Leibniz and the notion of 'impossibility' taken up by Giles Deleuze to explain the existence of mutually contradictory worlds (see Jones and Jessop, 2010).

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mechanisms and tendencies interact in a given socio-spatial field (Jones and Jessop, 2010: 1122).

An argument is made that, in a congested and tangled world of socio-spatial oppositions, antagonisms and contradictions, what appears possible in isolation from other social relations within a given spatio-temporal field, may prove impossible when viewed together with other sets of relations. For a researcher, this way of thinking hints at the impossibility of ever capturing a sufficiently full set of relations to prove a hypothesis true or false.

Jones and Jessop present a preliminary study of 'new regionalism' and the 'city-region' to illustrate their proposition. For the purposes of this research project, the author extrapolated three points of significance. First: a research study of state governance of 'the creative industries' must be constantly aware of the distinctions between real, actual and empirical – what appears logical and *real* at the outset may prove impossible when the collected empirical data is interpreted. Second: the *real* and *actual* possibilities are not time-space specific whereas the *empirical* will always be a partial set of possibilities and can never provide a fully formed totality. And third: the approach enables a shift to a denser geography of 'different moments' (Jones, 2009a), to *ensembles* and to 'depth ontologies'. In other words, a research proposition may seem possible but empirical data may prove it impossible, and even if it proves true, the collected data will have been collected from only a partial set of possibilities and compossibilities. There may be other sets of possibilities that disprove or reinforce the interpretation. These points were useful advice but were still a demoralising start to an empirical study.

For the author, a compossible-impossible 'phase space' philosophy presented a logical way of tackling a multi-dimensional study of inter-relations in a complex system of governing. With caveats in mind, the stance enables the researcher to challenge extant empirical interpretations and to investigate state theory concepts. The problem is the concept of a 'system'. State theorists and 'phase space' analysis view the system as a single monolithic global whole that encompasses micro, meso and macro levels. To examine such a system in its totality would be impossible - and conversely, to examine a microcosm would seem pointless. It was a dissatisfaction with a mega system that led the author



to complexity theory and ideas of a Complex Adaptive System. Before considering complexity theory and the usefulness of a Complex Adaptive System (CAS), the principles of a Strategic Relational Approach (SRA) are discussed in the next section.

## 2.8 State theory and a Strategic Relational Approach

Jessop's state theory synchronises with development of a Strategic Relational Approach (SRA) for understanding how 'the State' operates and its political and economic strategies. The complex dynamics of statehood are what Jessop calls the SRA (1990, 2007). Leaving aside the author's rejection of a single system and a monolithic 'State', a system of governing is said to privilege some strategies over others, and at the same time, interactions between strategies result in the exercise of state power. For example, a SRA inspired conjecture could be that: Labour privileged 'the creative industries' imaginary in cultural policy between 1997 and 2010; and at the same time, economic growth was privileged across multiple policy areas; the relationship between these strategies resulted in the exercise of state power at different scales including that of Government and regional cultural agencies. The approach focuses, therefore, on relational connections between state political and economic strategies and those with devolved powers.

Application of SRA mostly focuses on macro processes, and particularly globalisation, but some work has been done on decentralisation and regional governance (Jones and Jessop, 2010). Jessop describes a process as the 'complex, emergent product of many different forces operating on many different scales' (2002: 3). Thus, a process is understood as: multi-centric in that it emerges from activity in different places/ centres; multi-scalar because it emerges at many scales like a huge 'network of localities' and 'complex and tangled hierarchies'; multi-temporal because it emerges over time and space at different speeds; multi-form because different forms take shape in different contexts that are realised through different strategies (such as regionalism and localism); and multi-causal because of the different socio-political forces occurring in the system. As Jessop observes, it is not possible to generalise about the nature of something so complex as a process but we can better

understand how processes emerge and how they operate over time and space. Certainly, when looking at economisation of 'the creative industries' and interactions between other political strategies, a SRA analysis should prove illuminating.

In 'thinking state/space', Jones and Jessop (2010) point to the usefulness of a temporal dimension. With this dimension in mind, the research study was very quickly framed in a historical window (1997-2010), and covered a period of rapid change in governance arrangements in England. In his lecture *Globalization: it's about time too* (2003c), Jessop recognises the historical and political significance of 'time' to an understanding of socio-spatial processes that occur over territorial distances and years. As state theorists suggest, an historical perspective is most powerful when it (a) refers to historically specific geographies of social relations; and (b) explores contextual and historical variation in the structural coupling, strategic coordination, and forms of interconnection among the different dimensions of the latter (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, 2007). Of course, a socio-political process does not logically have a beginning and an end. A study of state governance of 'the creative industries' was bound to capture a series of events between 1997 and 2010 but would only ever generate a partial understanding of how these events emerged and to what future effect. However, a temporal element is important and a time frame was simply a practical research device.

But 'time' is not the only aspect to consider in SRA analysis of complex processes. In a SRA framework, there are four 'first order' dimensions to explain such processes (Jessop *et al*, 2008: 393): territory (T), place (P), scale (S) and network (N). These dimensions are undoubtedly important spatialities but there seems no reason why they are prioritised over any subsequent others. It may be that Jessop's language implies more categorisation, ordering and discrete delineation than he intends. Indeed, Jones and Jessop's protocols for SRA research caution:

1. Do not analyze states purely in territorial terms—particular forms of territorialisation of political power typically depend on their articulation with compossible multi-dimensional socio-spatial matrices;

2. Do not assume the homogeneity and fixity of states but examine the scope for polymorphy and flexibility; and
3. Where possible, look beyond individual states to explore how they shape and are shaped by compossible interstate systems (Jones and Jessop, 2010: 1123).

Arguably, these protocols are more applicable to studies of macro systems of whole countries, European Union and World Health Organisation *et al.* Nonetheless, the principles are clear. There is, as discussed in the section above, limitations to any research that only ever focuses on part of a spatial system. If the researcher's telescope was to shift or widen, then the analysis might well change too. This conundrum is recognised in other critical theories including complexity theory (see below). Jones and Jessop aptly warn:

While examining a single dimension of socio-spatiality may well be justified as a *simple entry point* into a *complex research field*, one should not confuse what is possible at this step in the analysis with what is compossible when additional dimensions are introduced (cf Jessop 2007a, 2009b). Conversely what seems impossible on one socio-spatial dimension may prove possible when potential obstacles are overcome through the intervention of other dimensions (Jones and Jessop, 2010: 1124).

The point to note is SRA enables 'a multidimensional, polymorphous account based on (a) the elaboration of sufficiently rich concepts for each of the dimensions of socio-spatial relations; and (b) their deployment in a manner that permits researchers to explore more precisely their differential weighting and articulation in a given spatiotemporal context' (Jessop *et al.*, 2008: 393). The challenge is to not research everything in order to find out something!

With the above state theorisation in mind and a SRA approach as the framework, a hypothesis began to form about the multi-dimensional nature and scope of state governance structures, processes and practices at the regional level, and their impact on governance effectiveness. It also highlighted problems with studying state governance at the micro level. Through what structures, processes and practices does governance work in a specific state space? And with what effects? These were questions to address in the investigation.

A literature review of the 'new state space' episteme offered testable conjectures as well as contestable assertions. Of the latter scenario, there is Jessop's preoccupation with 'multi-scalar meta governance in a national and global context that over-shadows the dynamics of statehood at the micro level. The implication is that state bodies lack independent agency and are reactive to de-centralised political and economic strategies, and subject to state power that are exerted from a distant central point (be that nation state, supra- or collection of nation-states). Jessop's emphasis on the dominance of the state-centric 'nation' might be refuted by empirical study of governance at the micro level.

Second: state governance is viewed as an incoherent and incomplete process that is *always* failure-prone. This again might be refuted by empirical observation and an application of SRA. With TPSN as dimensions, and the added one of semiotics, a study of state governance and 'the creative industries' might provide new insights to the role of state bodies and the effectiveness of their interventions. It is at this point that complexity theory offers additional explanation and particularly through the principles of a Complex Adaptive System (CAS).

## **2.9 Complexity theory**

Literature review of state theory and its application to a regional study highlighted the complexities of state space and the challenges this poses to empirical research. The recognition led to review of complexity theory and in particular the Complex Adaptive System (CAS) part of the theory that resolved some of the issues mentioned above. Rather than either state theory or complexity theory, the author found considerable synergy between the two theories and their explanations.

Key features of a CAS are a holistic structure, non-linear social interactions between people and organisations, openness, and path-dependent interdependencies. Theory discourse was initially inauspicious to a social scientist, given its origins in the fields of chemistry, biology, computer science and later organisational and business studies. Only recently has it been taken up in the

social sciences (Byrne, 1998; Martin and Sunley, 2007; O'Sullivan, 2004; Thrift, 1999; Urry, 2003). While there is no single unified Theory of Complexity, complexity perspectives look at a whole system, its parts and networks, inter-connections and inter-relationships, and the processes and mechanisms therein. Rather than reductionist principles, a holistic approach is taken to how a system works. A crucial difference to a state theory notion of 'system' is size and scope – that is, a complex system can be examined as a whole and at the micro level. It has much resonance with assemblage theory and the idea of a collection of social interactions that then connect to other assemblages (DeLanda, 2006). The area of complexity theory that is discussed here focuses on the principles of an inter-related and open human social system and its application to state governance.

Although the social science literature is at an early stage, and with little empirical work, complexity theory offers human geographers some useful principles and features to guide new empirical study of how a system of governing evolves and how agents (human and non-human) interact within different spatial configurations. The aim is not to disingenuously 'box' state governance into the confines of an administrative 'region'. Rather, it enables the researcher to draw a circle around an aspect of state governance, in time and place, and say 'that is the system I will study'.

A pioneer in the complexity of social systems, Walter Buckley (1968) introduced the construct of a 'complex adaptive system' (hereafter referred to as CAS). Buckley's contribution to complexity theory is the idea of 'reciprocating agent interactions', non-linearity, inter-dependency, self-organising and the emergence of both anticipated and unanticipated consequences of human actions (Buckley *et al*, 2008). Thus, there are significant complementarities (and differences) between state and complexity theory discourse on the evolutionary nature of social systems and core characteristics (Jessop, 2007; Jones and Jessop, 2010).

In terms of system analysis, both state and complexity theories are non-reductive and systematic in their approach to the complexities of social

interactions. A complex system is said to require holistic methods of analysis because:

Since they are nonlinear, no set of interactions can be represented by a set (a model) smaller than itself, superposition does not hold. This is one way of saying that complexity is not compressible (Cilliers, 2000a: 28).

To an extent, Paul Cilliers' postmodernist perspective mirrors Jessop's approach to a state system, pointing to multiple layers (of local, regional, national and global), interactions that cannot be reduced to a selected few, and evolutions that cannot be predicted. However, the problem for the relational researcher is, yet again, how to explain the self-organising dynamics of some interactions in a complex system/ CAS without some selection and compression? The author's solution was to admit the partiality of her research study that sought to elucidate rather than represent or reduce.

From thinking of organisations as entities or a group of organisations, Ralph Stacey (2001) introduces responsive processes to CAS analysis that constitute people's interactions within a social system (be it an organisation or institutional landscape). Similar focus on people is made by Eve Mitleton-Kelly (2003) who argues people and organisations in a CAS are not only responsive to each other but develop and co-evolve (she refers to a complex evolving system/ CES). Thus, complexity theory introduces a human-people aspect to understanding a system of governing that resonates with notions of 'peopled' organisations (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones *et al*, 2004). It is the social interaction end of a complexity explanatory spectrum (and not the mathematical organisational modelling end) that resonates with the author's study and represented by the work of Walter Buckley (1968) and Eve Mitleton-Kelly (2003). Like 'phase space', a CAS approach adds depth to exploring inter-relationships between state personnel and groups of organisations and the system(s) in which they interact and govern. Significantly, a CAS approach allows the researcher to select an assemblage without ignoring connections to multiple other assemblages. In other words, state organisations such as the three case study organisations (see Chapter 6) are viewed as nodes within a CAS. They are also enfolded in a bigger CAS which in turn is enfolded in a CAS *ad infinitum*. However, each CAS is capable of independent, spontaneous self-organisation and evolution as well as being capable of negative and de-

stabilising effects. This was a particularly helpful way to approach complex state bodies in a complex state landscape.

Importantly, there are some key aspects to a CAS that should be highlighted here because of their contribution to theorisation. They provide what David Byrne calls the 'secret door' to social reality (1998: 35). The following section summarises principles that are most pertinent to the study's theorisation and conceptual framework.

## **2.10 Principles of a Complex Adaptive System**

Review of complexity theory literature reveals no precise agreement on the characteristics of a CAS. Nonetheless, there is general consensus on what Walter Buckley calls its 'principles' (1968), with different terms and emphasis placed by the main protagonists. Admittedly, protagonists are drawn from organisation and systems disciplines but their insights are compelling. Of Buckley's six principles, they suggest dynamic processes of a state landscape that have remarkable synergy with those from state theory. Many of them are concerned with an organisation's capacity to change and adapt, and introduce an element of self-regulation and independence.

For example, Buckley's principle of 'irritability' refers to the stresses and strains of a system in which there is continual change and adaptation to circumstances. Given the known volatility of state institutional arrangements during Labour's regionalisation and devolution experiment (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones *et al*, 2004), 'irritability' would be a useful area of study. Also it links to the dynamics of compliance and resistance from state theory that state governance bodies are engaged (Pemberton and Goodwin, 2011). Linked to processes of stabilisation and destabilisation is the principle of morphogenesis. This refers to the constant dynamic of a balancing process, between striving to maintain stability and striving to adjust, improve and adapt. Again, the exercise of state power is theorised as a continual process of stabilisation and destabilisation that resonates with Foucauldian governmentalities and relevant to the author's study. A 'self-selection' process is also identified whereby people and organisations adapt by self-selection of their structures and relationships and

learning from past experiences – a sort of ‘trial and error’ approach that was considered a way of explaining certain inter-agency relationships and not others.

Explaining a CAS in terms of complex responsive processes, Ralph Stacey (2001) draws a distinction between structural elements and properties. Of a CAS’ structural elements, and relevant to the author’s study of state bodies, are: a large number of agents (people, organisations and relational connections); sets of rules (that determine inter-actions such as Terms of Reference, Memorandum of Understandings); and co-evolutionary relationships between organisations. Of properties, Stacey (2001) identifies coherent patterns of order that emerge from the self-organisation of ‘agents’, that in turn attract others to co-evolve in a similar way. What is particularly useful here is the idea of ‘attractors’ that can be both stabilising and de-stabilising in a CAS. In other words, chaos and order are able to co-exist in a CAS. In terms of state bodies and their *terrain*, these principles helped to develop the proposition and research questions.

An important contemporary protagonist of complexity theory is Eve Mitleton-Kelly (2003) whose work on Complex Evolving Systems (CES), builds on Stacey and Buckley’s principles. Her ten generic principles blend those of Buckley and Stacey and enriched the author’s understanding of a ‘people state’.

It is evident from the literature review that there is cross-over between state and complexity theories, as well as important differences that, for this researcher, address some difficulties with state theory. Based on a complexity way of thinking about a system of governing in a regional context, and state organisations, the following principles were synthesised for the project’s theoretical framework: First: there is the principle of connectivity that is perceived as distributed and uneven and, therefore, there is no centre to a CAS or a single hierarchy of power and influence. This contrasts with Jessop’s notion of de-centralised and devolved powers that flow outwards/ sideways, downwards from a core or distant macro centre of power. Second: the notion of multiple ‘nodes’ in a CAS overcomes the problem of Jessop’s overly centric and statist view of state power. In a CAS analysis, non-linear ‘self-reinforcing’



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interactions may take place within a node and may never connect with other nodes within the wider CAS. In other words, power does not always emanate from the macro scale.

Third: complexity theory introduces the idea of hybrid interactions that can involve multiple combinations of human and non-human interactions. For example, interactions between individual human and non-human ones such as state organisational changes, budget cutbacks, new policy directives, or a global economic crisis. Thus, there is the possibility of multiple interactions that can have multiple effects – intentional and/or unintentional - at the micro scale and more widely. Hybridity allows for circulations of socio-political interactions that do not necessarily emanate from the perceived centre of state power. Referring back to the philosophical differentiation between ‘the real’, ‘the actual’ and ‘the empirical’, complexity theory offers a way of applying this paradigm in a site-specific CAS in South West England, without having to worry (or worry less) about the irrelevance of a partial interpretation.

Fourth: turning to the principle of openness, complexity theory suggests there is no finite end or precise boundary to a CAS. For a researcher, this observation supports the selection of a specific site as no more or less than a research device for operational purposes. As in a SRA, the openness of a CAS means that a researcher will knowingly only ever be able to focus on a partial CAS enfolded within other CASs. To an extent, this principle resolves the problem of identifying every interaction in an open system. The researcher frames the study as that of a CAS but is aware of open spaces all around the research site. Of course, the openness principle renders interpretation to a spatial-temporal partiality whose analysis may have missed a crucial set of external interactions (human and/ or non-human). However, no social science research project is ever going to capture a definitive picture of social reality.

Fifth: from a complexity theory perspective, ‘nodes’ of interactions (such as a state body, strategic partnership, or network) can interact separately to another ‘node’. With no centre or core, decisions made in one ‘node’ may or may not influence another ‘node’. This is important when considering the inter-actions of state bodies in more than one network as well as their independent actions.

Complexity theory suggests that non-linear interactions can have intentional and/or unintentional effects on other 'nodes' within a CAS. Again, this will prove an important principle when considering the unintended and deliberate effects of certain state decisions (for example, delivery of *Creative Britain* policy directives).

Sixth: both complexity theory and state theory refer to path-dependence, path shaping and historical developments in an explanation of political and social space. Applied to a study of state governance of 'the creative industries' in the context of a specific 'region', pathways and histories were significant aspects to understanding a wider context of structural and processual changes. For example, the path dependencies and histories of particular cultural and economic state bodies, policy areas and specificities of a state body. For a researcher, there is the problem of how far back to track historical events and how wide to spread the search for 'path-dependencies'. Given the principle of openness, a CAS has no finite end or a complete history and, therefore, a logical selection was necessary.

Thinking about non-linear interactions and a notion of adaptive behaviour by an individual or group of state actor-agents, complexity theory allows for failure and success. Jessop's theory implies the dominance of state power at macro level and a subordinate, dependent and reactive role for state actors beyond the centre. As mentioned above, this neglects a proactive role for state personnel and their interactions in relation to governance failure and success. Complexity theory suggests people and organisations can act in, for example, self interest, in response to a specific issue, or pursuit of a set of shared goals. Accordingly, people and/or organisations may act independently of other parts of the CAS. With emphasis on complexity and adaptability, complexity theory allows multiple groupings and interactions to simultaneously take place in different parts of a CAS – some will be successful and others not. This was a line of enquiry that was key to the author's proposition.

Seventh: complexity principles are considered scale-invariant and apply to all scales, be they individual, organisation, government, economy, *et cetera*. Systems are said to evolve as a result of trial and error, whereby success and

failure are neither right or wrong policies but a learning process. Applied to notions of spatial-temporal 'fix', governance failure and success, this principle introduces subtleties and deliberations between state bodies (individual, organisation or collections/ groups) and unexpected circumstances. Reflecting on how to explain construction of 'the creative industries' and its policy environment and institutional arrangements, the idea of 'trial and error' seemed an appropriate one. The author's research project would not capture the entire learning process or indeed every scalar interaction, but would reveal some lessons.

### **2.11 A SRA-CAS lens**

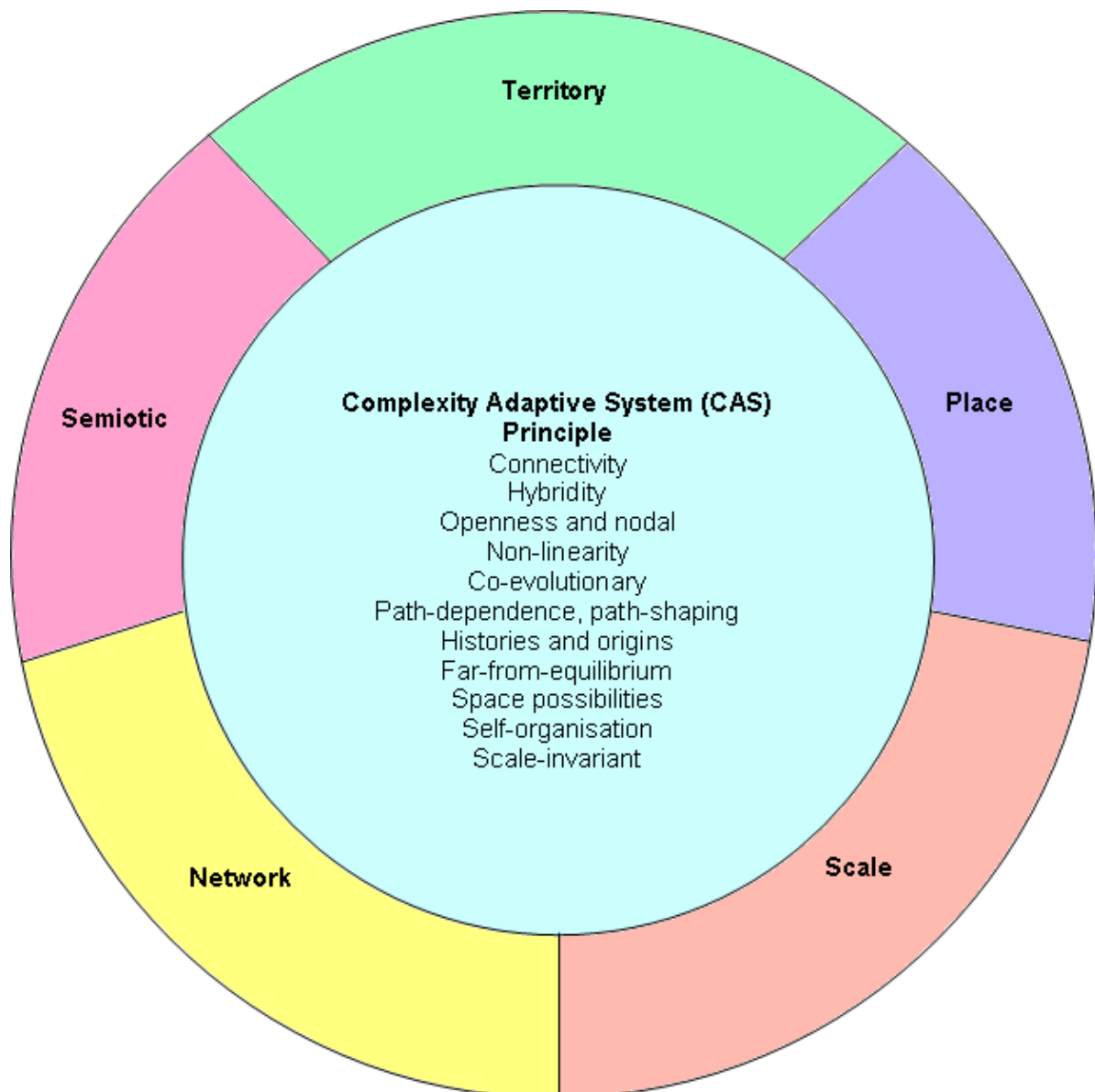
A complexity lens is not widely used in human geography although its influences are evident in SRA and recent regional studies literature. For example, Roberta Comunian (2011) advocates such a lens to 'city-region' and creative cluster analysis but her research is at an early stage and only general comments are made about complexity theory concepts and principles and application of a CAS to regional geographies. The author has, therefore, chosen to blend SRA 'first order' and semiotic dimensions with some of the relevant state theory principles and CAS principles (discussed above) and summarised in Figure 2.

The principles and dimensions in Figure 2 are not discrete or ranked elements, or intended as a new theory or model. Rather, they help to articulate the key elements of the author's blended theoretical framework. A SRA-CAS lens provides a systematic way of looking at the micro and relational dynamics of state governance and interactions of state bodies (individuals and organisations). What is being proposed draws on part of complexity theory (CAS), put alongside certain complementary elements of a SRA approach.

A SRA-CAS approach aligns with the author's inductive approach to a search for meanings and new insights from the collected research data. As an investigative method, its application is discussed in the next chapter.

Reflecting on the literature review and theorisation, and on practical professional experience, a conceptual framework was also constructed. Drawing on state theory, SRA and extant governance studies, the project focused on the concepts of: 'joined up governance', 'multi-scalar governance', 'governance success', spatial-temporal 'fix' and 're-scaling' state space (Goodwin, 2006; Goodwin *et al*, 2005, 2006; Jessop, 2001b, 2007). These were cross-referenced with those from CAS principles and the author's previous work on state intermediation. The result was a multi-theoretical and conceptual framework that suits a situated empirical study of state bodies as well as generating a set of research questions.

**Figure 2: To summarise Strategic Relational Approach dimensions and principles of a Complex Adaptive System**



State theory and SRA concepts are key to the project's conceptual framework but their focus is principally on state space at the macro/ national level. These needed to supplement them with concepts that applied to state bodies themselves, and particularly human relations and social inter-actions at an organisational and localised level. As a 'human' geography, spatial formation is as much to do with state personnel as wider socio-political forces. To this end, concepts from CAS theory were suggestive (Comunian, 2011). This is not to suggest these additional concepts are separate because, as mentioned above, much of state theory is complementary to a CAS way of thinking – for example, the principles of nodes, non-linearity, self-organising, and path dependencies.

To identify possible other important concepts for inclusion in a SRA-CAS lens, aspects of state theory and CAS principles were compared. The following two 'missing' factors were identified of significance to the project: large numbers (of state bodies and relationships); and a co-evolution (of state bodies within a system and with external bodies). Based on the author's prior knowledge and Master's dissertation, these two factors were viewed as important to understanding the especially congested and ever-changing world of regional cultural agencies.

Construction of the project's conceptual framework was based on a meticulous method and should provide the reader with reasonable confidence in its content and structure. Apart from Masters study in 2007-2008, partial testing of the theoretical and conceptual framework was undertaken in various papers given by the author to conferences and in a journal article for the Regional Studies Association's Special Issue of the *Regional Studies* journal (forthcoming). The latter is based on a paper originally given at the Association of American Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting in Seattle (18 April 2011).

## 2.12 Summary

In summary, a comprehensive literature review was used to consolidate a theoretical and conceptual framework on which to base the project's research. Drawing on critical realist-interpretivist philosophies, and state and complexity theories of layered and complex systems, the author's stance was established.

It is best described as complex statist. Philosophically, the world of state governance is viewed in terms of multi-dimensional, multi-layered and complex human and non-human interactions, meanings and meaning-making. As an objective-subjective researcher, the author's empirical study of power dynamics and imaginaries was never going to tell the whole story but its contribution is a partially better understanding.

State governance discourse on structures and processes is a vast and difficult topic to encapsulate in concise definitions, concepts and explanations. State theory undoubtedly provides the over-arching principles of how statehood is enacted in a Western European country such as the UK. Indeed, there is a growing body of work that examines governance through a SRA and relational lens at the regional and local level (Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jones *et al*, 2004; Jones and Jessop, 2010; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2011). Nonetheless, the realities and actualities of state processes and practices, and specifically those pertaining to 'creative industries' governance, remain little understood and under-researched.

State theory (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 2007) offers concepts of spatial-temporal formations and emergent power, and the role of imaginaries as 'technologies of power' within a system of governance. It is this theoretical scholarship that attracted the author's attention when searching for explanations. Less satisfactory were notions of 'the state' or 'nation state' that take little account of power relations in smaller scale systems. Castree refers to state bodies as a 'shadow state' (2010) and indeed an interviewee described another state body as a "*state within a state*" (F001). It was this idea of a system within a system that provided an alternative, albeit complementary, way of looking at regional state governance.

To look more closely at a system of governing at the regional level (South West England), the principles of a CAS were introduced. Complexity theory and CAS were used to explain complex inter-actions and inter-dependencies within and without a (state) organisation and the everyday practices of (state) people. Admittedly, the author's bi-focal lens is experimental but, for the purposes of this project, it proved useful. Based on CAS work on business organisations

(Buckley, 1968; Mitleton-Kelly, 2003) and Comunian's work on creative clusters (2011), an argument is made for state governance bodies to be similarly explained – that is, increasingly complex, constantly changing and co-evolutionary. A conclusion from the literature review is that, if statehood is getting more complex and fragmented, and policy delivery more difficult to do, then there is an opportunity to explore both these problematic areas and the 'different moments' of phase space (Jones, 2009a) where they overlap. Overlaps between state and complexity theories provide the study's theoretical framework, as well as a research base for the task. Furthermore, literature on a system of governing at the grassroots, and indeed study of state governance as a CAS, is sparse and, therefore, justifies research in this area.

Returning to the proposition that:

State bodies seek to control and regulate – as witnessed in South West England - through 'imaginaries of power', that are complex, multi-dimensional, multi-directional and hegemonic devices. Furthermore, state bodies at a regional level, as 'peopled' organisations (Goodwin *et al*, 2006), are motivated more by multiple socio-political expediencies, than a single and de-centralised policy directive, such as 'making Britain the world's creative hub' (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 6). Sometimes the effect of structural and processual forces is spatial-temporal 'fix' and governance success occurs; and sometimes the effect is failure. Triggered by deliberate acts or chance events, 'fixes' and fluidities are critical to (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals.

The proposition developed from: the principles of a critical realist-interpretivist philosophy and state theory (Bhaskar, 1997; Jones and Jessop, 2010; Sayer, 2000), combined with principles from complexity theory and a CAS. It addresses spatial-temporal 'fix' studied in a particular space and time rather than offering major new theory. Based on an inductive approach, the aim was to contribute empirical data. Triggered by the social phenomenon observed at the outset (of *Creative Britain* and its ill-defined policy directives) and questions about how state bodies manage to govern (or not) in an ever-changing state landscape, the proposition was gradually honed to a plausible and carefully considered one. Informed by literature review overlaid with academic and

practical professional experiences, a tentative idea of what might be a general explanation formed.

First: if state bodies govern through hegemonic devices, what is the nature and scope of those 'technologies of power'? And second: if there is a spatial-temporal mechanism that connects state structures, processes and practices together in a Complex Adaptive System (and at 'different moments' in space and time), how does that mechanism operate in the case of governing 'the creative industries' in 'the South West', and to what effect? The empirical research presented in this thesis is, of course, only one site-specific case to test the proposition and makes no claim to represent state dynamics in all cases. Its contribution is to a growing body of scholarship on state governance and the popular field of creative industries and regional studies. Explanations and understandings are based on what Andrew Sayer calls 'substantive abstractions' (1994) of certain selected elements of a much bigger and complex whole. Nonetheless, the case is another step towards knowing more about 'the art of government' (Foucault, 1979/1991: 91).

From a critical realist-interpretivist perspective, the proposition seeks to explain how power is exercised at the micro level beyond mere description of people, organisations and events. The search was for explanations about the subtle mechanisms that underpin the exercise of state power at the grassroots of government 'at a distance' (Rose and Miller, 2010) than are currently explained in extant literature and theories.



## Chapter 3: Investigation

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*Doing ethnography is establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. But it is not these things, techniques and received procedures that define the enterprise. What defines it is the kind of intellectual effort it is: an elaborate venture in, to borrow a notion from Gilbert Ryle, 'thick description'*

(Geertz, 1973: 6)

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the investigative methodology that was developed and applied to this project's data-gathering and analysis, and reflects on its strengths and weaknesses. Framed within a critical realist-interpretivist paradigm, the methodology is based on a theoretical and conceptual framework discussed in the previous theorisation chapter, and designed to elicit empirically 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) and new insights.

Drawing primarily on parts of state and complexity theories, the investigation was undertaken through a blended Strategic Relational Approach (SRA) and a Complex Adaptive System (CAS) lens (see Figure 2), looking at socio-spatial interdependencies, interactions, connections and disconnections in a situated state landscape. Taking heed of Bob Jessop's warning to avoid the dead end of universal 'truths' and 'unreflexive churning' (Jessop *et al*, 2008: 389), the methodology paid close attention to theoretical principles, while mindful of the practicalities of a research design in an empirical sense. A justification and critique are given for the author's selection of the research design and methods, and a consideration made of issues of positionality, ethics and design limitations.

The main question posed at the outset was 'how do state bodies manage to do what they do?' The practical answer from an experienced state practitioner is one focused on survival. The imperative is to cope and adapt to new structures, new administrative borders, governmental policies, and at times struggle with new and often ill-defined constructs such as 'the creative industries'. What few state personnel do is step back and reflect on 'how?' governance operates and

to what effect. As a human geographer, doctoral study provided just such an opportunity to explore the historical and political geographies of a system of governing as witnessed during the Labour era of 1997-2010.

In terms of a research motivation, the author is committed to producing a 'public' geography of relevance to academics and policy-makers with an interest in 'creative industries' and governance discourse. The 'public' nature of human geographies has gained traction in recent years (Fuller and Kitchin, 2004; Ward, 2006; Ward and Fuller, 1999) and particularly in the field of urban geography and urban regeneration and planning (Amin and Thrift, 2007; Fyfe and Kenny, 2005), governance studies (MacLeod, 2001; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999a, 1999b; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2011; Salaman, 2002), and in regional studies and their impact on policy-makers ambitions for 'the creative city' (Bianchini and Landry, 1995; Florida, 2002; Landry, 2008). Like Fuller and Kitchin (2004: 5) the author seeks to 'make a difference beyond the academy'.

To this end, research methods were selected that encouraged public policy-makers, advisors and state personnel to engage in public sector-higher education dialogue about state governance during interviews, informal and *ad hoc* conversations, and occasions. Many of these people await publication of this thesis.

Philosophically, the research is based on a critical realist-interpretivist and non-deterministic perspective (see previous chapter). Although critical realism does not explicitly prescribe a methodology, and is indeed criticised for the gap between its philosophical and methodological ideas and practical difficulties of application to research (Wuisman, 2005), the approach seems better suited to qualitative methods. The appeal of interpretivism is its non-prescriptive approach to methods, with greater emphasis on the researcher's need to 'watch, listen, ask, record and examine' (Schwandt, 1995: 222) and less on the special language and techniques of scientific methods.

Overall, multiple qualitative methods were used, including semi-structured interviews and conversations, policy discourse analysis, ethnographic and participatory observation. It is recognised that quantification methods are

associated with a positivist 'spatial science' approach and generally incompatible to an interpretivist perspective such as that adopted here.

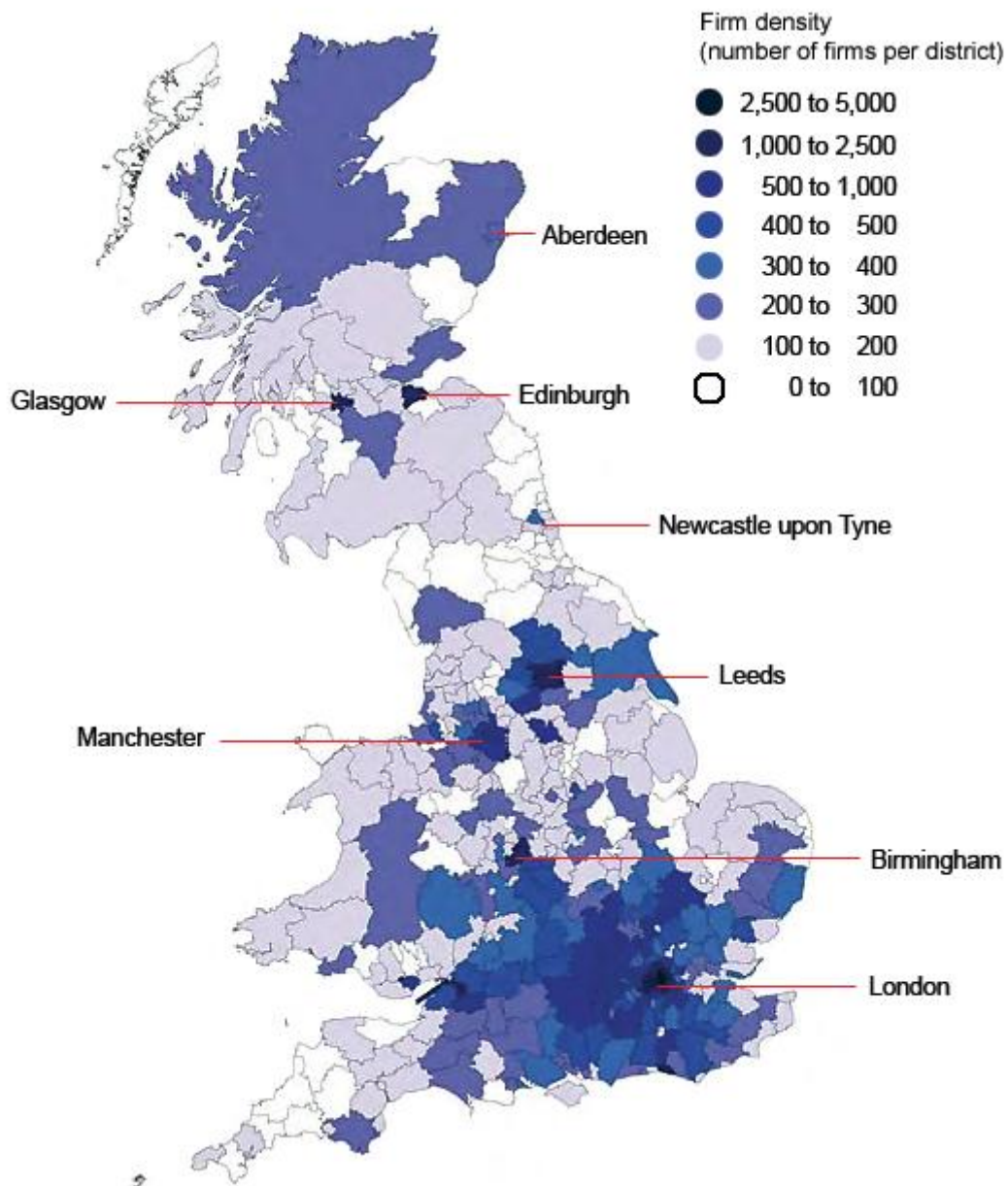
Nonetheless, secondary quantitative data were incorporated, when and where relevant, to help the reader (and researcher) visualise the scope and size of the institutional landscape under investigation. Given an anticipate profusion of state bodies and their complex inter-connections, networks and partnerships, it was considered appropriate to map the relational *terrain* of these institutions as a preliminary orientation to the landscape. Such a research strategy was not an attempt to reduce spatial relations to a simple one-dimensional map format, or make any fundamental claims about fixed locational or relational patterns or indeed their importance. Rather, visualisation of state bodies and their patterns of connectivity was applied as a starting point, to see potential relationalities that might be an active part of those patterns (Batty and Longley, 1994). Visual mapping is arguably a form of empirical observation but as Gregory *et al* (2009: 276) remark:

If the researcher goes beyond what is empirically observable to ask questions and form concepts about the more fundamental structures and mechanisms for the events or phenomena under study, then the tenets of realism or critical realist philosophies are approached.

To go beyond the empirically observed was most certainly the intention of the author.

Coincidentally, literature review found 'creative industries' studies are closely associated with quantitative research methods. Mapping studies were undertaken to better define and quantify the size and economic value, and many commissioned by government departments and state bodies (Cunningham, 2004; DCMS, 1998, 2001a; Frontier Economics, 2006). A more in-depth orientation to some of these mapping studies, their histories and contested articulations of 'the creative industries' is given in Chapter 4. To illustrate an application of mapping data, Figure 3 shows a map reproduced from *Creative Britain*. It also introduces the reader here to the shape of creative activity across the UK including South West England.

**Figure 3: To show the spread of creative business activity across the United Kingdom**



*Source:* Reproduced with permission from Department for Culture, Media and Sport *et al* (2008: 70).

Other creative industries studies apply qualitative methods and tend to focus on a particular site and involve participant and ethnographic observation of, for example, a creative cluster or city-region network (Coe, 2000; Comunian, 2011; Chapain and Comunian, 2010; Gibson *et al*, 2010; Harvey *et al*, 2011, 2012; Jones, 2009a). For this project's creative industry study, a mixed methods approach (Bryman, 1988) was adopted but with more emphasis on qualitative than quantitative investigation. This enabled the author to draw on evidence from a diverse range of sources. Preliminary mapping was useful in answering

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some of the 'what' and 'where' questions (albeit with limitations) and undertaken to supplement the qualitative methods and help answer the important 'how' questions of state governance.

The reader may be wondering 'why the creative industries?' First, there is a growing and inter-disciplinary body of work on the subject that is relevant to the author's interest in state governance and her professional practice (Comunian and Chapain 2012; Harvey *et al*, 2011; Pratt, 2009a, 2009b; Taylor, 2013). Combining academic research and personal experience, the author believes she can make a contribution to contemporary scholarship. Also, literature review revealed noticeable gaps in how state governance of 'the creative industries' is understood, and particularly at the grassroots level. Over the period 1997-2010, Arts Council England is invariably named as DCMS' lead cultural agency for 'the creative industries' (Jayne, 2005; Roodhouse, 2006) and thus renders the concept synonymous with 'the arts'.

It is apparent from 'creative industries' studies that the construct extends far wider than 'the arts' to the remits of many other cultural councils and artforms - such as UK Film Council, Council for Architecture and the Built Environment, Craft Council and Design Council. Thinking about broader economic governance, the 'creative economy' goal was shared with, for example, BERR/BIS, RDAs, Sector Skills Councils and local councils in the English regions (and equivalent bodies in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales). Why these other state bodies are ignored or subordinated is debateable, particularly as many have greater control over public funds than Arts Council England. An influencing factor may be the prevalence of geographies of 'creative industries' written from a traditional cultural artform perspective (O'Connor, 2008; Roodhouse, 2006), rather than from broader inter-disciplinary and critical state theory ones. The literature perpetuates an historically embedded position of Arts Council England as the dominant governance body of 'the creative industries' and, in doing so, remains in a mostly narrow cultural policy paradigm (Pratt, 2005). This neglect offers the author an opportunity to open up new ways of understanding a curious political imaginary that continues to attract academic and political attention.

Literature review of governmentality and relationality from a state theory perspective (Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Dean, 1999; Goodwin *et al*, 2005, 2006; Jones, 2009a; Jones, 2011; Jones and Jessop, 2010; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999a, 1999b), suggest the appropriateness of a SRA approach to the research topic and, in this instance, to study at the regional scale. As Jessop *et al* observe:

[an approach] that can grasp the inherently polymorphic, multidimensional character of socio-spatial relations' (Jessop *et al*, 2008: 389).

Integrated with a SRA are notions of 'phase space' (Jones, 2009a) of 'different moments' that together focus on: (1) the material (such as state structures, policies and an industrial grouping); (2) processes (modes of governance, regionalism and localism); (3) practices (tactics and effectiveness); and (4) purpose (in other words, 'why' state bodies do what they do and to what effect).

With territory-place-scale-networks (TPSN) as SRA 'first order' entry points for investigation, the addition of a semiotic dimension (SE) (Jessop, 2004c; Sum, 2009 – see also Chapter 2 Theorisation), while inter-actions and inter-sections between these causal dimensions are not empirically observable or discrete in a traditional scientific sense - cannot be touched, heard and seen under laboratory or repeatable conditions – their overlaps are crucial to understanding 'how' governance operates in a particular space and time. Thus, SRA offers a multi-dimensional way of exploring socio-political relations and forces in a state landscape and the underlying mechanism(s) that connect them or not. Avoiding the accusation of only one entry point to this complex subject, the author was keen to see how a TPSN(SE) analysis might work at the micro level.

Certainly, Gordon MacLeod endorses a SRA as offering:

a rich set of tools through which to examine the internal governance of regional economies – systems of corporate regulation, labour relations, development agencies – alongside the wider networks of political and economic institutions within which regions are positioned (2001: 821).

Extant scholarship indicated, however, that to explore a system of 'internal governance' at a regional scale through SRA, had its problems.

In advocating SRA, MacLeod and Goodwin advise consideration of the following key factors (1999b: 697):

1. The need to outline the research object of enquiry, including research methodology, theory selection, and 'constitutive properties' of causation;
2. A willingness to 'analytically interrogate' relationships between economic development, political governance and scale;
3. And 'an obligation to pay due respect to the politics of representation and active processes of state restructuring and political strategizing through and around which economic development is itself constituted'.

Notwithstanding a 'rich set of tools' and apposite guidance, the author was conscious of certain practical and conceptual challenges to Jessop and colleagues' systematic approach to 'internal governance' at a micro level. In particular, how to understand 'internal governance' when any system, large or small, extends beyond artificial regional boundaries. Also, how to manage a time-limited research project and at the same time interrogate complex state bodies and their constantly changing internal and external relationships *vis-à-vis* that partiality.

Having decided on a blended SRA-CAS lens (see Figure 2), the conceptual framework provided a way forward for the researcher. Importantly, this strategy enabled the researcher to explore different spatial configurations - a state body, a group of state bodies, and an 'internal governance' system – as a CAS or collection of CASs. Critical to such analysis are the principles of an open and nodal system and non-linear relationships, which are multi-centric and multi-scalar without losing sight of other surrounding spaces and expediencies.

Review of the 'creative industries' literature suggests there is scope for empirical study of the 'region' as a *terrain* of creative governance and creative practice (Chapain and Comunian, 2010; Harvey *et al*, 2011, 2012; Jayne, 2005; Pratt, 2007c, 2009a). While governance is tackled as an investigation of creative practices (Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Holden, 2007; Pratt, 2004a; Rantisi *et al*, 2006; Turok, 2003), less attention has been paid to the discursive processes and practices of state bodies themselves in regional spaces – or 'spaces of regionalism' (Jones and MacLeod, 2007).

### 3.2 Induction, deduction and abduction

A methodology was developed for the project that is primarily inductive but incorporates deduction and abduction when addressing the research proposition. This section clarifies the link between the project's theorisation and methodological approach. Wuisman (2005: 367) explains induction as 'Inferring propositions about general regularities or universal laws from a limited set of sensory observations' and draws on the work of Charles Peirce to suggest a combined logic of induction-deduction-abduction. Writing from a critical realist perspective to social science research in the early twentieth century, Peirce advocated a 'cycle of scientific discovery' in which: first, a perceived gap or new idea is identified that appears to be missing from the episteme; next a hypothesis is conjectured that specifies a particular rule that, if true, would explain the gap/new idea; in order to determine whether the explanation is valid and the hypothesis really true; a deduction is made about a case; and finally, detailed information is collected about an actual case to find out whether the hypothesis is or is not true. If proven untrue, then the cycle starts all over again.

For Peirce, abduction is:

The process of forming an explanatory hypothesis. It is the only logical operation, which introduces any new idea; for induction does nothing but determine a value, and deduction merely evolves the necessary consequences of a pure hypothesis. Deduction proves that something must be; induction shows that something actually is operative; abduction merely suggests that something may be (Peirce, 1903: 171-172 cited in Wuisman, 2005: 20).

For the purposes of this research project, a hypothesis was indeed developed in an attempt to explain a 'missing' discourse in the literature – that is, a lack of empirical explanation of how state bodies operate at the grassroots of a system of governing, and the role of imaginaries. This gap was especially noticeable in creative industry scholarship where little critical analysis is made of the effectiveness of state bodies and *imaginaries of power*. Next, a hypothesis was conjectured that draws on the available episteme, whilst also proposing a 'new idea' about the unpredictable and serendipitous nature of everyday statehood



and its effect. Substantial information was then collected through actual case study work (the details of which are described below), and finally a critical analysis and interpretation were undertaken to ascertain the validity of the proposition. In a sense, a 'cycle' of discovery' implies a point of completion, an end to a research problem, and better describes a traditional scientific exercise. From a critical realist-interpretivist perspective, the process of enquiry in this instance is best described as an on-going 'journey of discovery' that is still in progress.

Social scientists are wary of a deductive approach to research and its association with positivism and quantitative methods. Deduction relies on cause-effect binaries, limited variables and a limited scope for interpreting human/ social inter-actions. The project's methodology does include a minor deduction in that some parts were designed before the data was gathered and analysed, and informed by the large generalities and regularities of state and complexity theories. But there ends any similarity to a deductivist-positivist approach. With an inductive approach at the forefront, a research design was based on collecting; analysing and interpreting data gathered from different sources and specific case studies and designed to lead to better understanding of state governance more widely. In other words, the theory followed the data through a process of detailed analysis.

For the author, the advantage of an inductive approach was the scope it allowed for choosing a research design and strategy (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). It also gave flexibility to adapt to unforeseen constraints on research activity and any unexpected external changes. Certainly, this project experienced some constraints and disruptions over the four year duration. These included abolition of case study organisations, radical structural changes in regional governance arrangements and employment uncertainties for participants, and the researcher's own health problems.

Following SRA-CAS principles and an inductive and non-determinist approach, the elements of a hypothesis were gradually built up of: (1) material – a state body controls and regulates through 'technologies of power'; (2) efficient cause - state bodies seek to govern at a regional level including delivery of *Creative*

*Britain* policy directive of ‘making Britain the world’s creative hub’; (3) formal - a self-organising, non-linear, evolutionary mode of governance and spatial-temporal ‘fixes’; (4) purpose – economic imaginaries and ‘fixes’ are critical to (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals. The entire mechanism is set in the specific geographical and historical context of South West England and Labour administrations between 1997 and 2010. The extent to which the underlying mechanism that is proposed actually operates as a general rule will, of course, depend on specific contextual circumstances. Referring back to Peirce’s logic, other circumstances may trigger variations to the mechanism’s mode of operation. To paraphrase Peirce, the author’s proposition is presented as an abduction to suggest something about how state bodies operate at the micro scale of regional governance, that was deduced through a reading of state and complexity theories, but more importantly, induced from actual case studies.

Having decided to investigate state governance through a multi-level case site and ethnography strategy, a research design was needed that took account of the relatively intimate nature of such research, and the author’s positionality (discussed below). The result was a collection of case studies built on data gathered from thirty-two semi-structured and informal interviews and follow-up conversations involving people from senior management teams and significant other staff, observational work and policy discourse analysis of over 250 policy documents. Data was gathered between spring 2009 and autumn 2011.

The sections below consider the research approach, research questions and proposition, research strategies, methods, timings and analysis method that form the research design.

### **3.3 Application of a SRA-CAS conceptual framework**

Application of SRA and CAS analyses in regional and creative industry studies is at an early stage in human geography (Comunian, 2011; Jones and Jessop, 2010; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Urry, 2003). Much literature seems to divide between an interpretive rationale and an interventionist one. The former views systems as complex and, therefore, need interpreting, and the latter views

systems as complex but problematic and, therefore, need solutions. Comparison between, for example, analysis of the 'city-region' by Jones and Jessop (2010) and that by Comunian (2011) highlights these two different approaches. Both have their merits. Nonetheless, the author's position is somewhere between the two, motivated by a need to increase knowledge as well as inform better governance practice and policy delivery.

In responding to the call for a multi-dimensional, holistic and socio-spatial analysis of state governance (Jessop *et al*, 2008: 393), that addresses territory (T), space (S), place (P) and network (N), the methodology followed a systematic TSPN approach. To this mix, was added a 'second and *n*-th order' dimension (Jones and Jessop, 2010: 1127). That is, a semiotic (SE) dimension is introduced to take account of the importance of political dialogics and meanings in a system of governing (Jessop, 2004c; Painter, 2006). The dialogic practices of state bodies are evidently embedded in policy documents and governmentality.

Some argue SRA is a 'taxonomic fury' (Paasi, 2008) and no doubt more dimensions and a CAS perspective increase the storm. A systematic and multi-dimensional SRA-CAS lens (see Figure 2) has two advantages. First: the researcher is working with credible theories and previously studied concepts; and second: a taxonomy or framework enables evidence to accumulate in each structuring principle to be systematically cross-tabulated with other fields of operation of that principle (Jessop *et al*, 2008: 392). Admittedly, the addition of another dimension posed problems to an applied and time-limited research study.

As Jones and Jessop acknowledge, if a researcher sticks to just a compossible perspective, s/he would 'address the relative coherence that comes from a variable combination of similarity across socio-spatial forms *and* complementarity among functions.' (Jones and Jessop, 2010: 1130-1131). By adding 'second order' dimensions and new possibilities to the study, the relationalities and complexities are increased, so too are the possibility of impossibility, and arguably the richness of analysis. The author's addition of

semiotics was less about compossibility and more about the importance of that dimension to study of imaginaries.

### 3.4 Research questions and conjectures

Through thinking about governmentalities and relationalities of state governance, and the core research questions, the following key research questions were devised:

- What is the nature and scope of inter-relationships between state governance bodies who seek to deliver Government policy on ‘the creative industries’ at the regional level?
- Using South West England as a case study site, through what mechanisms and processes are new forms and scales of state governance produced as they link to other state bodies at national, regional and local scale?
- What role do imaginaries play, such as ‘the creative industries’ and ‘South West’, in state governance at the regional level?
- What are the effects of structural and processual changes that are constantly taking place in a complex system of governing, such as that practiced under Labour 1997-2010?

Having rejected the idea of a bounded, top-down centric view of ‘the state’, that devolves power through a stratified hierarchy of state bodies, an alternative explanation was formulated. It draws on an application of the SRA-CAS conceptual framework. The research study set out to test the following conjectures:

- State bodies are complex and inter-dependent socio-political entities that operate and interact at multiple scales.
- State bodies seek to control and regulate, individually and collectively, the object(s) of their governance - such as ‘the creative industries’ and ‘creative economy’, and witnessed in the administrative area of

South West England – through a non-linear, co-evolutionary, self-organising mode of governance.

- These objects of governance are ‘imaginaries of power’; that are semiotic and hegemonic devices that evolve and change over time and space.
- And moving beyond scale, state bodies, as ‘peopled’ organisations (Goodwin *et al*, 2006) are motivated more by multiple socio-political expediencies, than a single decentralised policy directive, such as ‘making Britain the world’s creative hub’ (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 6).
- Whether intentional or unintentional, the effects of structural and processual relations and forces are occasional ‘moments’ (Jones, 2009a) of coherence, when territory, place, scale, networks and/or semiotics coalesce.
- ‘Moments’ of spatial-temporal ‘fix’ are critical to (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals.

Together, these conjectures constitute the proposition that the author developed and refined during the project and against which the empirical data are tested. Clearly, the findings are context specific, and make no claim to represent power relations across all state bodies, all industrial sectors or all geographic settings. Nonetheless, the empirical analysis aims to make a modest contribution to governance studies on multi-scalar governance and re-scaling state space. The thesis will also add to the growing body of work on ‘the creative industries’.

### 3.5 Research strategies

Overall, the research strategy was to collect data from various sources that would build an empirical in-depth picture of state governance in a case study site and focusing on case study organisations. Furthermore, a multi-level case study approach was taken to investigation of state governance as a response to calls (Jones, 2009a; Allen and Cochrane, 2007) for a ‘middle ground’ on which to think space relationally as well as explain spatial-temporal fixity. The researcher was familiar with the institutional landscape of creative industry

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governance at national, regional and local scales in England, and had been employed, directly or indirectly, by the three case organisations at some time in the past.

Widely used in the social sciences, case studies are a research strategy that involves empirical investigation of a social phenomenon (the object of enquiry) within a 'real life' and contemporary context, and often involve mixed methods to data gathering (Stake, 1998; Yin, 1994). A combination of different methods, qualitative and quantitative, known as triangulation (Olsen, 2004) resonates with a critical realist-interpretivist paradigm and the need for flexibility when searching for data (Patton, 1990). Michael Patton rejects the restrictions of 'methodological orthodoxy' in favour of what he calls a methodology of 'appropriateness' that can be accommodated within a case study strategy.

The author's decision to adopt a case studies and mixed methods strategy was made for mostly practical reasons. First, it was important to understand state governance dynamics in a real life setting and preferably in several different situations. To reiterate a conceptual point made earlier, the author is not presenting the 'case' site as a bounded or representational territory but as a specific site of study in space and time.

Prior knowledge of the case study site and organisations (see Appendix One Researcher's Biography) enabled the researcher to immediately become immersed in the case organisations' *milieux*, and gave unprecedented access to senior personnel and archive material at a particularly sensitive time for state bodies working in the cultural policy realm. This sensitivity intensified as the project progressed with the impact of events such as a global economic crisis and public spending cuts in late 2008 that were then compounded by growing organisational uncertainties in the run-up to the May 2010 General Election. Also, a case study strategy was compatible with the author's aim of in-depth observational study combined with other methods.

The decision for a case study approach offered opportunities and threats. While the concept of 'case' introduces breadth, length and flexibility to the research, there is also its potential for unpredictability and instability. For example, the

'live' and sometimes prolonged nature of a case study may result in a shift of focus over the research period, as well as a focus change because of the intimate nature of the process itself (Ragin and Becker, 1992: 8). The author remained sensitive to these issues and accommodated where and when necessary. Another hazard for the researcher who chooses a 'case', in which s/he is closely associated, is that of partiality. How will the case study be finally read? For this author, her case study was intended to be read as a multi-site investigation of state governance dynamics and the role of political imaginaries. An alternative reading may be of a 'public' geography. Do these different readings matter? No, because both are intentional. However, if the case study is misconstrued as a critique of sector development agencies, or of the specific case study organisations, then this would be a matter of professional and personal concern. To be clear, this is a doctoral study and not an *exposé*.

The case study strategy for this research project could be described as an 'insider/outsider' research (Brannick and Coglan, 2007; Ferber, 2006; Gilbert, 1994) because of the researcher's employment and professional affiliation with the case study organisations. Usually, 'insiders' refer to researchers who study a community or group to whom they belong and conducted in that same social *milieu*. In this 'case', the author straddles both positions, acting as 'insider' *vis-à-vis* past and present working relationships with the case organisations as well as being in an 'outsider' position as academic researcher. The insider/outsider dichotomy is much debated in research methods literature (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994; Flowerdew, 2005; Gregory *et al*, 2009; Haraway, 1989; Kitchin and Tate, 1999), often framed as an either/or question and in terms of a researcher's choice of position along an axis between subjectivity and objectivity – subjectivity assigned to the 'insider' and objectivity to the 'outsider'. On the one hand, writers such as Melissa Gilbert (1994) argue there is no such division because the very act of doing research places the researcher in an 'outsider' position. Whereas others (Brannick and Coglan, 2007) defend the researcher's ability to 'go native' and still produce credible results. This author rejects the idea of having to choose one or the other, as well as rejecting the phrase 'going native' with its connotations of anthropological colonialism. To act as both insider and outsider may demand more rigour from the researcher but it should not compromise a self-conscious and self-reflexive perspective. Indeed,

the author asserts a dual insider/outsider position was a positive advantage to ethnographic work with state bodies that might otherwise have restricted her access to them and their organisation's policy archives.

In terms of the author's claim to both a subjective/objective position, earlier discussion of a critical realist-interpretivist paradigm concluded that the researcher is *de facto* subjective because s/he is located in the social world. Moreover, in a critical realist sense, that which is being studied is socially constructed and is in the process of being constructed by the researcher. It is worth noting Sayer's three definitions of subjectivity/objectivity (see Table 1):

**Table 1: Andrew Sayer's three definitions of subjectivity/objectivity**

<b>Subjectivity</b>	<b>Objectivity</b>
1. Value laden	1. Value neutral
2. Untrue/opinion	2. True/ practically adequate
3. Pertaining to subjects	3. Pertaining to objects

Given a combined insider/outsider relationship between researcher and social phenomenon under investigation, the author is sanguine about the nature of research, particularly in the social sciences, that is ultimately based on more or less fallible descriptions (Sayer, 2000: 58). Case study (and ethnography) strategies offered a transparent way of addressing 'thick description' that was compatible with an interpretivist perspective.

Ethnography was adopted as a second research strategy for the project, with its emphasis on observation, description and interpretation of social phenomena through 'first-hand field study' (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). By 'stepping inside' the case site (Castree, 2002: 119), and what others call 'immersion' (Bryman, 2004: 264), the researcher was able to become closely engaged in the 'real' life of those case study organisations being studied. In the case under discussion here, there was the regional space of South West England and three case study organisations.

Mindful of ethnography's potential spatial pitfalls, the author developed a relational TIME approach (theoretically informed methodology of ethnography)



(Willis and Trendman, 2000). A Lefebvreian conception of nodal points in socially constructed space was favoured to chime with a SRA-CAS approach and to avoid an overly concrete view of space (Brenner, 2000; Lefebvre, 1978/2008). That said, the reader will find references throughout the thesis to place names (such as Bristol and Exeter) and to regional space (such as South West) but should be read as administrative areas rather than concrete, bounded or uncontested abstractions.

Alongside a critical realist-inductive approach (in which theory develops from data generated from, for example, ethnographic observations and interviews), the author was aware of 'grounded theory' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Most recently, Henry Wai-Chung Yeung suggests (2012: 371) three guidelines for a methodology that is compatible with a critical realist perspective - 'iterative abstraction, qualified grounded theory method and methodological triangulation'. Based on incremental steps, a 'qualified grounded' theory method builds and refines theory as data are gathered, presumably thinking about theory from the ground up.

As mentioned earlier, there was a skeletal theoretical framework at the outset of the research project, and this incrementally evolved during the research. First, came literature review, identification and refinement of state and complexity theories. Next, a SRA-CAS lens was developed and conceptual framework was designed. The next stage was collection of empirical data from policy discourse analysis and case study work that resulted in further refinements to the theory. With data-gathering at the forefront, an 'iterative' and 'grounded' method seems to succinctly describe the process that was implemented. It is worth noting that a 'grounded' and ethnographic method necessitate rigorous data-gathering and meticulous record-keeping because of the sheer volume of qualitative (and some quantitative) material generated. This study was no exception and measures were taken to manage the data (described later in this section).

In summary, the research strategies employed for this research project were to undertake case study work, ethnography and a grounded theory method. Empirical data were gathered on the over-arching case study site of the administrative area of South West England, as well as on three case study

organisations. Having been directly and indirectly employed by all three organisations, the author was located in an advantageous position to gain access to informants and information. Research methods used to collect data are explained below.

### 3.6 Research site

Fieldwork for the research study focused on the governmentally defined administrative area known as 'the South West' (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4: To show the location of Government Office Regions in England 1998-2010**



Source: Government Office for the South West, accessed 20 April 2010, <<http://www.go-sw.gsi.gov.uk>>.

The South West was one of nine Government Office Regions (GOR) across England during the Labour years. The three in-depth case study organisations

were located within this 'messy politically constructed space' (Jones and MacLeod, 2004: 437). In terms of physical geography, the South West region was the largest GOR and located in the far south west of the UK. Its boundaries incorporated the historic counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, and the major urban centres of Bristol, Plymouth and Bournemouth.

Although the label 'South West' is still commonly used in, for example, official statistics, governmental reports and weather forecasts, Labour's GOR boundaries were abandoned in October 2010 by an in-coming Coalition Government (DCLG, 2010). 'South West' and South West England are used throughout the thesis to indicate a Labour GOR administrative area.

National and regional mapping studies of 'the creative industries' (Chapain *et al*, 2010; DCMS, 2001) point to pockets of high industrial activity in the South West and particularly in the major urban centres of Bristol, Bournemouth and Plymouth (see Figure 3). Importantly, the South West featured as a pilot region for delivery of Commitment 13, 18 and 20 of *Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al*, 2008) and where 'creative clusters' were to be developed. Selection of South West England as a research site was, therefore, germane to an investigation of Labour's political and economic strategies at the micro scale and goal of a 'creative economy'.

For research purposes, a GOR area also provided a practical and convenient CAS for delimiting, organising, visualising and analysing the project's empirical material. However, the limitations of such a strategy are acknowledged, and notably the artificial boundedness of 'South West' as a territorial space (Amin, 2004). The author is not suggesting regional governance or industrial activity were confined to this physical geographic space and the reader will find exploration extends beyond the South West region.

In discussion with colleagues, alternative administrative regions were considered as research sites, such as the North West and West Midlands, and indeed other policy areas and a global dimension. However, there were advantages to building a situated and empirical analysis of state governance on

a pre-existent foundation. Importantly, the South West region provided the best opportunity for in-depth study at a time of acute economic and political upheaval and changes in the public sector. Access to senior personnel and policy-makers and their willingness to discuss sensitive operational issues was crucial to the project's success. First, DCMS' cultural governance structures in England were under review by mid 2008 and radical changes were forecast.<sup>7</sup> These concerns proved correct and during the major fieldwork stage (spring 2009 to autumn 2011), re-structures were compounded by global recession, unprecedented public spending cuts and preparations for a General Election in May 2010. These economic and political forces had considerable impact on the case study organisations and are discussed later. The author's pre-existing professional relationships with state bodies were, therefore, vital aspects of the research strategy and secondary goal of a 'public' geography (Ward, 2006). In spite of turbulence and uncertainties (including abolition of one case study organisations, cessation of one and merger of another), the author was able to maintain the trust and co-operation of participants. Given the circumstances at the time, this level of engagement would have been difficult to achieve, if at all, in other GOR regions.

As a critical and relational study, there is no intention to present the South West here as a representational 'region', or to make sweeping statements about governance of the creative industries in all regions, or indeed make comparisons between different regions and industrial groupings. The reader is reminded that the study is a situated geography in the sense that empirical study was focused on a specific area of England.

### **3.6.1 Overview of South West England**

To orientate the reader who is unfamiliar with England's geography, and to contextualise the case study organisations, an overview of the research site and its emergence as a GOR administrative area is given here. With land coverage

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<sup>7</sup> The ESRC project proposal was written in March 2008 during a review of regional arrangements carried out by Minister for Culture, Margaret Hodge MP. The Review outcome was announced in November 2008 (DCMS, 2008b) and included the abolition of Regional Cultural Consortia and re-structure of how state-funded cultural activity was governed and coordinated in the English regions. These changes had significant impact on institutional arrangements in all English regions including the South West.

of 9,200 square miles (23,828 square kilometres), the South West was a large, mostly rural of GOR regions.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, it had a relatively low but ageing population of just over five million, which represented ten per cent (10%) of the English total (ONS, 2009). Stretching from Swindon in the north east, along the M4 motorway to the Severn Estuary, from Bournemouth and the English Channel in the south, and over to Cornwall and the Atlantic Ocean in the far west, this area is sometimes referred to as 'the West Country'. Characteristics of a long coastline, clean air, relatively low population densities, low levels of deprivation and world-wide reputation for cultural heritage, all helped to attract tourists, older people and economic migrants.

Associated with raising productivity levels, GORs were key to Labour's agenda of devolution and regionalisation. It is worth noting, however, that Labour's spatial policy to decentralise powers to a more localised (or certainly regional) level was not unique to the late twentieth century. Historically, demarcated regional spaces had been introduced by other administrations in response to perceived political and/or economic weaknesses. Brian Hogwood pithily remarks:

The key to understanding the role of regional structures in British public administration to date [1995] is that they are primarily concerned not with the management of *territory* but the delivery of *functions* (1995: 1).

Review of recent moves towards regionalisation in England (Hazell, 2006) bears out this observation and shows a gradual (re)shaping of delineated regional space over the past one hundred years.

As early as 1934, Special Areas were created to address areas of high unemployment in England (mostly in the North) and in which businesses were encouraged to expand with the aid of government grants and tax rebates. During the Second World War (1939-1945), twelve regional areas were demarcated as part of military and emergency civil defence plans and controlled by Regional Commissioners.<sup>8</sup> In post war Britain, integrated public services

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<sup>8</sup> The twelve 'military' regions were configured as: Region 1 - Durham, Northumberland and Yorkshire (North Riding); Region 2 - Yorkshire (East and West Ridings); Region 3 -

(such as health, education, transport and public-funded arts) tapped into this regional structure.<sup>9</sup> A 1946 regional map aligns the old military administrative boundaries with emerging state governance arrangements and shows the 'South Western Region'. However, state intervention in regional and local economic development declined in the 1980s under Conservative administrations of Margaret Thatcher (Hazell, 2006; Law, 1982; Taylor, 2009). However, and importantly for this project, in 1994 John Major's Conservative administration set up GORs to help strengthen local government and delivery of social inequalities programmes. These GORs were based on ten HM Treasury boundaries. The GORs included 'the South West'. Although Labour reduced GORs to nine across England, Government Office for the South West boundaries were only slightly changed.

As well as a mechanism for delivering national state programmes, GORs from 1974 onwards managed European Union (EU) funding programmes. Importantly, their geographic coverage corresponded to an area known as 'first level Nomenclature Units of Territorial Statistics' (NUTS1). The term is used by member states of the EU and fundamental to the allocation and delivery of

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Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutlandshire; Region 4 - Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Norfolk and Suffolk; Region 5 - London and Middlesex; Region 6 - Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Dorsetshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire; Region 7 - Cornwall, Devonshire, Gloucestershire, Somersetshire and Wiltshire; Region 8 - Wales; Region 9 - Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire; Region 10 - Cheshire, Cumberland, Lancashire and Westmorland; Region 11 - Scotland; Region 12 - Kent, Surrey and Sussex.'

<sup>9</sup> There are historical connections between changes to delineated regional spaces in England and the emergence of state bodies for 'the arts'. Arrangements for managing public-funded arts originate in the 'military' civil defence areas (see above Footnote). First, during the Second World War each Regional Commissioner nominated a member of staff to act as liaison for the Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA). Between 1942 and 1944 CEMA itself took over responsibility for public arts, and set up offices in the by-then ten regions. By 1945, CEMA had become the Arts Council of Britain (later known as Arts Council England). Direct involvement by the national arts council in the regions declined and by 1955 all regional offices had closed. However, local arts societies began to collaborate for mutual benefit and in 1956; the South West Association for the Arts was formed to plan and coordinate regional touring programmes. It received a grant from the Arts Council and within ten years a network of independent regional associations was firmly established across England. With regular organisational re-structures and various name changes, Regional Arts Boards developed as independent state-funded bodies until in 2002 they became part of Arts Council England. For example, South West Arts (a Regional Arts Board) became Arts Council England South West. Following another re-structure in 2009, all regional offices dropped their regional label and became branch offices of the national HQ (Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed 06 April 2010, <<http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/wid/ead/acgb/acgb-el2.html>> and <<http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/wid/ead/acgb/acgbb.html>>).

European Regional Development Funds (ERDF).<sup>10</sup> Thus, moves towards English regionalisation coincided with requirements imposed by the EU for geographic-based data gathering and allocation of funds.<sup>11</sup> Further discussion of Labour's regionalisation process will be taken up again in Chapter 6 in the context of findings on institutional arrangements.

### 3.7 Research methods

Bearing in mind the philosophical, theoretical and conceptual thinking behind the study, research questions and research strategies (described above), a variety of research methods were chosen for data gathering and analysis. Qualitative and some quantitative methods were used, including: desk research of academic literature and textual material (policy and archival documents); policy discourse analysis; mapping of state bodies and partnerships; semi-structured interviews; multi-level case studies; and critical discourse analysis.

First, this mixed methods approach ensured data was gathered from a range of primary and secondary sources in order to generate 'thick description'. Second, multiple methods enabled data to be systematically gathered and cross checked. And third, it was important to avoid a dead-end conclusion that 'everything is related to everything' without learning anything new. Taking Schwandt's advice to 'watch, listen, ask, record and examine' (1995: 222), the methods are each explained below.

#### 3.7.1 Desk Research

An extensive review of academic and textual material was undertaken at the outset of the project (see Chapter 2 Theorisation for an overview of the literature review method). This included examination of: academic papers,

<sup>10</sup> According to the Office for National Statistics, Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) is a hierarchical classification of administrative areas, used across the European Union for statistical purposes. At the highest level are the different member states, followed by NUTS1, NUTS2, NUTS3 and Local Administrative Units. The South West is one of 12 NUTS1 areas in the UK that is sub-divided into four NUTS2 and further sub-divisions (accessed 17 September 2011, <<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/beginner-s-guide/eurostat/south-east--england-/index.html>>).

<sup>11</sup> With the abolition of Government Offices in October 2010, responsibility for EU programmes was assigned to Regional Development Agencies and, following their abolition in March 2011, EU funding decisions are now under the control of central Whitehall departments (DWP and DCLG). Although regions are no longer a mechanism for UK policy delivery, NUTS areas remain an important EU demarcation of territorial space for funding purposes.

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journals and research studies, think tank commentaries, consultation reports, policy and strategy documents, briefing papers and meeting notes (see Bibliography and Appendix Two for a full list of key policy documents that were analysed). Literature review provided an early opportunity to become familiar with both academic and policy material, and in doing so, to clarify the key problems to be addressed. Knowing the territory in advance as a practitioner was not the same as 'coming to know' the material as a researcher. The texts were constantly revisited as the study progressed, and cross-reference to the interview data, building a substantial knowledge base for the subsequent discourse analysis.

The academic literature provided a context in which aspects of policy could be seen as influencing and being influenced by, state governance debates and *vice versa*. Academic literature is reviewed in the preceding chapter (see Theorisation) and informed a series of papers that were presented at departmental seminars, two Regional Studies Association conferences and the Association of American Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting in Seattle (18 April 2011).

As a research method, desk research formed an important part of the initial data-gathering process because of the widespread availability of information via computer-based archives. In particular, policy documents were readily accessed from official government websites and those of public-funded organisations that comply with Freedom of Information legislation in the UK. Increased use of the Internet search engines and downloadable electronic publications coincided with the era under discussion and has transformed the way researchers and citizens find and read such information. A major strength of computer-based research is, of course, its efficient use of time. Rather than hours and days spent away looking through libraries and official document stores in disparate places, the researcher is able to visit sources at the click of a mouse.

It is arguable that Internet searches generate almost too much information and particularly if keywords are not sufficiently precise. For the academic literature review, this process did indeed lead to 'overload' and required a more



disciplined approach to selection of the relevant reading material as the project progressed. However, for policy documentation review and statistical and factual data searches, the process was made easier by a working knowledge of many documents, historical events and publishers' websites. An unexpected outcome of the author's close scrutiny of this policy literature was a realisation of its sloppy presentation that could easily mislead or confuse a less-informed researcher. For example, it was sometimes difficult to identify the authorship and exact publication date, or determine a document's final approved version and, most annoyingly, find the source of cited statistics. This was particularly evident when constructing a time-line for decisions taken by state bodies (see, for example, Appendix Sixteen for a timeline of a case study organisation). Scrutiny of the material also highlighted the changing prominence given to certain policy themes and state bodies in policy development that will be discussed in Chapter 5.

### **3.7.2 Policy discourse analysis**

Research questions about the exercise of power and governance dynamics led to selection of policy discourse analysis as a method for examining the important state process and practice of policy formation and implementation. Policy documents were collected and subjected to policy discourse analysis as part of building the case studies. Literature review of methods and interdisciplinary studies (Fairclough, 1995 and 2001; Fischer *et al*, 2007; Hewitt, 2009; Hajer, 1995, 2006; Hoppe, 2007; Howarth, 2005) found 'discourse' to be interchangeable with words like discussion and dialogue to denote a form of communication or narrative. Discourse analysis is presented as a method of examining that communication and the patterns and meanings of its language. In a Foucauldian tradition, critical discourse analysis (CDA) focuses on power relations that are reflected in language and on articulations that are shaped by social practices (Billig, 2003; Dean, 1999; Foucault, 1980; Hastings, 1999). Applied in a case study strategy, as in this instance, a discourse methodology was used to enrich data and seemed particularly appropriate to exploration of 'imaginaries of power' and gaps between political rhetoric and governance practices.

From review of social theory episteme, there seems to be little prescribed methodology for critical discourse analysis (Hewitt, 2009; Howarth, 2005) and, from a critical realist-interpretivist perspective, 'to do so would afford a particular position the status of truth in a perspective where truth is always conditional' (Gilbert *et al*, 2003: 792). That said, *critical* discourse analysis demands a reflexive approach and an attempt to uncover underlying assumptions of governing – or, as Foucault put it, the 'will to truth' (1978/1991: 56). Having written numerous public policy documents, the author was keen to re-examine the formation and meaning-making of public policy discourse from a new perspective. As Chouliaraki and Fairclough note:

CDA, like other critical social sciences [ ] needs to be reflexive and self-critical about its own institutional position and all that goes with it (1999: 9).

Admittedly, reflexivity posed challenges to the researcher, and throughout she was conscious of inherently subjective relationships that existed between herself and those being observed. This inter-personnel position was never hidden and efforts were made at the outset of research to acknowledge her positionality (and discussed below). To undertake critical discourse analysis is fraught with self-criticism on the part of everyone involved (researcher, policy-maker, reader, supervisor, *et cetera*) and is no more problematic in this case than any other critical geography (Billig, 2003). The important point was to maintain an integrity and openness.

Literature review of policy discourse studies in organisational and geography studies, and inspired by Foucauldian ideas (Fairclough, 1995 and 2001; Hajer, 1995, 2006) show considerable variety in methods. These loosely fall into three main approaches: (1) discourse as socially constructed realities (Philo, 1992), as flows of meanings and power relations, and contestations of power in different discourses (Woods, 1998); (2) discourse analysed through narrative and studied sometimes over a long period of time; (3) discourse analysis as structured and systematic.

Of the latter approach, Maarten Hajer's structuring approach to environmental policy discourse seemed to fit the author's requirements (see Table 2). Hajer talks of 'story lines' that state actors produce in order to communicate and make sense of political intervention. He also talks about 'discourse coalitions' to

indicate a group of actors who, *in the context of an identifiable set of practices*, shares a particular set of story lines over a particular period of time. A framework to help the researcher develop a policy narrative suggests a practical way of managing a large amount of textual material into elements of discourse.

**Table 2: Maarten Hajer's policy discourse analysis research framework**

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Desk research – a first chronology and first reading of events</li> <li>2. Helicopter interviews – to gain an overview from different perspectives</li> <li>3. Document analysis – to identify story lines and sites of discursive struggle</li> <li>4. Interviews with key players – to enable the researcher to construct the interviewee discourses and shifts in recognition of alternative perspectives</li> <li>5. Sites of argumentation – data search to account for any argumentative exchange</li> <li>6. Analyse for positioning effects – to show how people, institutions or nation-states/ state spaces get caught up in an interplay</li> <li>7. Identify key incidents – to understand the discursive dynamics and outcomes</li> <li>8. Analysis of practices in particular cases of argumentation – by going back to the data to see if the meaning of what is said can be related to the practices in which it was said (the rhetoric-practice gap)</li> <li>9. Interpretation – come up with an account of the discursive structures, practices, sites of production</li> <li>10. Second visit to key actors – respondents should recognise some of the hidden structures of language</li> </ol> |
|---|

For example, the focus of the policy being constructed, key actors/ state organisations and their motives, key 'story lines' and 'imaginaries'. Such a method helps identify disparities and conflicts) between the policy rhetoric and how it is implemented and practiced. Hajer (2006: 73-74) advised ten iterative steps to policy discourse analysis (see Table 2 that is adapted from Hewitt (2009): The requirements of critical discourse analysis complement those selected for this research project including desk research, interviews and participant observation.

Review of policy documents raised the question of 'what constitutes a policy?' Ansel Hansen *et al* (1998: 67-68) identify five problems associated with policy discourse:

1. Policy is not a complete or coherent set of statements
2. Policies may be invisible or inaction itself may be indicative of a non-interventionist policy
3. Policies may have unintended consequences
4. Policies may be contradictory or incremental, dealing with some sectors and not others and creating anomalies by straddling two or more areas of involvement
5. Policies may contradict or be at odds with each other because two or more governmental departments may implement them.

Clearly, policy discourse analysis involves a vast array of documents that do not conform to a single type or format. The multi-authored *Creative Britain*, with its twenty six disparate Commitments for 'making Britain the world's creative hub', exemplifies the problematics of a public policy document (and discussed more fully in the empirical findings – see Chapters 4-6).

Mindful of Hansen's work, and the study's engagement with a 'creative industries policy domain(s)', the widest possible definition of 'policy' was taken when compiling material from a range of sources. Although the time frame is set between 1997 and 2010, some policies were examined that date before this period in order to track particular changes and trajectories. For example, it was necessary to look at policy that pre-dated and influenced structural changes to, for example, Regional Arts Boards and Regional Screen Agencies in the mid 1990s. Much of the documentation was in the public domain and available via official and organisational websites, or was already archived by the author. However, the closure of several state bodies and loss of online archives during the research period, and major changes to governmental websites in 2010, resulted in the disappearance of some documents that were previously available to download. Furthermore, certain documents were in the public domain but necessitated requests for access, including briefing papers, partnership statements and meeting minutes. In addition, one case study organisation had no website and, therefore, policy papers were accessed via other state bodies.

An archive of policy material was built up over the project period, serving as the basis for a database of potential interview participants, interview discussion and data for the case studies. Throughout the project, Google news alerts were used to track any relevant developments in creative industry policy from key bodies, including DCMS, BIS, Cabinet Office, UK Film Council, Arts Council England, and named case study organisations. Regular visits were also made to case study organisation websites in order to monitor their publications, consultations and statements.

### 3.7.3 Mapping

A basic mapping of state bodies engaged in governance of 'the creative industries' in the research site was chosen as a subsidiary but locational research method to help confirm and compare organisational information and to begin scoping inter-relationships and inter-dependencies in the case site *terrain*. The emphasis was not to quantify state bodies and the number of their relationships but more to visualise the intricate nature and scope of connections. Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (1992: 175-176) note:

Through an analysis of the intricate inter-dependencies between political rationalities and governmental technologies, we can begin to understand the multiple and delicate networks that connect the lives of individuals, groups and organisation to the aspirations of authorities.

With the principles of a Complex Adaptive System (CAS) and SRA in mind, an initial list was compiled of key state bodies engaged in policy development and governance of 'the creative industries' in South West England (see Appendix Four).

Based on policy document analysis and the author's knowledge of the terrain, twenty-eight organisations were identified operating at national, regional and local scales. The list was not intended to be definitive and, for research purposes, 'state body' covered a range of organisations. This was a good starting point for selection of the case study organisations and people to interview (see Appendix Five for brief information on interviewee characteristics).

Later, 'fact sheets' and schematic maps were developed for each of the case study organisations as well as for those interviewed but whose organisations were not included as a case study (see selection method discussed below). A 'fact sheet' and schematic map were based on information compiled during desk research, policy discourse analysis and the author's working knowledge. They were then refined and amended in conversation with an interviewee and other state personnel. Each individual schematic map located the state body as a central or 'nodal' point, around which were located named other state bodies and groups that were key to its governance of 'the creative industries' (see Appendix Three for an example). The original list of twenty-eight key bodies helped to populate these schematics (see Appendix Three for an example).

Looking at a first draft 'fact sheet' and schematic, an interviewee was asked about the key organisations and networks in their governance world vis-à-vis 'the creative industries' and nature of those relationships. From this preliminary dialogue, it was possible to visualise the breadth of relations between state bodies, the extent and type of connections, as well as explore the significance of historical events and structural changes in their operational world. This mapping approach helped to identify 'who' and 'what' state bodies were perceived to be most active and influential in regional governance (at a moment in time and space and retrospectively). It also highlighted the volatile 'churn' of institutions in the state landscape. This was dramatically illustrated in a revision of one schematic produced in late 2009 that looked radically different to 2010.

While mapping research tools used for this project captured data and developed spatial visualisations, they also acted as useful prompts during interview. Interviewees' engagement with these tools varied between those who were more concerned with the size of an organisation's name box (and implied level of importance), and those who had never considered their organisation's position in spatial terms. For example, one civil servant in a Government department was surprised at the level of connectivity between cultural and economic development bodies in the research site. Mapping was not an exercise in showing the importance or precise number of state bodies. Rather, visualisation sought to indicate institutional densities, inter-sections and flows of

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influence and decision-making that was then explored in interviews and ethnographic work.

As a research method, mapping has its drawbacks. Schematics were envisaged as an iterative research tool but on occasions the rapidity of change proved a problem. For example, a schematic map constructed for one state body in early 2009, was out of date by the time of interview in early 2010 (and even more so by late 2011). This fluidity was initially confusing to the interviewee when trying to explain past, present and future relationships with reference to a schematic. But, on the other hand, the disparities between the landscapes (past and present) opened up a fascinating conversation about structural change and the effect on decision-making processes and how state bodies interpret and adjust to them. Apart from temporal specificity, a mapping methodology arguably gives an artificial, or selective, view of that being examined. For example, the researcher's selection of state bodies included in the various schematics *de facto* implies some were excluded, and some relationships and connections were shown and not others. However, the selection formed part of the interview conversation and interviewees were encouraged to confirm or not the schematic's validity.

In 'creative industries' studies, mapping techniques are more often associated with quantification of creative business activity and clustering (Chapain *et al*, 2010) and economic values (Frontier Economics, 2006; Higgs and Cunningham, 2008; The Work Foundation, 2007), In terms of relational and spatial mapping of 'the creative industries', Comunian (2011) in her work on urban creative clusters, suggests such a method illuminates 'those champions and networks driving creative activity'. The role of mapping in construction of 'the creative industries' is discussed in Chapter 4, but the point being made here is the different ways researchers apply mapping as a method. For the author, mapping was used as a preliminary visualisation tool in the early stage of data gathering and interviews. Mindful of mapping criticisms and notions of 'phase space', each schematic was cross-checked and developed with the various interviewees, and are not intended to be comprehensive or static – simply a momentary and relational set of connections (TPSN) between key state bodies and an interview prompt.

### 3.7.4 Sampling - case study organisations and interviewees

A sample frame was designed for the selection of case study organisations and identification of potential interviewees that was based on the preliminary mapping data (see above). First: a comprehensive mapping was undertaken of key state bodies that were known to have been involvement in 'creative industries' policy delivery in South West England (see Appendix Four for a list of twenty-eight key state bodies at national, regional and local scales). Second: having identified a comprehensive (but not definitive) list of organisations, critical selection factors were applied to each state body (of geographic coverage, location, governmental status, sector coverage). In the course of this listing, potential case study organisations located in South West England began to emerge.

Before the final sample of case study organisations was chosen, the full list of key state bodies was systematically examined against the selection factors of:

- geographical coverage: 4 strata (national, regional, local, other)
- location: 4 strata (national centre, regional centre, local town/city, multiple places)
- government status: 5 strata (NDPB, quasi-NDPB, government department, local council, independent other)
- sector coverage: 4 strata (all-creative industries; specialist sub-sector; generalist, other)

A systematic method complements the dimensions identified in a SRA, of territory, place, scale and network. Broadly applied during the primary sampling stage, a SRA approach was more substantively taken in case study analysis.

Selection of the three case study organisations was an incremental process. Individually and then as a collection, the key state bodies were assessed against:

- importance and relevance to the research topic and case study site
- organisational type and mode of governance
- specialist sub-sector, all 'creative industries' or generalist developer
- likely access to senior staff and board/ decision-makers.



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The selected primary sample of case study organisations contained regional bodies based in the case study site area with different government status, organisational structures, relationships with national bodies, and were involved in whole-sector or sub-sectors of 'the creative industries'. They were significant players in delivering *Creative Britain* Commitments in South West England. A portfolio of three case study organisations was considered a manageable number for this type of project and, importantly, also captured the dynamics of other state bodies. The researcher was initially intending to use one or two local councils as case studies but this proved less useful than anticipated (see below).

By sampling, the researcher was able to consider the case studies as a collection to demonstrate different spatial-temporal configurations of scalar governance. It is important to note that the three case study organisations are context specific and, as such, are interesting in their own right and are not intended to be representational *per se*. It became clear early in fieldwork that resources should be concentrated on in-depth study of these three regional bodies because of their pivotal roles in delivering *Creative Britain* and mutual links to DCMS and SW RDA. Many of the non-case organisations identified in Appendix Four feature throughout the thesis discourse and their contribution to governance of 'the creative industries' was significant.

Case study work was originally planned to include studies of two local councils. From policy document analysis and author's experience, local councils were identified who had some 'visibility' in delivering 'creative industries' policy (see Appendix Four). Two local councils were selected for interviews on the basis of their different geographic location, size and approach to cultural governance. While local councils exemplify state governance at the most microscopic level, their data proved of less value for the purposes of this research than anticipated. During semi-structured interviews with senior and middle manager personnel, the author realised that there were limitations to treating a local council as a 'case study organisation'. A local council's structure was too big and amorphous to be studied in its entirety and proved difficult to isolate the mechanics of governance in relation to 'the creative industries'. Also, local government re-structure and public sector reforms were a major distraction to

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senior officers whose priorities (including participation in a research study) dramatically shifted in 2009.

Of local government changes, in February 2009 the South West administrative region covered six local councils based on the county structure with thirty-five district councils and ten unitary authorities. By March 2010, there were only four local councils categorised as counties with twenty-five district councils, and twelve unitary authorities. During the fieldwork period, one selected local council expected approval of its bid for unitary authority status but was turned down by the Department for Communities and Local Government in autumn 2009. Notwithstanding the deletion of local councils from case study work, the collected data were informative. The researcher decided to concentrate resources on three key regional state bodies for her in-depth study. Data gathered from local council sources (policy documents and semi-structured interviews) were useful to understanding aspects of policy delivery and mentioned when and where relevant – albeit not used to develop individual case studies.

Next, a list was compiled of thirty-two named individuals (see Appendix Five for brief information) who were involved in aspects of ‘creative industries’ policy development and delivery in the case and non-case study organisations (senior managers, middle managers, company/ board of directors). Because of continual changes in the governance terrain (of organisational structures and staff), some individuals were included whose retrospective experiences and governance roles might be captured, even though they had moved to other employment. The list was based on individuals who were named in policy documents, on organisations’ website pages, schematics and ‘fact sheets’, from the author’s professional experience and in discussion with academic supervisors. This was an iterative and fairly straightforward exercise because of the small size of management teams and number of people who were relevant to the researcher’s enquiry.

Of the thirty-two named individuals, seventeen were associated with the case study organisations and interviewed (semi-structured and telephone) plus numerous follow up and other *ad hoc* conversations (see Figure 5 below). The

remaining fifteen individuals were interviewed (semi-structured and telephone) and belonged to other organisations. The purpose of this latter group was to capture the views of those with influence on, and knowledge of, policy development specific to 'the creative industries' during the Labour administrations at local, regional and national levels.

Most people had no hesitation in agreeing to interview; although a few were more hesitant about being recorded or committing to a lengthy interview and, therefore, opted for a shorter informal conversation. The number of semi-structured interviewees provided a large amount of data – or 'words' (Pryke *et al*, 2003) - and more interviews were only curtailed by the amount of time and resource available for processing the information, and by a judgment about the likelihood of collecting major new insights. Of informal interviews, these continued up to late 2011 when write-up began.

### 3.7.5 Interviews

As a 'conversation with a purpose' (Burgess, cited in Seale, 2004: 181), interviews were chosen as an effective means of eliciting information and exploring opinions and experiences. This method was also compatible with an ethnographic strategy. Of interviews, Flowerdew and Martin aptly write:

They take a conversational, fluid form, each interview varying according to the interests, experiences and views of the interviewees. They are a dialogue rather than an interrogation (1997: 111).

With different formats to choose from, ranging from the highly structured type through to *ad hoc* informal conversation (May, 1997), a semi-structured type of interview provided the principle dialogic method of data collection. It was important to select a format that best fitted the task and different interviewees. To explain, most interviewees were known to the researcher in a professional capacity and mutual trust and openness were already well established. Nonetheless, interviewees were busy senior and middle tier managers and would expect some degree of formality when discussing their employer organisation and governmental role. The semi-structured interview, with its core themes and starter questions (see the interview schedule Appendix Six), offered the necessary balance. It avoided the 'vessels-of-answers' approach (Holsten and Gubrium, 1997: 117, cited in Pryke *et al*, 2003) and the restrictive

interrogation mode of a structured interview, whilst encouraging a free-flowing interaction between researcher and interviewee (Cloke *et al*, 2004).

In terms of the interview format, each conversation progressed (more or less with adjustments for different organisations and people) along the following lines: (1) starting with a confirmation of facts about the interviewee's organisation and management structure, and prompted by a Factual Data Sheet (see Appendix Seven for an example); (2) discussion moved on to how an interviewee understood and valued inter-organisational relationships in their governance world (see Appendix Three for an example of a schematic); (3) next, conversation turned to how governance was practiced and policy directives implemented and the major influences on those practices and processes; (4) interviews were asked about the nature and impact of structural changes that impacted (or not) on their governance world; and (5) links with, and influences of, the private sector and economic performance of 'the creative industries'; (6) then discussion focused on *Creative Britain* and regional pilot project and how governance success and/or failure was perceived; (7) and finally time was given to 'any other comments'.

Semi-structured interviews were supplemented by numerous follow-up and more informal conversations during ethnographic work and *ad hoc* encounters. For those interviewees who were less willing, or unable, to participate in recorded semi-structured interviews, a modified format was devised in the form of a telephone conversation that covered the same thematic areas but in less depth. The ethnographic and participant observational work is described below and not included in Figure 5 results.

Figure 5 summarises the type and number of interviews that were conducted and, shows a total of thirty-two interviews (for brief information about interviewees see Appendix Five), of which seventeen were semi-structured (53%) and fifteen (equivalent to 47%) informal. Of the thirty-two participants, twenty-one (66%) were senior managers (SM), seven (22%) middle managers (MM) and four (12%) board directors (BD).

**Figure 5: To show the type and number of interviews**

Type of organisation	Type of interview	Type of participant	Totals
Case study organisation (CSO1) Specialist sub-sector	Semi-structured	2 X SM 1 X MM 1 X BD	4 X SM 4 X MM 4 X BD
	Informal	2 X SM 3 X MM 3 X BD	
Case study organisation (CSO2) All creative industries	Semi-structured	2 X SM	3 X SM
	Informal	1 X SM 1 X MM	1 X MM
Case study organisation (CSO3) All creative industries	Semi structured	1 X SM	1 X SM
Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) Specialist sub-sector = 2 Generalist = 3	Semi-structured	1 X SM 1 X MM	3 X SM 2 X MM
	Informal	2 X SM 1 X MM	
Government Department (GD) Generalist	Semi structured	2 X SM	4 X SM
	Informal	2 X SM	
Local Council (LC) Generalists	Semi-structured	3 X SM	3 X SM
Independent Other (IO) All creative industries	Semi structured	3 X SM	3 X SM
<b>Total</b>			32
<b>Key</b> SM = Senior Manager MM = Middle Manager BD = Board Director			

Interviews were held in three case study organisations (CSO), two Local Councils (LC), two Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) organisations, one Government Department (GD) and one independent think tank organisation (IO). The length of a semi-structured interview varied between approximately sixty to ninety minutes and the length of informal interviews between ten and thirty minutes. Of those interviewed, fourteen (44%) were sub-sector specialists in 'the creative industries', eight (25%) were involved across all of 'the creative industries' and ten (31%) were generalists in cultural or economic development.

During semi-structured and informal interviews, and participant observation work, the researcher was keen to collect data on the expressivities and performativities of governance-in-action, on the dynamics of power relations

within, and between, different state bodies, and the detail of organisational arrangements, motivations and experiences of multi-scalar governance. As well as interviews held with case study organisation personnel, a further series of semi-structured interviews and informal conversations were held with individuals from organisations that played a significant and influential role in governance of 'the creative industries' at a national, regional and local level, as well as policy advisors who were involved in early mapping studies and strategic planning with state bodies in South West England.

A procedure was developed for the semi-structured interviews that was more or less followed for each person. First: an invitation was sent by email with a brief explanation of the research, purpose of the interview and themes, ethical guidelines, interview format and short biography of the researcher (see Appendix Eight for an example of invitation text). Only one person did not respond to the researcher's invitation. Having secured a person's agreement and confirmed a mutually convenient date and time, each interviewee was sent, a week before interview, a fact sheet and schematic map of their organisation as 'warm up' material (described above). Interviews were held in various venues that were convenient to the interviewee including their own organisation, hotel lounge, railway station café, university seminar room and the researcher's office. Interviewees knew in advance that the conversation would be audio recorded and transcribed for research purposes only, and this agreement was reiterated before the recorder was switched on. Interviewees were also assured of anonymity in any publication related to the research. In addition to a digital record, hand-written notes were taken during each interview to ensure an immediate record was made (and mitigate against a malfunction of the Sony digital voice recorder) and to note any non-verbal 'silent' data were collected. For example, a note was taken of the ambience of the room, interviewee's body language, any distractions or disruptions to conversation. One voice recording was lost due to a power failure but the interview notes were sufficiently comprehensive. It is relevant to point out that the researcher has a visual impairment and, therefore, notes were taken by a research assistant which she later transferred to an electronic Word file. The researcher was then able to add her own observations of the interview. Of informal interviews (and *ad hoc* conversations), computer-based notes and observations were made

retrospectively. All voice recorded interviews were transcribed in full by the research assistant and transcripts stored as Word files. Back-up copies of voice recordings and transcriptions were made and stored on two separate computer hard drives. The researcher made spot-checks of several transcriptions and voice files to ensure their quality and accuracy. Working alongside the research assistant, the author was able to help her decipher unclear phrases, names and acronyms. Recordings ranged from forty-three minutes to one hour thirty-nine minutes and all were audible throughout.

Interviewees were sent a 'thank you' email the day after interview and follow-up information or actions were taken. For example, several policy documents identified or 'missing' in the 'fact sheet' were sent to the researcher. No one requested to see the transcript or notes taken during the interview and all were keen to receive a copy of the thesis when available.

In summary, from the thirty-two interviews, data for analysis was generated by digital voice recordings, audio transcriptions, hand-written notes (later transferred to computer-based files), and contextual observations. Additionally, informal and *ad hoc* conversations generated data as part of ethnographic and participant observation work, some of which were summarised and stored in note form.

### **3.7.6 Ethnographic and participant observation**

To build the case studies of three specific state bodies, data was analysed from the primary sources of policy discourse and interviews (see above) and supplemented by more observational insights from ethnographic work. Huberman and Miles (2002) explain an ethnographic method 'allows a fieldworker to use the cultural setting to account for the observed patterns of human activity'. The researcher was able to undertake participant observation on various occasions. Bryman (2004: 264) refers to this as 'immersion' during which the researcher becomes an 'insider' (Walliman, 2006: 206) in the daily lives of a social group or setting as well as observer/ outsider. As a process, this method requires the researcher to navigate between engagement/ neutrality; reportage/ interpretation; visibility/ covertness. Ethnography allows the researcher to explore the setting, whereas participant observation infers a role

to play (although the two modes overlap *in situ*). For this research project, the researcher was able to make regular and lengthy visits to the case study organisations and attend staff and strategic development meetings, observing the informal and formal patterns of governance activity. Over three years, such access gave numerous opportunities to observe the subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) twists and turns of state interactions.

Exactly what role the author played during periods of observation is difficult to fully describe. According to the classic participant observation typology (Gold, 1958), the researcher is: participant as observer, complete participant, complete observer or observer as participant. In this instance, the author was conscious of playing all four roles at some time, and it is arguable that such plurality is not unusual in social research (and indeed in any social setting). Paul Atkinson and Martyn Hammersley suggest:

The epistemology of participant observation rests on the principle of interaction and the “reciprocity of perspectives” between social actors. The rhetoric is thus egalitarian: observer and observed as inhabitants of a shared social and cultural field, their respective cultures different but equal, and capable of mutual recognition by virtue of a shared humanity (1994: 257).

Perhaps, the idea of egalitarian exchange overstates the relationship because researcher and observed find themselves in the situation for different reasons – the former arriving to construct ‘situated knowledge’ (Haraway, 1991) and the latter already situated albeit constructing meanings.

Critics of ethnography as a method point to tensions between ‘disinterested observation and political advocacy, between the “scientific” and the “humane,” between the “objective” and the “aesthetic.” (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994: 249). While tensions may well arise, an either/or scenario seems artificial. In keeping with a critical realist-interpretivist stance, the author was never devious in explaining her presence and made no pretence to disinterest or political neutrality during observation work. Her purpose was, and remains, twofold; first, to contribute to disciplinary knowledge and, second, to consider the practical implications of findings to better policy implementation.



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A salutary warning about participation observation as a research method is given by Gregory *et al* (2009: 520):

A key challenge of participant observation today is to find ways of representing the political, economic, cultural, textual and affective resources through which knowledge is actually negotiated in context. This method can then defend the way in which specific products of participant observation become scientific evidence, not through Malinowsky's suppression of subjugated knowledges, but through norms of accountability that contend with the unequal conditions of production of scientific knowledge.

A challenge indeed! Throughout the research study, the researcher sought conversations with, and between, state personnel from case and many other state bodies. This was facilitated by everyday and regular social interactions with state bodies involved in aspects of 'creative industries' governance.

Apart from conversations, much can be learned from 'hanging out' (Pratt, 2007b), listening and participating in the 'buzz' and 'small talk' of public sector life (Harvey *et al*, 2012). This included time spent at the case study organisations, talking to and observing people at conferences, consultation seminars and industry events, and even chance meetings on long train journeys. This data was not systematically recorded but captured in brief diary notes. Appendix Nine provides a list of some of the encounters at which data were gathered but is by no means comprehensive. Some data were validated by another data source (for example, in interview or policy document) and other non-validated data included because of their contribution to findings.

Together, these ethnographic methods provided the author with ways of exploring inter-relationships and ways of doing governance beyond the 'formal' and 'official' side of statehood. Critics of observational research (Silverman, 1993) argue such studies provide 'brief, persuasive data extracts' that must be supplemented. For this research project, multiple methods generated the supporting evidence.

### **3.7.7 Case studies**

In response to an identified lack of empirical study of state governance at the micro level, calls for situated analysis of 'the creative industries' (Jeffcut and

Pratt, 2005), and comparative case studies of neoliberalisation (Castree, 2010), the research drew together different empirical data. This included: ethnographic and observation work undertaken with three case study organisations; semi-structured and informal interviews with senior personnel; exchanges with staff and board directors; data gathered from textual analysis of a substantial archive of policy documents and desk research of web sites; and supplemented with the author's own prior knowledge of the case study site.

Such a methodology helped the researcher 'step inside' a state *terrain* (Castree, 2008) and to produce 'grounded work on the specific and concrete routines, practices, networks, and structures through which a system of governing is constructed and sustained. By examining the co-constitutive relationships between case organisations and networks in their governance world, inter-connections and complex relationships were identified as well as the ways in which they evolved and criss-crossed that landscape over time and space.

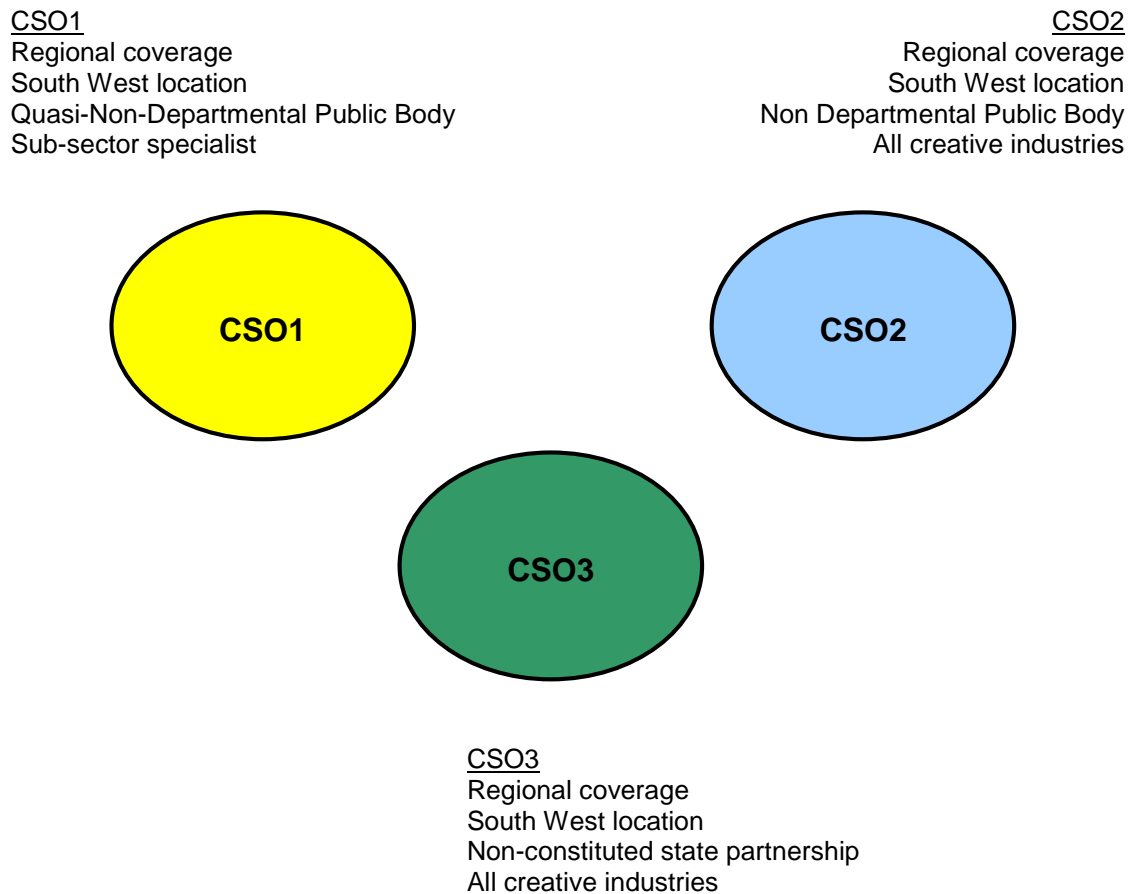
In order to frame the empirical data gathered from the various research methods (described above) and to prepare for a SRA-CAS analysis, multi-level case studies were developed of three state bodies.

As a research technique, the in-depth case studies complemented the project's overall research strategies and interpretivist approach, as well as drawing on the author's practical knowledge of the 'case' material. A technique of triangulation (Denzin, 1978) was applied to the various qualitative and quantitative data including that from desk research, interviews and ethnographic and observation work.

The three case study organisations (see Figure 6) were all state bodies with different histories, structures, governance roles and sets of inter-relationships with other state bodies in the 'creative industries' governance landscape in and beyond the research site. At the time of writing, all have ceased to exist or morphed into another state configuration (discussed more fully in Chapter 6). As mentioned earlier, the case studies are not representational of all state bodies in all regions nor governance of all industrial sectors. Rather, they were studied

and analysed in order to draw out some new 'truths' and grassroots insights into state governance using a blend of deductive, inductive and abductive thinking.

**Figure 6: To show key selection factors of case study organisations**



Based on collection and analysis of the various research data, key themes emerged that were then used for case study analysis and evaluation and discussed in the findings chapters. The themes are:

- governance histories (covering factors of formation, background, territorial coverage, governance status, structure and organisational remit and change);
- governance processes and practices (covering fields of relations, inter-dependencies, connections, imaginaries, decision-making);
- governance effects (the various forces and outcomes of state interactions and interventions).

Data generated through mixed methods provided the empirical basis for the case studies in support of the research questions. A formal critical discourse

was then produced, in the form of a substantive doctoral thesis, with reference to the aims and objectives, proposition, theoretical and philosophical framework.

### **3.7.8 Limitations of the research**

The focus of research was on state governance at the micro level and, therefore, case study organisations were examined that operated at a regional scale. Although these three state bodies provided substantive insights into multi-scalar governance and re-scaling state space, there are limitations to their application to other cases and particularly those at a local council level. As mentioned above, local councils are very different governance bodies. However, data gathered from the two original local councils, although not as detailed as that for the case study organisations, did provide an opportunity for some analysis at this very local level. Also, local council data suggest potential for further enquiry. A critical difference between the three chosen case study organisations and local councils was that the latter were delivering across multiple state policy areas. Their involvement in 'the creative industries' was quite marginal.

Other data-gathering techniques were considered, including a questionnaire survey of state governance bodies, and a single in-depth participant observation in one case organisation. These were rejected, respectively because (1) apart from factual information, attitudinal and descriptive responses given by public funded organisations in survey forms was likely to be brief and official, whereas the more personal and discursive setting of a semi-structured interview and informal conversations were likely to elicit richer data and encourage exploratory conversations; (2) full participant observation in a single case organisation would have meant the researcher was reliant on one state body for data and consistent access at a time of increasing uncertainty in the public sector; (3) permissions were negotiated with state personnel from the three organisations but there was the constant possibility of withdrawal because of organisational change, staff redundancy and other negative and external pressures. In addition, semi-structured interviews were chosen instead of unstructured ones, because the former would ensure maximum use of time for information gathering, and a degree of directed conversation with senior personnel whose time was limited.

Fieldwork was conducted at an extraordinarily turbulent period for state bodies (spread mostly between spring 2009 and autumn 2010 with some additional work in 2011) that is demonstrated by the disappearance of all three case study organisations that no longer exist. Yes, statehood proved highly complex and some might argue 'messy'. Nonetheless, as John Law observes:

[ ] the world is largely messy. It is also that contemporary social science methods are hopelessly bad at knowing that mess. Indeed it is that dominant approaches to method work with some success to repress the very possibility of mess. They cannot know mess, except in their aporias, as they try to make the world clean and neat. So it is my concern to broaden method. To imagine it more imaginatively (2003: 4).

The author's method was to examine the 'messiness' as 'it is' and to try and make sense of it from an academic perspective. Clearly, follow-up or repeat investigation of many of the state bodies involved in this study is impossible.

Furthermore, cessation rules out the possibility of the author making any specific recommendations to the case study organisations or about a particular landscape of state institutions. Nonetheless, the economic imaginary of a 'creative economy' and post-neo liberalism (Taylor, 2013) are on-going political strategies. The UK's current Coalition Government is working with another *terrain* of state bodies to develop and deliver policies around 'the creative industries' and will need to consider the pros and cons of a past and future system of governing. This research may be a historical and site-specific empirical geography but it has much to offer governance scholars and those involved in today's state landscape.

### 3.7.9 Resources

A grant from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) ensured that financial resources were adequate to meet the research expenses, and did not compromise the quality and depth of data output. The major expenses were transcription of the recorded semi-structured interviews and travel during fieldwork. In terms of fuel energy and material resources management, this project had a low impact because document exchanges were electronic whenever possible and public transport was used when in the field.

### 3.7.10 Summary of methods

In summary, the overall methods used for the research project align with the researcher's critical-realist-interpretivist paradigm and theoretical framework. The research design was based on exploratory and ethnographic study of three case study state bodies involved in the state governance of creative industry policy between 1997 and 2010 and located in South West England. Primary data were gathered through thirty-two semi-structured and informal interviews with senior state personnel and middle managers, plus periods of direct and indirect ethnographic observation. This was supplemented by: policy discourse analysis and desk-based research, *ad hoc* observation and informal conversations with a range of other key state personnel. Data were triangulated, analysed and evaluated within a SRA-CAS conceptual framework and conducted in a systematic and consistent manner.

### 3.8 Data management, analysis and synthesis

Management, analysis and synthesis of data were based on a mostly systematic method with scope for some intuitive interpretation. Starting with literature review and analysis of textual material, a methodical approach proved an efficient and manageable way of dealing with a large amount of information gathered from many different sources. There are evidently many different ways of making sense of qualitative data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Flowerdew, 2005) and choice of methods seems to depend more on the research project topic and preference of the researcher than on a 'one size fits all'.

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) was seriously considered as a possible way of storing, coding and interpreting data but a 'tester' training session at the ESRC Research Methods Festival (July 2008) proved CAQDAS a highly technical and labour intensive method for a researcher with a visual impairment. Having decided not to use a proprietary software package, and anticipating different types of data, various techniques were discussed with academic colleagues, supervisors and a close examination of those used in human geography and governance studies. Use was also made of: ideas of categorising data; of Cillier's principles (1998) and

Comunian's (2011) advice on a Complex Adaptive System analysis; of Hancock and Raeside (2010) social network analysis; and multi-disciplinary studies of the arts (Potts, 2007; Potts *et al*, 2008). Drawing on SRA and related research studies (Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones, 2009a; Jones and Jessop, 2010), the researcher considered ways of identifying and analysing patterns and underlying mechanisms that connected (or not) state bodies and their various inter-relationships.

Given the research focus, analysis centred on commonalities, differences, conflicts, synergies, patterns and shapes of governance and power dynamics. Significant characteristics of state governance at different geographical levels were further extrapolated from the data, and explained with reference to the underlying discourses of multi-scalar manoeuvres, semiotics and other relevant governmentalities.

First, the principles of computer-based CAQDAS analysis were integrated into a more bespoke and screen-based system using Microsoft Word and Excel programmes, including ideas of colour coding transcriptions and multi-level themes (major, medium and minor). For example, data from Interviews and ethnographic observations were electronically stored in Microsoft Word files and colour-coded according to key words and themes.

For textual analysis of policy documents, a simple matrix was designed for systematic data collection and interrogation. Based on Microsoft Excel software, Work Sheets provided a way of inputting, and later cross-referencing, data under different categories (e.g. publication title, author, date, type, policy area), and references to key words and phrases ('the creative industries', creative economy, 'world's creative hub'). A full list of documents can be found in Appendix Two and an example of fields from the analysis tool given in Appendix Ten.

A relatively simple screen-based method was devised to analyse interview transcriptions and notes, based on the SRA-CAS conceptual framework (see Figure 2). In practice, synthesis of data within the full spectrum of territory-place-scale-network plus semiotics (TPSN+SE) dimensions, as well as the

principles of CAS, proved an unwieldy and onerous exercise. Rather than leading to synthesis of data, this method of analysis resulted in an unhelpful 'messiness' (Law, 2004). To compartmentalise data into separate dimensions obscured the amount of overlaps. Both state and complexity theories emphasise the holistic nature of a system and, therefore, a SRA-CAS approach necessitated a similar way of handling data as a 'whole'. A practical solution was to concentrate analysis on the SRA entry points of territory-place-scale-network+semiotic (TPSN+SE), and eleven key-CAS principles (see Figure 2). The case study site (South West England) and each case study organisation were considered as holistic and inter-dependent CASs.

Semi-structured Interviews were initially analysed by listening to each audio recording, reading the notes and transcriptions. This enabled the researcher to get an overview of the material before listening again (and sometimes again) to begin identifying major themes via the TPSN-SE dimensions and SRA-CAS conceptual framework. Notes were made of similarities and contradictions between interviews, and provisional conclusions were synthesised and based on SRA-CAS principles). This meant semi-structured interviews were analysed and viewed through two different but related perspectives by meticulously highlighting and noting the key words, phrases and meanings that referred to the SRA-CAS conceptual framework. This iterative and double-checking process yielded useful (and not so useful) information for interpretation, and was supplemented by later readings of the transcripts during write-up phase.

Analysis of data through a SRA-CAS conceptual framework was also applied to data gathered from informal interviews, ethnographic and participant observation and the policy discourse analysis. In this way, consistency of analysis was introduced to data from different sources, and enabled the researcher to see links, similarities, contradictions and patterns. Computer-based modelling software was not used and may have generated a more thorough analysis of emergent patterns but the author contends that an interpretivist approach necessitates a hands-on 'feeling' of the data.



### **3.9 Timescale**

The research project was a relatively short term study that commenced in October 2008 and was due to be completed in December 2011. In terms of timing, this was constrained by available resources and requirements of an ESRC grant and those of the University of Exeter. However, due to health problems in 2011 and consequent disruptions to the project's delivery plan, write-up extended to early 2013.

A project delivery plan with staged timescales was used to guide research activities and provided a tool for checking progress and achievement of various milestones. With approved adjustments, the delivery plan was delivered on schedule.

### **3.10 Positionality and ethics**

A human geography that involves people, politics and state bodies is likely to raise certain issues for the researcher. For the reader of this thesis, and any scholar wishing to undertake a similar research project, this section discusses some of the challenges encountered by the author, and reflects on certain limitations and possible improvements. Clearly, it is the responsibility of the researcher to identify the critical issues either in advance or during the research project and, if possible, resolve them in order to maintain the credibility and quality of the research process and outputs. Two issues in particular were identified early in this inquiry – researcher positionality and ethics.

In terms of background reading, positionality in social science research, and particularly a study involving qualitative and interpretive methods, seems to be a hotly debated issue in research methods and notably feminist literature (Bondi, 2003; Gilbert, 1994; Haraway, 1989; Rose, 1997; Ward and Jones, 1999). Reflecting on context-based influences that impacted on the author's own research experience, she readily acknowledges several factors that had an influence. Specifically, they were: pre-existent professional involvement with interviewees and the case study organisations; a possible bias in the interpretations she placed on empirical evidence; and privileged access to state personnel, organisations' archives and their decision-making processes. Some

scholars might argue these influences render data analysis unduly subjective. Notwithstanding, the author makes no claim to either an 'insider' or 'outsider' stance and vigorously rejects the idea of an objective all-knowing position. As Haraway (1989) asserts, there is a fundamental 'unknowability' about social research and fallibility of description (Sayer, 2000). The irony is that methodological debate about the position of a so-called 'insider' or 'outsider' role focuses on the problem of power relations between observer and observed (Mullings, 1999; McDowell, 1992). Yet, this research project was all about state bodies and their power relations. The author's involvement simply added another power dynamic to the observed relationships.

Based on historical involvement and experiential understanding, the author's position was (and remains) one of committed researcher. Having decided to choose the South West as the research site, the author's familiarity was an unavoidable aspect of interactions with state personnel. Acting in multiple roles, as 'insider-outsider', researcher and ex-colleague, female, middle-aged and white, the author was constantly mindful of the impacts that such plurality might have on, for example, access to confidential information and discussions, as well as her own 'situated knowledge' (Haraway, 1989). On several occasions the researcher was tempted to dispute an interviewee's recollection of a sequence of events or decision-making process that she had been party to. However, argument was inappropriate and a more diplomatic and 'attentive listener' mode was adopted during interviews in order to explore different memories and interpretations of governance dynamics. That said, a 'complete participant' mode was also adopted during time spent at the case study organisations and lively free-flowing conversations ensued. Thus, prior knowledge of people and events proved useful when probing how different people make sense of the macro and micro politics of regional governance.

Literature review on researcher positionality in the context of contact with so-called 'elites', provided little useful guidance. An unhelpful distinction is made about researching 'up' and 'down' as remarks by Cormode suggest:

Researching the powerful presents very different methodological and ethical challenges from studying 'down'. The characteristics of those studied, the power relations between them and the researchers and the politics of the

research process differ considerably between elite and non-elite research (1999: 299).

Perhaps, the paucity of positionality discourse *vis-à-vis* 'elites' may be due to less research involving such subjects (for example, state bodies) or to social science's greater interest in studying 'down' with socially and culturally marginalised groups (Mullings, 1999; Herod, 1999).

Debates on access to 'elites', 'the powerful' and privileged information that are framed around 'insider' and 'outsider' positionalities, rightly challenge the artificiality and instability of a binary position – that is, one where the researcher is supposedly fixed one way or another. By positioning her experiences relative to a regional state governance research context, the author aims to make a contribution to contemporary debate on researcher positionality and engaging with 'elites'.

Positionality is often viewed as a barrier to gathering information and gaining access to informants in sensitive situations (Cochrane, 1998; McDowell, 1998). Of the tricky question of 'gaining access' to 'elites', a key issue for this project was to ensure the trustworthiness of the information gathered. As Andrew Shenton and Susan Hayter observe:

For many qualitative investigators, one of the most pressing research concerns lies in gaining access. The researcher's success in this regards will have a significant effect on the nature and quality of the data collected and, ultimately, on the trustworthiness of the findings (Shenton and Hayter, 2004: 223).

From the author's assessment, access to informants and sensitive material was not an issue in this research project. Why? It is possible that pre-existent relationships with case study organisations and other state personnel, her track record of senior level governance activities as well as familiarity with policy, all contributed to a situation of relative trust and cooperation. From the outset, pre-existent relationships with many of those interviewed raised questions of confidentiality and positionality. Would past relations and affiliations unduly influence an interview conversation and inhibit people's willingness to share their personal opinions? Would interviewees trust her? To what extent would professional practitioner experience interfere with academic analysis? Of

confidentiality and rapport, the author's concerns proved unfounded. Indeed, invitations to interview were almost all enthusiastically accepted with only one none response. Participant observation and post-interview emails were equally positive.

People's frankness was sometimes remarkable, given their uncertain situation at the time - most faced organisational change or closure, and either their own possible redundancy or within their staff teams. Reflecting on people's relaxed and friendly manner during interview and participant observation, the author suggests a reciprocal relationship developed that was as much to do with mutual trust as it was to do with conditions at the time. People seemed to positively relish the opportunity of talking about the politics of their working lives, past and present, saying "*it's fascinating thinking back about all the changes*" (M005) and "*this is great you never get a chance to pull everything together*" (F008). At the end of one interview, a middle manager commented "*it's so good to get it off my chest*" (F013). For one middle manager, participation in the research was an opportunity to assuage negative views about 'quangos', commenting "*I don't think any one outside the agency circuit knows what we do apart from fund*" (F005).

The author's overall impression was of state personnel intrigued to engage with academics and on a topic of intense interest to them. Of course, state personnel might have been willing to cooperate with any *bona fide* researcher and it was coincidence that access was granted to the author. It is also pertinent to point out that other researchers from the University of Exeter (Harvey *et al*, 2011, 2012) were conducting interviews at the same time with some of the author's participants on the topic of 'creative industries' networks. Arguably, the acceptable positionality of both research teams contributed to a conducive environment for investigation.

As a human and public geography, undertaken at a time of acute political change and economic crisis, the process of researching was inevitably affected. Ward and Jones (1999) point to the need for a research approach that is sensitive to 'research situatedness' and the 'political-temporal contingency' of a research moment. In other words, the research process and researcher's

position will be affected by the interaction of politics, time and the research project's focus. As already mentioned, the majority of fieldwork took place over a period of extraordinary political and economic change. Major events (of global economic crisis, public spending cuts, and pre and post General Election in May 2010) were impossible to ignore by researcher or those researched. To an extent, the timing and volatility intensified the very dynamics under investigation but their impact also required careful handling in order to keep the research on track!

Turning to ethical issues, much is written about the 'ethical turn' in contemporary social science and human geography (Barnett *et al*, 2005; Cloke *et al*, 2004; Popke, 2007) and the relationship between ethics and the 'politics of disciplinary change' (Johnston, 2006: 288). Ethical debates, of course, have an ancient philosophical past on the conundrum of 'what ought to be' (Cutchin: 2002: 658). A fairly basic definition of ethics is given by Gregory *et al*:

That part of philosophy concerned with the worthiness of human actions and of systems of belief regarding what people ought or ought not to do. Questions regarding our duties, obligations and responsibilities fall within the purview of ethics (2009: 211).

For the human geographer who studies the state, questions of morality and political responsibility are not straightforward ones. Rob Cutchin suggests moral rules are 'principles that need to be creatively (flexibly) and intelligently applied in ever-changing circumstances' (Cutchin, 2005: 661). For a critical relational geography of state governance and power dynamics, the author chose a pragmatic and sensitive route through the tricky ground of research ethics.

Linking issues of positionality and ethics together, there was the problem of how to balance the researcher's autonomy and responsibility, neutrality and political activism, 'other' and self in pursuit of knowledge? The author considered the implications of undertaking a study that was not only *of the other* and *for the other* (Cloke, 2002) but also *with the other*. While Ron Martin (2001) calls for a 'policy turn' in geography towards greater engagement by researchers in the policy realm, Paul Cloke raises more fundamental ethical questions about 'living ethically and acting politically'. For Cloke, a general lack of sensitivity by geographers to those being researched (the 'other') is a major issue:

[ ] my nagging doubts about much of the current interplay between moral geographies and a critical political edge to human geography which incorporates active practice as well as intellectual transformation. In broad terms, I believe that it is easy to detect in human geography an abstract, intellectually fascinated, but often uncommitted sense *of the other* ... it is far more difficult to discover in contemporary human geography as a whole a sense *for the other* which is emotional, connected and committed (2002: 591, original italics).

Cloke's critique of the ethical state of human geography is a harsh one and prompted the author to do some serious soul-searching about the act of doing research *of* and *with* those whom she felt an affinity (as well as thinking more broadly and intelligently about the connections between research of state bodies and political consequences).

By mapping an 'ethical terrain', the researcher must, as Cloke suggests, decide a position. Presumably, the options are the moral high ground, somewhere in the middle or in the lowlands of immorality. Thinking about some of Cloke's critical questions, the author has found it helpful to have the following internal conversation:

Question: Is the research self-serving?

Answer: Sort of. If I am awarded a PhD, and the thesis is published, then the research may enhance my career. However, any published research will hopefully be of use to those who participated in the study, scholars in the field and interested policy advisors.

Question: Are you self-critical?

Answer: I think I am. During the project, I tried to maintain a critical view of the research topic, avoid bias, and continually reflected on how the research was being conducted. In hindsight, I probably could have been more confrontational during interviews and casual conversations but that doesn't mean to say I didn't challenge certain statements.

Question: Do you think this research project will improve the lives of those you studied?

Answer: In an altruistic and conditional sense, yes. If people working in state organisations gain a better understanding of how their world works, then their processes and practices may be more effective, and their self esteem

improved. If, however, better understanding leads to people's disillusionment, or a misuse of state powers, then the research will have had an unintentional and negative result.

Settling on a position somewhere on the moral middle ground, the author is aware of potential "good" and "bad" outcomes of this research project. Many outcomes will depend on more than her ethical approach to research, and the outcomes presented later in the thesis. In terms of active policy engagement, the fieldwork and write-up demonstrate a positive attempt to 'step inside' (Castree, 2008) a topic of contemporary debate in human geography (state governance and creative industries studies) and considerable interest to politicians and policy advisors across the world.

With reference to formal academic principles and code of good practice laid down for the researcher by ESRC and the University of Exeter, guidance was taken from institutional resources. First, the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics (FRE) (2010) sets out six key principles that a researcher should follow.<sup>12</sup> These principles were implemented to the best of the researcher's ability and knowledge, and monitored during regular sessions with academic supervisors. Other resources used for ethical guidance were supplied by the University of Exeter including: *University of Exeter Ethics Policy* (2012) and particular attention paid to issues described in point 3 pertaining to Research. This policy includes reference to 'Compliance with Data Protection Law and respect for privacy and confidentiality' and 'Freedom of Information issues under the Freedom of Information Act (2000)'; *Code of Good Practice on Managing Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism, cheating and collusion)* (2010/11). Also, the author completed a compulsory e-learning module provided by the university titled *Understanding Academic Honesty and Plagiarism* (29 January 2013).

The author conducted the research project with the approval of the University Ethics Committee, having submitted a proposal that demonstrated clear

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<sup>12</sup> This research project was guided by ESRC's Framework for Research Ethics (2010) that was later re-issued in September 2012 (<<http://esrc.ac.uk>>).

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understanding of ethical principles laid down by the academy and Research Council.

Confidentiality and data handling were two ethical issues that required careful handling during the project. Of 'privacy and confidentiality', the researcher was able to convince senior state personnel to participate in research of a sensitive (rather than secretive) area of governmental activity at an equally sensitive time of public sector reform and scrutiny. It was necessary to negotiate people's agreement, but without duress or coercion, on the basis of the benefits to their individual organisations and policy delivery mechanisms more widely. One benefit, for example, was to gain a better understanding of an organisation's involvement in policy development and delivery in the English regions, and how that knowledge might contribute to greater and more general understanding of governance dynamics. Permissions were sought and granted for interviews, and (in the case study organisations) to talk to staff members and observe meetings. It was necessary to ensure participants understood what was being researched and to give assurances of anonymity in any published findings. The researcher was in regular contact with case study organisation staff during the fieldwork phase and encouraged conversations about the project's progress without compromising people's privacy. Participants could have withdrawn from the research at any time but none did so.

Taking an overt 'public' and open approach to the research, the researcher was careful to distinguish between information collected in the public domain and that which was made available in confidence. Methods used for data collection and storage for this research complies with ESRC and University of Exeter guidelines. They will be made accessible and responsibly destroyed according to legislation and set time limits.

The next three chapters explore the research findings and their significance to the research topic under investigation.



*A new term, creative industries, has emerged ...that exploits the fuzziness of the boundaries between “creative arts” and “cultural industries”, freedom and comfort, public and private, state-owned and commercial, citizen and consumer, the political and the personal ... The core of culture [is] still creativity, but creativity [is] produced, deployed, consumed and enjoyed quite differently in post-industrial societies from the way it used to be.*

(Hartley, 2006: 18)

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the historical and geographical nature and scope of ‘the creative industries’ and its emergence as an object of state governance. The exploration sets the scene for understanding the policy context and multi-scalar institutional structures and practices that correspondingly evolved during Labour administrations between 1997 and 2010. Based on careful and critical analysis of academic and policy texts, together with the author’s interviews and own professional experience, the definition and articulation of ‘the creative industries’ are examined. In the following sections, the themes of political imaginary, contestation and rapid change will recur when describing events and transformations surrounding this curious object. On the one hand, its conceptualisation will seem logical and stitched together in time and space and, on the other hand, will appear illusionary and incoherent. What will become apparent, however, is that both scenarios co-existed under Labour and not least because of the proactive and manipulative role of state bodies (as actors and organisations).

### 4.2 Definition

Starting with conceptualisation of ‘the creative industries’, much of the background information and definitional debate have been comprehensively covered elsewhere in scholarly literature (Garnham, 2005; Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; O’Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005). The author will, therefore, concentrate on major events and conceptual iterations that are pertinent to understanding this curious political construct and its role in national

and, more importantly, regional policy development and delivery. With the launch of an inter-departmental Creative Economy Programme in 2005 and publication of a 'creative industries' strategy in 2008 (DCMS *et al*, 2008), the object appeared to be well understood by Government, even if a minor policy issue. The Foreword to *Creative Britain*, written by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, reads:

The creative industries must move from the margins to the mainstream of economic and policy thinking as we look to create the jobs of the future (ibid, page 1).

However, beneath the political rhetoric, the object that politicians and state bodies sought to govern was proving a slippery one.

Findings from the author's literature review, policy discourse analysis and fieldwork reveal a mismatch between public declarations (such as that in *Creative Britain*) and how the concept was understood, integrated into policy and implemented on the ground. Exploration will show disconnects between different definitional models, policy articulations and how state governance practices, that were exacerbated by a fundamental 'fuzziness' about the object.

First, it is important for the reader to understand where the idea of 'the creative industries' came from and why such a curious (and soon problematic) construct gained such traction in governmental thinking as Labour came to power. Having only appeared in cultural studies discourse during the 1990s (Jayne, 2005; O'Connor, 2006; Pratt, 2005), the object's rise to political prominence was swift and remarkable. This thesis is concerned with events in the UK but literature review shows simultaneous take-up of 'the creative industries' in countries as far a-field as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Singapore (O'Connor, 2006; Pratt, 2005). Discourse on 'the creative industries' is closely linked to quantification studies and, therefore, quantitative data are cited below when and where appropriate. Indeed, such numerical information will give the reader a sense of scope and size, and to illustrate the different processes by which the object was constructed, narrated and manipulated.

### 4.2.1 Origins

Discourse on 'creative industries', whether from a cultural, economic and/or political perspective, is invariably predicated on the belief the object can be more or less defined. Simon Roodhouse (2006: 15) refers to 'creative industries' literature as 'contorted and torturous definitional discourse'. Other commentators take a more analytical approach, such as Andy Pratt's (2005) work on the economisation of cultural policy and artificial political construction of 'the creative industries'. Another approach is that taken by Justin O'Connor (2007: 47) who, in his literature review of 'creative industries' scholarship, poses more fundamental questions about its conceptualisation and observes that 'Definitions are heuristic devices which implicate the subsequent handling of the subject, in academic or policy terms'. What is common to all three stances is an engagement with the origins and problematic definition and nature of 'the creative industries'. This body of work provides the basis for the author's introduction to the subject that will hopefully avoid contortion.

Historically, discourse on 'the creative industries' evolved from that on the nature of cultural production and consumption in western developed countries (Hesmondhalgh, 2002). The phrase 'the cultural industries' was introduced in cultural studies as a way of distinguishing traditional artforms (such as theatre, ballet, opera and museums) from popular artforms or 'mass culture' (such as film, television, and glossy magazines). First coined by critical social theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1979/47), 'the cultural industries' originally had a pejorative meaning associated with the commodification and debasement of 'the arts' under capitalism. However, during the 1980s and early 1990s, the idea of 'cultural industries' was taken up by UK metropolitan Labour controlled local councils in cities such as Glasgow, Liverpool, London and Sheffield. David Hesmondhalgh suggests (2002) the word 'industries' fitted a political strategy to imbue certain cultural activities with an industrial and egalitarian dimension that would convey a non elitist approach to public funding of the arts. Clearly, the earlier negative connotations were forgotten or re-interpreted to suit Labour's shift in policy thinking of the day.

In terms of state bodies, Arts Council England began to express a tentative interest in an economic dimension to 'the arts and cultural industries' (O'Brien

and Feist, 1995). Leaving aside the odd distinction made between 'arts and cultural industries', inclusion of the word 'industries' signified a degree of acceptance by the principle national state body for cultural policy delivery at the time. From the mid 1990s onwards, cultural policy discourse (academic and independent policy commentaries) began to refer to notions of creativity and 'new media' in relation to cultural activities, linking them to goals of economic growth, social reform and urban regeneration (Bianchini and Landry, 1995; EUCLID, 1999; Evan, 2005; Garnham, 1997).

Writers argue that transition from a focus on 'cultural industries' to one on 'creative industries' during the run-up to the 1997 UK General Election was the work of academic policy advisors to New Labour (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005). The terminology of 'creative industries' and 'digital age' are said to have been used to help differentiate New Labour from discredited 'old' Labour's cultural policy and local councils. Also, New Labour's preference for 'the creative industries' and focus on 'new media' was viewed as an astute 'political mobilisation of youth' (Pratt, 2009a: 10) and an image of 'cool Britannia' (Oakley, 2004). Thus, critical theory debates about 'cultural industries' in the mid twentieth century turned to 'the creative industries' and, by the end of the century, the imaginary was being adopted as a governable object. This transformation, as we will discover, demonstrates the evolutionary and malleable nature of 'the creative industries' concept.

Under Conservative administrations of the 1980s and 1990s, cultural policy had shifted some way from a focus on elitist traditional artforms and a public subsidy model, towards more popular cultural artforms and a public-private partnership model (Pratt, 2005, 2009a). However, cultural policy was still a marginal and discrete area of state intervention when Labour came to power in 1997. Where cultural policy crossed over into more commercialised activities (such as film and television, 'new' media and popular music) and other policy areas (such as health and education), it was linked to social reform and 'good causes'. An important 'good cause' intervention was the 1995 National Lottery scheme initiated by Prime Minister John Major's Conservative administration (Jayne, 2005; Pratt, 2005). Using monies collected from lottery ticket sales, Government acquired greater financial powers to support activity of public benefit over and

above core policy objectives. Of note here is the eligibility of popular (and traditional) cultural activities for National Lottery support. In other words, the National Lottery scheme transformed public funding of cultural activities and extended Government's influence into new cultural territory. As National Lottery sales escalated, so too did the spending power of the Department of National Heritage (and from 1997, the new Department for Culture, Media and Sport/ DCMS).

According to the DCMS website, the department is 'responsible for pan-National Lottery policy, including Lottery legislation and setting the policy and financial framework within which the distributing bodies for National Lottery grants operate' (online accessed 09 November 2012).<sup>13</sup> Major National Lottery Distributor Bodies (NLDB) included state bodies with remits covering 'the creative industries'. For example, Arts Council England is National Lottery distributor for 'the arts' and the UK Film Council (between 1998 and 2011) was distributor for film.<sup>14</sup> There is much debate about the overlap between, and some argue manipulation by, Government of National Lottery monies and core party political goals (Evans, 1999; Pratt, 2005; Taylor, 2009). A close connection was made, for example, in Labour's 1997 election manifesto that promised to 'reform the lottery' and prescribed several strategic lottery investments.<sup>15</sup> Labour's strategy to link political goals with lottery awards had significant impact on the subsequent shaping of state governance spaces at the regional level and will be returned to later. Importantly here, Labour's approach to National Lottery funding and DCMS' distribution mechanism were major influences on the rapid acceptance of non-traditional cultural activities as legitimate targets for state intervention.

Alongside increased academic and political interest in different modes of

<sup>13</sup> DCMS controls National Lottery funds apart from the Big Lottery Fund that is the responsibility of the Cabinet Office. Since 1995, almost £29 billion of grants have been awarded (DCMS, accessed 02 November 2010, <[http://www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/national\\_lottery/default.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/national_lottery/default.aspx)>).

<sup>14</sup> The UK Film Council's responsibility for National Lottery funds was transferred to the British Film Institute in 2010.

<sup>15</sup> Labour's 1997 Manifesto included a promise to establish the National Endowment for Science and the Arts (Nesta) as a national trust 'to sponsor young talent', that would be part funded by the lottery. Nesta became a highly influential research organisation for DCMS and state bodies, specialising in 'creative industries' studies and policy papers (Nesta, accessed 17 September, 2010, <<http://www.nesta.org.uk/publications/policy>>).

cultural production and consumption *per se* (traditional and non-traditional), there was also a desire to quantify its scope, size and economic impact. In terms of experimental work, UNESCO (a multi-national state body) published the first Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) in 1986 for defining and quantifying cultural activities and aimed at policy-makers.<sup>16</sup>

Another major influence was cultural statistics work undertaken by the European Leadership Group on Culture in response to a resolution by the European Council of Cultural Ministers for better cultural statistics and their use in policy development (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013b). While acknowledging both a material and an immaterial dimension, the models focused on the material (or instrumental) side of cultural activities, in order to outline the boundaries of a discrete industrial ‘cultural sector’ – a.k.a. ‘the cultural industries’.<sup>17</sup> Their language and approach reflected an increasingly economised view of cultural activities and potential for capital accumulation. Subsequent development of FCS-type definitional frameworks homed in on the notion of a sub grouping known as ‘the creative industries’ (Leadbetter and Oakley, 1999).

Definition of ‘the creative industries’ is tackled in more detail below but the point to note here is the key role played by state bodies (UNESCO and LEG) in first, articulating cultural activities as a ‘cultural sector’ and second, selecting a sub-grouping of ‘creative’ activities. These ontological developments in statistical measurement and definition suggest a number of state-led processes and practices were simultaneously taking place in different state spaces and at different scales towards the end of the twentieth century. From a critical interpretivist perspective, no one group, process or action can be isolated as the single causal one, and there are likely to have been several others not

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<sup>16</sup> United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) first published the Framework for Cultural Statistics in 1986 and a revised version in 2009 (UNESCO, accessed 08 July 2011, <<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001910/191061e.pdf>>).

<sup>17</sup> The material-immaterial dimensions to definition of a cultural sector are discussed in a DCMS technical report (DCMS, 2004a: 10) and include these passages: ‘A. Culture has both a “material” and a non-material dimension. The definition of the Cultural Sector must focus upon material culture, and we understand this to be the sum of activities and necessary resources (tools, infrastructure and artefacts) involved in the whole ‘cycle’ of creation, making, dissemination, exhibition/reception, archiving/preservation, and education/understanding relating to cultural products and services.’ And, ‘B. We recognise that the range of activities defined as ‘cultural’ is mobile and changing. However, at their most inclusive, we propose that the domains of the Cultural Sector cover the following: Visual Art, Performance, Audio-Visual, Books and Press, Sport, Heritage, and Tourism.’

mentioned here. Nonetheless, multiple social-political-economic forces coincided to produce the conditions that shaped a new political imaginary.

In 1997, the newly elected Labour administration of Prime Minister Tony Blair abolished the Department of National Heritage and instead set up DCMS to implement its Labour party manifesto pledge:

We need a new and dynamic approach to the 'creative economy'. The Department of National Heritage will develop a strategic vision that matches the real power and energy of British arts, media and cultural industries (Labour Party, 1997).<sup>18</sup>

Keen to demonstrate 'new thinking' and to delineate a ministerial territory that spanned both the cultural and economic spheres, DCMS' new Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Chris Smith, immediately convened and chaired the Creative Industries Task Force. The group of civil servants, policy advisors and senior industry figures had a broad remit:<sup>19</sup>

To recommend steps to maximise the economic impact of the UK creative industries at home and abroad (DCMS, 1999: 6).

Within a year, the Task Force had published the seminal *Creative Industries Mapping Document* (DCMS, 1998 and revised in 2001) that was to have an enduring and global influence on how 'the creative industries' was explained, narrated and understood over the next thirteen years (Holden, 2007; Jayne, 2005).

#### 4.2.2 Definitions and quantifications

A much quoted definition of 'the creative industries' from the DCMS mapping document reads:

[ ] those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property (DCMS, 2001: 5).

Based on four of the seven FCS-defined cultural domains, the mapping study

<sup>18</sup> Labour Party Manifesto 1997, online version, accessed 08 July 2011, <<http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1997/>>

<sup>2</sup> DCMS Creative Industries Task Force membership included representatives from: Department for Trade and Industry, Department for Environment, Transport and Regions, Foreign Office, HM Treasury, Department for Education and Employment, industry advisors such as Sir Richard Branson (Virgin Group Plc), Paul Smith (fashion designer), Alan McGee (Creation Records), Lord David Puttnam (film director), Charles Allen (Granada Television Group) (DCMS, 1998).

identified a number of industrial categories (or sub-sectors) to constitute ‘the creative industries’.<sup>20</sup> Thirteen industrial categories or sub-sectors were listed as:

- advertising
- architecture
- arts and antique markets
- crafts
- design
- designer fashion
- film and video
- interactive leisure software
- music
- performing arts
- publishing
- software and computer services
- television and radio.

The categories covered a spread of activities, ranging from ‘invisible’ services of, for example, one-off design, advertising and architecture, to the more tangible outputs of television programmes, theatre productions and films (Creative Industries Task Force, 1999). For governance purposes, DCMS was the lead ministry for most sub-sectors but shared responsibility with BERR (later to become BIS) for advertising, design, computer and video games and publishing, and BERR/BIS took full responsibility for ‘software and computer services’.<sup>21</sup> In Chapter 6, we will find that governance of these sub-sectors was delegated to specialist councils and their regional partners – for example, Arts Council England, Design Council and UK Film Council.

From the 1998 mapping work onwards, conceptualisation veered between two approaches – first, models that categorised creative activity into industrial sub-

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<sup>20</sup> The four cultural sector domains identified for the ‘creative industries’ sub-grouping were: audio-visual, performing arts, books and press. visual arts and crafts.

<sup>21</sup> BERR was set up by a Labour administration and merged in 2008 with several other Whitehall departments to become BIS. The acronym BERR/BIS is used throughout the thesis to identify both bodies. Although policy documents refer to shared and exclusive responsibility between the two departments for DET sub-sectors, DCMS officials were unable to confirm the exact split. Textual analysis of government websites and publications provided no further clarification.



sectors; and second, models that focused on the creative capacities of individual producers (Holden, 2007). Review of definitional literature shows, however, that most adhered (and continue today) to DCMS' original categorisation of sub-sectors. Although the technical details of modelling *per se* are not relevant to this thesis, the conceptual thinking behind them, and the role of state bodies in their construction and re-construction, help to explain how an imaginary such as 'the creative industries' evolves. DCMS' *Creative Industries Mapping Document* was an attempt to operationalise UNESCO's FCS definition of cultural activities and to push ahead on the European ministerial resolution (see above point) and in particular tackle the sub-grouping of 'the creative industries'. Beginning with the Regional Cultural Data Framework (RCDF), the 'creative industries' mapping document and RCDF were soon blended to become known as the *DCMS Evidence Toolkit* or DET (see Positive Solutions *et al*, 2002). A policy agent involved in early definitional work explained:

*The intention behind the RCDF was to develop a framework that was useable, manageable and cost effective for the new Regional Cultural Consortia* (M016).

A second version of the DET (2001) was a methodological improvement but again aimed at the Regional Cultural Consortia:

Indeed, the impetus for the present document sprang from the difficulties encountered by the English Regional Cultural Consortia (RCC) when assembling a quantitative picture of their regions for the regional cultural strategies in 2000/1 (Positive Solutions *et al*, 2002: 1).

Thus, mapping tools served as heuristic devices to help DCMS articulate its new economised thinking on cultural activities and to provide state-funded specialist bodies with a means of organising and measuring their regional 'industrial' territories.

Two linked but separate processes were underway. First, to give the cultural sector (and governance bodies) parity alongside other industrial sectors such as manufacturing and construction (O'Connor, 2007). And secondly, to promote the idea of 'the creative industries' as a distinct and governable object in cultural policy frameworks was promoted. For one DCMS official, profile-raising was a resounding success: "*We did a very good job, I think, as an organisation in really convincing people that these industries exist*" (M012). In terms of regional

advocacy, the south west Regional Cultural Consortium (Culture South West – see case study 6.4.2) was confident of ‘the creative industries’ existence as early as 2001, declaring in its cultural strategy:

[ ] as a sector we can work together to improve the quality and range of cultural activity available to all those living in or visiting our region and support the further development of our already successful creative industries (Culture South West, 2001: 1).

Under New Labour, state bodies became remarkably paternalistic about their imagined territorial spaces, as the reader will notice from this and other quotations cited in the thesis. To advocate and champion seems to have encouraged a sense of state ownership over *our* ‘creative industries’ and *our* region (a point illustrated more fully in the case studies).

Quantification of public funded activity was closely associated with Labour’s managerialism and target-driven approach to policy delivery (Cochrane, 2004). An onus was placed by Government on ‘evidence-based policy’ and evidence equated to statistical data. At the turn of the century, lack of quantitative data on cultural activities was considered a major disadvantage by politicians and state bodies for their policy-making capacity. As early as 2000, DCMS was urging a ‘pragmatic’ approach to data-gathering at regional and local level (2000). By 2004, DCMS articulated the problem as:

[ ] the urgent need, expressed by all the English Regional Cultural Consortia (RCCs), for a more robust and reliable evidence-base on which to develop future policies for culture (DCMS, 2004b: 1).

In Culture South West’s strategy, *In Search of Chunky Dunsters* (2001: 4), an estimate was made of 90,000 people working in the region’s ‘creative industries’. Lacking definitive evidence, there was a priority for a major research programme (*ibid*, page 30).

Behind DCMS’ and the RCC’s need for statistical evidence lay two significant assumptions: (1) credible evidence equated to numerical data and (2) regional policy and decisions could not be developed without such quantitative data.

Apart from policy considerations, DCMS also needed evidence to enhance its credibility with more powerful Whitehall departments such as HM Treasury and

BERR/BIS. Importantly, proof of the economic value of cultural activities, and particularly the ‘knowledge-intensive’ categories of ‘the creative industries’ was needed to attract ministerial support and a higher HM Treasury financial settlement. Similarly, DCMS’ sponsored bodies (such as Regional Cultural Consortia) needed ‘hard’ evidence at the regional level to lobby more powerful bodies such as Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and secure funds for state programmes. Measurement tools and their statistical outputs were, therefore, crucial technologies for politicians and state bodies to use in defining and laying claim to their respective governmental and governance territories including ‘the creative industries’.

The drive for ‘robust and reliable’ evidence escalated under Labour in response to HM Treasury’s ‘target-driven’ system of accountability and reporting. Public spending allocations were made conditional on ‘evidence of achievements’. Like other Whitehall departments, DCMS’ annual allocation was set out in a Public Service Agreement (PSA) with a number of prescribed PSA targets agreed by HM Treasury (DCMS, 2005). These allocations and targets were then devolved by DCMS to the various sponsored ‘target delivery bodies’ who in turn passed them on to their regional partners. At every level and stage, evidence was required and particularly when reporting achievements back to HM Treasury. Of DCMS’ four 2005/06 PSA targets, PSA4 illustrates the economic and prescriptive nature of Government’s goals set in relation to ‘the creative industries’:

**PSA4.** By 2008 improve the productivity of the tourism, creative and leisure industries.

**Indicators:**

Productivity is estimated for each of the three industries by dividing gross value added by total employment. Gross value added and total employment are estimated from the Office of National Statistics Annual Business Inquiry. Baselines and targets are reported under two headings; “Tourism and Leisure related Industries” and “Creative Industries”. Targets take the form of annual percentage increases in the productivity figures higher than those for the service sector as a whole (DCMS, 2005: 20).

The point to note is the onus on quantitative evidence of economic performance that was required by HM Treasury on ‘the creative industries’ that had little to do

with cultural outcomes.

A DCMS official commented “*it’s like the GVA figure is the end point*” (M012). Each PSA was accompanied by ‘Definitions’ and measurement guidelines including:

“Numbers employed” is defined as the number of full and part-time employees on the payroll plus the number of working proprietors involved. It should be noted that, because of the difficulty of gathering information, this will not cover the self-employed, who often feature significantly in the creative industries (DCMS, 2005b 10).<sup>22</sup>

This ‘difficulty’ of measurement in relation to ‘the creative industries’ was a constant problem for DCMS and regional cultural agencies and not unique to DCMS’ 2005/06 PSA. As we will discover, in spite of technical modification and countless coding refinements, precise DET quantification of the various industrial categories remained problematic.

To comply with HM Treasury’s requirement for productivity data, DCMS annually produced a set of economic values based on what was called a ‘narrower version’ of a DET defined ‘creative industries’ sector (see for example DCMS, 2002 and 2011). But even this ‘narrower version’ proved problematic. Each year’s *Creative Industries Economic Estimates* bulletin contained caveats, modifications and refinements to the DET methodology that did more to weaken than strengthen the declared purpose of providing ‘robust and reliable’ data. For example, the 2011 statistical bulletin warns:

Modifications to the scope and methodology have been made since last year [...] and so the results here should **not** be compared with estimates from previous releases (DCMS, 2011: 2, original emphasis).

Changes were regularly made to the way creative activities were grouped and named in the statistical tables. Of the ‘DCMS 13’ original industrial categories, the computer software-related ones were especially prone to methodological revisions and name changes such as ‘interactive leisure software’ and ‘software and computer services’. By 2011, these categories were referred to as ‘digital

<sup>22</sup> DCMS’ 2005-2006 Public Service Agreement: Technical Note (2006, online, accessed 06 July 2010, <<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/248372CE-3A62-4869-B8FC-A311E864931F/0/TechnicalnotewithfinalPSA3baselines.pdf>>).

and media entertainment' and 'software/electronic publishing' (DCMS, 2011).

Furthermore, refinements were not always the result of 'scientific' improvement and in some cases a response to pressure from state bodies. In 2011, for example, DCMS announced:

Due to demand for a separate "Computer Games" category, we have divided up the "Software, Computer Games and Electronic Publishing" category used previously into two smaller categories. Of these, "Digital and Entertainment Media" now fairly closely resembles the Computer Games sector (DCMS, 2011: 11).<sup>23</sup>

The 'demand' referred to in the above quotation was that expressed by a Sector Skills Council (SSC) who needed evidence on Computer Games that lay buried within several categories. DCMS' helpful re-construction was, therefore, more an expedient and timely solution to a state body's 'demand' than an impartial scientific development.

For DCMS, the mapping studies (1998 and 2001), annual statistical bulletins, and research commissioned under the Creative Economy Programme (2006), were attempts to standardise and control the shape and scope of 'the creative industries' as a credible governable object. A DCMS' Creative Economy Programme Working Group report recommended:

Creative industries policy development needs to be coordinated across Government. [ ] One Government Department should take responsibility for collecting data, and providing a cross sector view on the impact of different Government policies (DCMS, 2006a: 14).

Thus, policy development was inter-departmental while data collection and evaluation were assigned to DCMS. Cultural agencies were encouraged to commission regional mapping studies that helped promote the idea of a universal, coherent definition, and generated much-needed 'evidence' of a total 'creative industries' sector (for example, BOP Consulting and University of Leeds, 2004; BOP Consulting, 2007a, 2007b).

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<sup>23</sup> This 'demand' for changes to the categories came from Skillset, the Sector Skills Council, who required data on one of its priority industrial sub-sectors - Computer Games. The previous category of Software and Electronic Publishing was too broad and overlapped with another Sector Skills Council's territory (author's prior knowledge).

In practice, however, neither an application of DET as a whole nor the 'narrower version' approach seemed to produce the desired precise measurement that governance bodies craved. SW RDA acknowledged that:

Lack of definition and constantly evolving technology has meant that the understanding of the sector and its subsequent challenges are not as instantly recognisable as with many of the more traditional sectors (SW RDA, 2006: 21).

A regional cultural agency middle manager remarked, "*I never know which statistics to use, there's so many you have to be quite careful about quoting them*" (F004). State bodies struggled to make sense of the different definitions and conflicting statistics that circulated on 'the creative industries' at national, regional and local level.

Underpinning the maelstrom of mapping work was an intense political interest in a 'knowledge-driven' economy (BERR, 1998) to replace a fast declining manufacture-based economy (Howkins, 2001; Negus and Pickering, 2004). For SW RDA (2006), 'diminishing' manufacturing outputs were compounded by a similar trend in primary industries (agriculture and extraction industries) that were traditional sources of employment and business enterprise. Economic trends identified in 'the creative industries' (of, for example, 'fast growth') and its links with 'digital media' were highly attractive prospects for economic development. A Whitehall civil servant remarked "*stick the word digital into something and you're more likely to get some support than others*" (M011). Adopted as a 'priority sector' in the regional economic strategy (SW RDA, 2006), SW RDA produced its own statistics based on a bespoke and even 'narrower version' of a DET categorisation.<sup>24</sup> For example, a regional employment count for 'the creative industries' was estimated of 'just under 55,000 people' (*ibid*, page 22). This figure differs significantly with Culture South West's (2001: 4) higher estimate of 90,000. Importantly, SW RDA's analysis revealed considerable variation of economic counts between the sub-sectors and concluded:

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<sup>24</sup> SW RDA's data analysis (2006: 22) was based on nine sub-sectors and not the full DET thirteen. An acknowledgement is made that 'These estimates under represent the full extent of the CI labour force as the figures do not include freelancers, self employed and employees working who are usually non-VAT registered companies'.

The Agency, with its partner South West Screen, has identified the 'digital media' sub-sector as a key area for support (SW RDA, 2006: 22).

Although 'digital media' was not a label used in DET, (or in SW RDA's own bespoke labels), the target was 'radio and TV' and 'computer games, software and electronic publishing'. Writers point to the obvious connections that Whitehall departments and RDAs made between digital content production and a 'new knowledge economy' (Hartley, 2002: 43). Certainly, the case studies will show how 'digital media' resonated with SW RDA's selective way of thinking about 'the creative industries'.

Looking at the source material used to define and measure 'the creative industries', it is interesting to notice the narrow range of data and commentators. Review of policy documents (see Appendix Two) shows economic counts (for example, of number of jobs and Gross Value Added) were mostly sourced from three official surveys that were published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) – namely, Annual Business Inquiry (ABI), Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) and the Labour Market Survey.

Of secondary data analysis and policy commentaries, the main producers were BOP Consulting, Demos, Frontier Economics, Nesta and The Work Foundation. Pratt observes (2006) that many protagonists in 'the creative industries' debate (as he is), are closely associated with policy think-tanks and independent research organisations. Indeed, prominent writers such as John Holden, John Howkins, Charles Leadbetter, Kate Oakley and Andy Pratt are all academics who have authored reports for influential 'think tank' organisations. Nesta is singled out by DCMS as a source of 'reliable' evidence including revisions to DET (DCMS, 2011). A DCMS official remarked:

*[ ] they [Nesta] tend to do stuff that we generally recognise as good analysis in the area, and it's often insightful and they're often addressing the questions that we, as analysts, are putting to the policy officials and then because of that, you know, there's a sort of their stuff will get listened to (M012).*

Based on the author's own experience of state-funded research, selection of a 'recognised' researcher was an important part of the commissioning process. To "get listened to", state bodies had to have evidence with traction (see above for discussion of evidence and targets). It was well-known that the publications

and pronouncements of a relatively small group of high profile policy advisors (for example, specialist consultants and think tank organisations) had considerable influence on cultural policy development.

During the Labour years, state bodies considered it prudent to either cite DCMS' statistics and analysis when lobbying and reporting, or to commission research from high profile commentators on 'the creative industries'. For example, agencies in South West England jointly commissioned a regional mapping study from BOP Consulting and University of Leeds (2004) and later, a feasibility study for the regional creative industries strategy (BOP Consulting, 2007a) and West of England Strategic Partnership (BOP Consulting, 2007b). Policy discourse analysis shows policy direction (at national, regional and local levels) was crafted by these 'experts' through state-funded commissions.

While DCMS and commissioned researchers grappled with statistical measurement of industrial categories using DET, a conceptual shift in what constituted 'the creative industries' sector began to occur from the mid 2000s onwards. This change is relevant here because of the proactive role played by state bodies and public-funded researchers (independent and academic) in this transformation and its effect on policy development and governance arrangements. From a model based on the original four FCS cultural domains and thirteen DET industrial categories (see above), a 'refined' model was developed.

Rather than cultural domains or blocks, 'the creative industries' was re-conceived as a system of inter-dependent circles or layers of creative capacities that emanated outwards from a core of content production activity. Using the same official survey datasets (mentioned above), chain modelling segmented the production process and quantified the economic values therein.

Protagonists of this type of chain modelling included BOP Consulting (Nesta, 2006b), Frontier Economics (2007) and The Work Foundation (2007) who had been so active in developing DET. First mooted by Pratt (2004), further research was commissioned under the Creative Economy Programme (Frontier Economics, 2007; The Work Foundation, 2007) and informed policy of the day –



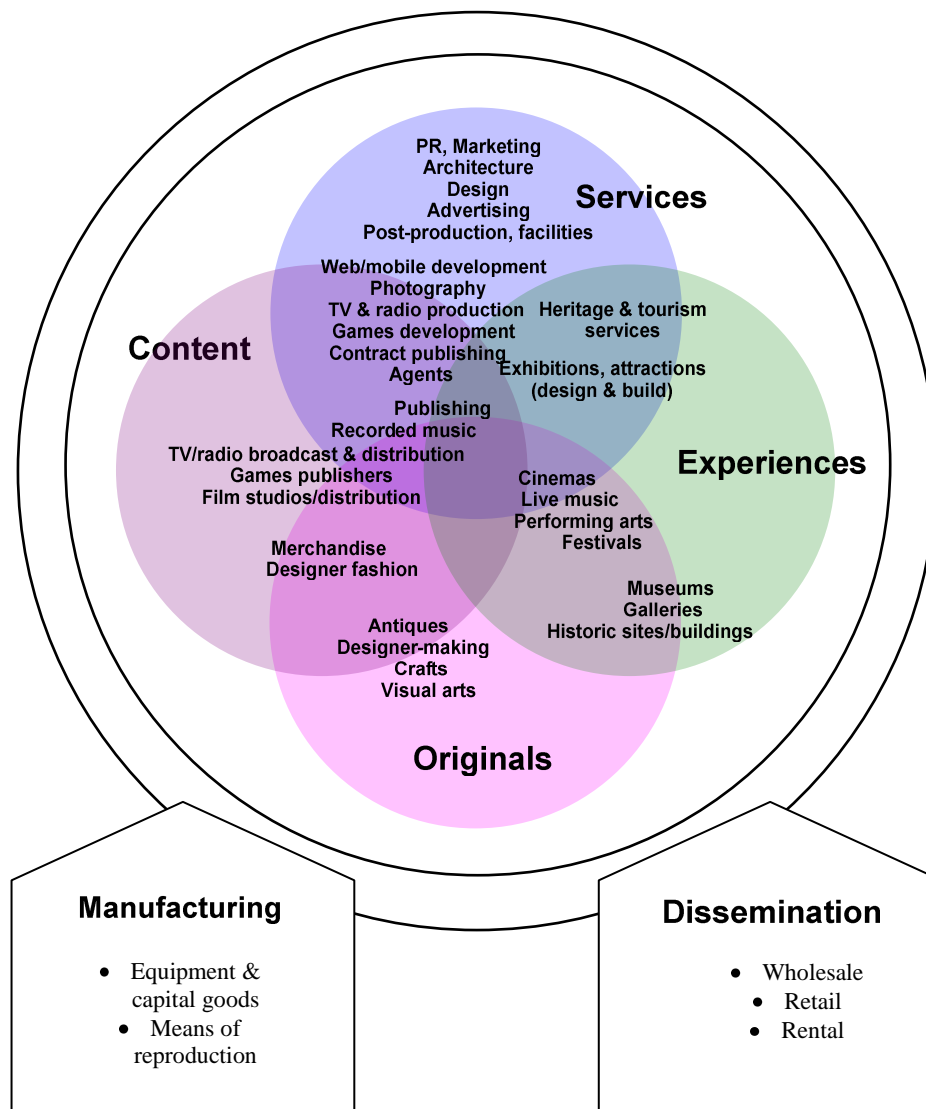
most importantly, *Creative Britain* and, at a regional scale, the *Creative Industries Strategy for the South West* (SW RDA, 2007). Before discussing the effects of re-conceptualisation, a closer look at one version will illustrate the subtle shift in thinking about 'the creative industries'. Further information on definitional models is given in Appendix Eleven.

A 'value' chain model was developed by BOP Consulting and universities of Leeds and Manchester for Nesta's report *Creating Growth* (2006b) and later used by SW RDA to inform its *Creative Industries Strategy for the South West* (2007). The model segmented 'the creative industries' into four core groups - content, services, experiences, originals, 'bringing together those sectors that have sufficient commonalities (in terms of business models, value chains, market structure and so on) as to warrant a common approach for policy' (Nesta, 2006a: 54). In addition, the model identified the 'ancillary' sub-sectors of manufacturing and dissemination (see Figure 7).

Leaving aside technical details, the chain model radically changed the way 'the creative industries' was visualised for policy purposes. From a collection of discrete blocks of cultural activity, the object was now visualised as a process of varying levels of cultural production and consumption in which creative businesses were, according to Nesta, more or less 'able and willing to innovate' (2006a: 54).

Those creative businesses with the capacity to generate economic 'value' (for example, jobs, Gross Value Added, Intellectual Property, technological innovation) were said to be located in four core segments and particularly concentrated in creative content and services. With national and regional economic growth as the principle policy drivers, and ever-increasing global competition from creative economies in other countries, Nesta recommended a more commercialised policy approach to state intervention in 'the creative industries' (2006: 4). This sent a powerful message to policy-makers and fund-holders who needed to understand the division of creative labour.

**Figure 7: To illustrate a value chain segmentation model**



Source: Reproduced from SW RDA (2007: 5) *Creative Industries Strategy: unlocking the creative business potential of the South West*.

Segmentation was especially attractive to regional economic development agencies that were dismissive of DET as an analytical tool and uninterested in non-commercial activity. A SW RDA manager explained:

*We segment the creative industries into four: content, services, originals and experiences. We're particularly interested in those businesses that have scaleable business models, because some creative industries aren't scaleable (M007).*

In other words, re-visualisation provided RDAs with a justification for a divisive approach that was endorsed by Creative Economy Programme/Whitehall. Such an approach empowered the business-facing agency to identify how and where

to intervene in 'the creative industries' chain and (as the reader will discover) to detach itself from lobbying by the regional cultural agencies.

Viewing 'the creative industries' in terms of high and low value segments was less welcome to state bodies with governance of 'low' value activity. A DCMS official commented:

*By defining creative industries as thirteen sectors and saying they exist as a group as well as individual sectors, we are probably rightly slightly cautious about the prioritisation of one sector over another. So, whilst there's obviously lots of sector specific interventions, a lot of what government's or what DCMS' role is to champion the whole lot and to try and see them together (M011).*

A regional cultural agent referred to the chain approach as a "private/public sector continuum" (F008) that tended to marginalise the public subsidised (and low value) end and other types of 'value'.

For state bodies tasked with governing segments that received high levels of public subsidy and grants such as the 'experience' group (notably live music, the performing arts, festivals), chain modelling weakened their 'evidence' and hence fund-raising powers. Culture South West and Arts Council England South West (ACE-SW), for example, encountered resistance from SW RDA to fund 'creative industries (non media)' programmes (discussed more fully in the next chapter). Of Culture South West, a SW RDA senior manager commented:

*[ ] they kept going 'but you have to give us money to do delivery because we're your strategic partner'; and we kept going 'no we don't!' And there was a tension there (M007).*

Noteworthy is the word "tension" that points to incompatibility between cultural and economic governance bodies, regarding a holistic approach to sector development. From the author's experience, regional cultural agencies (in the South West) were frustrated at SW RDA's reticence to invest in their 'creative industries' support programmes and were slow to recognise the impact of segmentation on RDA decisions to invest (or not).

Based on professional experience and research, the author contends that a fundamental misunderstanding developed between regional cultural and economic governance bodies over the nature of 'priority sector' status for the

'creative industries'. Having initiated the DET-defined sector, DCMS' directive to regional cultural NDPBs was to work with RDAs (and other governmental bodies):

We have also asked our Regional Cultural Consortiums to deliver strategies for their regions, working closely with local authorities, RDAs, cultural institutions and all regional cultural bodies (DCMS, 2001: 38).

Describing a leadership role for cultural agencies in *Leading the Good Life*, DCMS advised:

Regional bodies can also be invaluable champions, to provide a strong lead and inspire local development and commitment through strategic planning, advocacy and as funders and gateways into Government. This is especially true for Regional Cultural Consortia and Regional Development Agencies. (DCMS, 2004b: 32).

However, proactive collaboration with cultural NDPBs was not reciprocated by BERR/BIS and DTI. For example, a DTI strategy (1998) for a 'knowledge driven economy' gave direction to RDAs on building a 'digital world' but no mention is made of DCMS, cultural agencies or 'creative industries'. Although the Creative Economy Programme was an inter-departmental initiative, any economic interventions were clearly intended for RDAs as the following quote indicates:

[ ] national government and key delivery partners for the creative economy – principally the Regional Development Agencies – consider focusing their investment on supporting the type of growth that is achievable by location, rather than focusing on building for high level scalability in every context (DCMS, 2006a: 44).

Thus, RDAs were encouraged by DCMS to be selective about types of creative activity and not spread their financial resources too thinly.

Thinking back to the division of departmental responsibility for DET sub-sectors between DCMS and BERR/BIS, there seems to have been some forethought on the part of BERR/BIS about the commercial high value end of 'the creative industries'. Asked how sub-sectors were assigned, a DCMS official replied:

*I suspect it was a resource point-of-view [ ] there's only limited capacity within DCMS. [ ] it is a case of well which of these sectors need government support (M011).*

This points to BERR/BIS' greater financial resources than DCMS and, therefore,

capacity to invest in sub-sectors that were evidently more economically/commercially valuable. The split of DET sub-sectors helps to explain the *tension* and disconnect that developed between cultural and economic development bodies and how they differently understood and claimed authority over specific governance territories. With greater capacity and spend, BERR/BIS and RDAs were undoubtedly in a more powerful position to choose their governance spaces. While they were willing to name 'the creative industries' as a priority sector for strategic purposes (for example in BIS and DCMS, 2009; SW RDA, 2006; Technology Strategy Board, 2006), their actual support was focused on high growth, high value sub-sectors – that is, their lead 'digital' sub-sectors. A similar selectivity was taken by SW RDA to its leadership of a so-called 'holistic' creative industries strategy (2007: 4) but its actual 'strong focus [was] on creative content and creative service business'.

#### 4.2.3 Creative Britain onwards

Of *Creative Britain*, textual analysis suggests co-sponsorship by DCMS and BERR/BIS was a pragmatic move on the part of both departments to shift debate away from definition to a more pressing imperative to intervene. Written by DCMS as lead author, the document claimed to cover 'the whole creative process from the grassroots to global marketplace (2008: 6). But, rather than portraying a process of value accumulation (as advocated in the Creative Economy Programme's definitional work), the process was turned into a series of one-off Commitments – what one interviewee likened to "*a shopping list of stuff that had already been bought*" (F001). Starting with Commitment 1 and public subsidised, cultural policy end of 'Finding Your Talent' programme, the Commitments progressively move towards an economic agenda of state funded business support programmes and infrastructure development. Of the latter, many were assigned to RDAs such as Commitment 18 and 20 (*ibid*, see page 76-77).

Definitional vagueness was compounded by woolly policy directives set out as Commitments. Examination of those Commitments aimed at BERR/BIS and RDAs shows wording and tone were generic and linked more to pre-existing

generalist support programmes than specific new policy.<sup>25</sup> For example:

Working through the RDAs, the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) is committed to addressing the lack of financial awareness, understanding and formal investment readiness of new and growing businesses. This will include creative businesses (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 47).

At the time, BERR/BIS was already delivering this type of business support service through RDAs and Business Links. Indeed, SW RDA's 'creative industries' strategy, that was published a year earlier, mentions an objective of:

**Opening access to the benefits of globalisation** – by creating the right conditions in the region to attract international investment and by helping regional businesses to compete globally (SW RDA, 2007: 9, original emphasis).

Furthermore, Commitment 18 (page 59) sets out SW RDA's leadership of a 'regional creative economy strategic framework' (more closely examined in the next chapter). Pertinent to say here, 'helping creative businesses grow and access finance' involved Commitments that left considerable scope for state bodies to interpret their method and translate into delivery.

DCMS seems to have deliberately promoted the notion of an ill-defined 'creative hub' and 'expanded creative sector' (page 4) in order to promote the image of 'the creative industries' outside the 'DCMS 13'. A DCMS official described *Creative Britain* as:

*A promotion sort of thing; but promotion not obviously to the outside world, but to the Treasury, to other departments who might create or might be thinking about policies that might affect creative industries (M012).*

In other words, DCMS was using *Creative Britain* as a Trojan horse to carry appealing messages to more powerful Whitehall departments. That said, and given the work of the Creative Economy Programme, few references were made to definition or statistical evidence. The front cover diagram of The Work Foundation's 'concentric circles' chain model hints at the shape of 'a creative hub' but no further explanation is found inside. A map of 'creative industries firm density in the UK' (based on Frontier Economics' supply chain modelling) is

<sup>25</sup> Rather than new policy or new initiatives in *Creative Britain*, BERR/BIS' Commitments tended to focus on pre-existent business support mechanisms such as Business Links and regional networks (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 45-46).

appended (*ibid*, page 70) but again without citation or explanation.<sup>26</sup> As a heuristic device, the policy document turned the ‘creative industries’ narrative away from individual artforms and sub-sectors towards amorphous ‘creative businesses’.

Arguably, *Creative Britain* marked a watershed in attempts to define and quantify ‘the creative industries’ for policy purposes. By 2008, neither a DET or chain model visualisation was entirely satisfactory as a way of thinking about content production and implementation of a ‘creative economy’ policy, from a cultural or economic perspective. Policy discourse in *Creative Britain* suggests a deliberate move by Government to abandon exhaustive work on definition and measurement in favour of a taken-for-granted object - ‘the creative industries’ – and its importance to a wider ‘creative economy’. With excessive use of the word ‘creative’ as a prefix (in total 599 mentions including ‘creative’ Britain, industries, hub, economy, talent and life), the document implies an object no longer in need of definition or disaggregated measurement. *Creative Britain’s* Foreword by the Prime Minister and six ministers, and the twenty-six Commitments assigned to various state bodies, all suggest an object understood and governable.

One further point should be highlighted about the implications of re-imagining ‘the creative industries’ as a value chain. That is, the technique significantly increased statistical ‘evidence’. For statistical purposes, values generated in the core ‘DCMS 13’ were supplemented with ‘spill over’ values from ‘other industries’ in the ‘expanded creative sector’. To explain, people working in creative occupations, located in non creative businesses, were captured in a chain model. An example might include designers working in aerospace and engineering businesses. A ‘core+other’ concept dramatically inflated the numbers. Rounded up to ‘Two million’ employed in ‘the creative industries’ in

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<sup>26</sup> The ‘creative hub’ that features in *Creative Britain* is based on The Work Foundation’s ‘concentric circles’ chain model from *Staying Ahead* (2007), and reproduced on the front and back covers. pages 2 and 3. However, Frontier Economics’ work on ‘supply’ chain modelling (2007a, 2007b) is used for the economic values cited in the document (for example, page 6 and 41) and a poorly reproduced map of UK creative business clusters on page 70. Bizarrely, the map does not show significant densities of creative business activity in the South West or any named cities in that region, and yet the South West is identified in Commitment 18 as one of two regions for RDAs to be ‘Supporting creative clusters’ (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 59).

*Creative Britain*, DCMS estimated:

[ ] creative employment totalled 1.8 million jobs. This comprised just over 1 million jobs in the Creative Industries and a further 780,000 creative jobs within businesses outside these industries (DCMS, 2006c: 2).

By 2010, further analysis of creative occupations led DCMS to report:

[ ] creative employment totalled just under 2.3 million jobs. This consisted of just under 1.3 million jobs in the Creative Industries and just under 1 million further creative jobs in businesses outside these (DCMS, 2010: 4).

It is worth noting, however, that the 2010 estimate of employment at 2.3 million was revised down to 1.5 million in 2011 after doubts were cast on such an unbelievable increase.<sup>27</sup> The point is that the 'core+other' model generated impressive statistics for DCMS and cultural agencies to report and use for lobbying (Frontier Economics, 2006; Nesta, 2006a, 2007). Also, for those named as delivery agents in *Creative Britain* (such as Arts Council England, Regional Screen Agencies and RDAs), chain modelling encouraged a less bounded way of thinking about their governance space, and a reach into 'other' policy areas.

By 2009, DCMS' policy agenda was complicated by a number of events, including the run-up to London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games (and massive budget overspend), digital switchover from analogue transmission in 2012, severe public spending cuts across DCMS' sixty sponsored bodies and a deepening economic crisis (Cabinet Office, 2009).<sup>28</sup> Sir Gus O'Donnell, Cabinet Secretary urged DCMS in the Capability Review report,

To meet increasing public expectations, it will be important for departments to enhance their delivery capability and to improve the way they work across departmental and sector boundaries (Cabinet Office, 2009: 2).

DCMS' talk of a 'creative hub' and 'expanded creative sector' to be delivered

<sup>27</sup> A new 'dynamic' mapping of 'the creative industries' has been undertaken by Nesta (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a) to address DCMS' inconsistent and problematic data. The research found an employment figure of 2.5 million in the 'creative economy' based on a new model. This suggests *big numbers* remain an important part of imagining a 'creative economy'.

<sup>28</sup> In 2009, DCMS' declared aim was 'to improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities, to support the pursuit of excellence and to champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries. It brings together responsibilities for government policy on the arts, sport, the National Lottery, tourism, libraries, museums and galleries, broadcasting, creative industries including film and the music industry, press freedom and regulation, licensing, gambling and the historic environment. DCMS is the host department of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games' (Cabinet Office, 2009: 9).



across departments, as promoted in *Creative Britain*, was perhaps a timely step towards the Cabinet Office's desired improvement. But Government required a much more economised and 'targeted' approach. *Digital Britain* (BIS and DCMS, 2009: 8) urged state bodies to pursue a new 'Industrial Activism' where 'markets meet public policy'. Government's over-riding directive was for state bodies to proactively support high value activity in the private sector. From an imagined 'creative economy' to a 'digital economy', state bodies were forced to address economic crisis through a Treasury and BERR/BIS' lens.

The need to find and exploit 'high value' activity was flagged up in key national policy documents of the day. Most importantly, *New Industry, New Jobs* (BIS, 2009) singled out high value sectors including 'the creative industries':

We will be depending more than ever on higher value goods and services to drive exports and growth (BIS, 2009: 4).

Driven by financial crisis and need to demonstrate economic recovery, the co-sponsors of *Digital Britain* (this time authored by BIS) asserted:

[ ] we also need a digital framework for the creative industries and a commitment to the creative industries grounded in the belief that they can be scaled and industrialised in the same way as other successful high-technology, knowledge industries such as bio-sciences have been (BIS and DCMS, 2009: 105).

Noteworthy here, is the overt harder-edged approach to state investment and public-private partnership than that of *Creative Britain's* 'new talents for the new economy' (that acknowledged both low and high values).

Like value chain modelling, Industrial Activism and BERR/BIS' directives to RDAs had a mixed reception from regional bodies. For SW RDA, central Government policy documents strengthened a segmentation approach to 'the creative industries'. A SW RDA senior manager explained:

*When I started three years ago, there was a distinct discontinuity between the government and what it did centrally, and the regions and what we did, and what the sub-regions and local authorities did. Each one did its own thing. What has happened in the last year, with Mandelson coming in, is quite a dramatic change. One which I think, from my point-of-view is really good (M007).*

Thus, SW RDA felt empowered to select those creative businesses that were

'scaleable' (and would generate high production values) and leave governance of the *unscaleable* rest to regional cultural agencies.<sup>29</sup> As we will discover, this arrangement was not entirely compatible with delivery of DCMS' Commitments in the South West.

Labour's focus on 'scaleable' businesses and 'the creative industries' was explained in *Digital Britain*:

[ ] grounded in the belief that they can be scaled and industrialised in the same way as other successful high technology, knowledge industries such as bio-sciences (BIS, 2009: 105).

However, this cultural political economic strategy made several flawed assumptions about regional state bodies. First, state bodies such as RDAs and regional cultural agencies were assumed to know which segments and individual businesses would expand from small to large scale - and were willing to cooperate.

Chain model studies (for example, BOP Consulting, 2007a and SW RDA, 2006) only identified broad segments and not individual businesses. A SW RDA senior manager confidently asserted that some businesses in 'the creative industries' were *unscaleable* because "*the proprietors aren't interested or, if it's an artist painting, he or she only paints*" (M007). Such comments suggest SW RDA's decisions were based more on subjective bias than objective analysis.

Secondly, the strategy ignored national and regional research that consistently found creative businesses were characteristically small and micro sized with modes of production suited to small-scale operation (BOP Consulting, 2007a; Frontier Economics, 2006; Nesta, 2006b). At a moment of national economic crisis, Industrial Activism seems to have been a doctrine borne of desperation and ill-suited to businesses categorised as 'creative industries'. With major spending cuts imposed across the public sector from 2009 onwards, regional state bodies had very limited resources to invest in 'scaling' businesses. As will be revealed in the case study of South West Creative Economy Partnership

<sup>29</sup> SW RDA prioritised 'scaleable' businesses including creative content producers. That is, businesses 'having products, processes and a culture that enables increasing sales. This is often evidenced by a business' ability to recognise and adopt technology in both its production and distribution processes' (SW RDA, 2007: 6).

(SW CEP), a lack of financial resources was a major brake on its capacity to intervene. Before closing, SW CEP commissioned a report whose conclusions pointed regional bodies towards 'a new kind of economy that combines economic, cultural and creative growth in a sustainable way' (J3S, 2010: 14). Given the political and economic climate in early 2010, a 'new economy' was probably the best way of re-conceptualising 'the creative industries'.

Before examining the language of statehood, Figure 8 summarises major events in evolution of 'the creative industries' imaginary and key national and regional policy documents that were used for its governance in South West England.

**Figure 8: To show major events in evolution of ‘the creative industries’ imaginary and key policy documents**

NATIONAL		REGIONAL
1st Creative Industries Mapping Document published by DCMS 1998	Creative Industries Task Force set up by DCMS 1997 <i>Our Competitive Future: building a knowledge-driven economy</i> White Paper published Jun 1998	
2nd Creative Industries Mapping Document published by DCMS 2001	<i>Culture and Creativity: the next 10 years (Green Paper)</i> published by DCMS Mar 2001	<i>Stepping into the Creative Industries</i> published by Culture SW 2001 <i>In Search of Chunky Dunsters: regional cultural strategy</i> published by Culture South West 2001
Creative Industries Economic Estimates first published by DCMS 2002	Creative Economy Programme 2005-2007 Including Frontier Economics research published Aug 2006 <i>Cox Review of Creativity in Business</i> published by HM Treasury Nov 2005	<i>Creative Industries Mapping and Economic Impact Study</i> published by Culture SW & SW RDA Mar 2004 <i>Strategy for the Development of the Media Industries</i> published by SW Screen Nov 2004 <i>Creative Industries (non media) Sector Strategy</i> published by Culture SW Jul 2005
The Work Foundation <i>Staying Ahead</i> report published Jun 2007	<i>Creative Britain</i> published by DCMS, BERR & DIUS Feb 2008	<i>Regional Economic Strategy for the South West of England</i> published by SW RDA 2006 <i>Creative Industry Collaborations</i> published by SW RDA Mar 2007 <i>Creative Industries Strategy</i> published by SW RDA Jun 2007 <i>A better place to be: regional cultural strategy</i> published by Culture SW Sep 2008
<i>New Industry, New Jobs</i> published by BIS Apr 2009	<i>Digital Britain</i> published by BIS & DCMS Jun 2009	<i>South West region: Creative Economy Framework</i> published by Culture SW May 2009 <i>South West Creative Economy Partnership concluding statement</i> published by SW RDA Jan 2010 <i>Nubs and Networks</i> unpublished by J3S for SW RDA Feb 2010

### 4.3 Articulation of ‘the creative industries’

Looking at creative industries policy documents from a language perspective, some interesting insights are revealed in the territorial shifts and obfuscation of state bodies.<sup>30</sup> Changes to definitions and methodologies were, as discussed above, closely connected to how policy for ‘the creative industries’ was developed, narrated and understood. Between 2001 and 2007, a plethora of bespoke mapping studies were commissioned at national, regional and local level (Pratt, 2004b). Multiple definitions and a profusion of statistics were consequently in circulation at any one time, which were then selected and cited by politicians and state bodies in their speeches, strategies and policy statements. Critical analysis of this material uncovers several different versions of ‘the creative industries’ story (over and above definition issues). To illuminate the relationship between imagined object and power relations, this section examines the language of these stories in a governance context and the South West region in particular.

Discourse on notions of creativity, innovation and a knowledge-intensive economy (all ingredients of the creative industry story) was accompanied by excessive enthusiasm for the prefix ‘creative’ with little explanation of what it actually meant. For example, writers imagined ‘the creative economy’ (Howkins, 2001), ‘creative class’ (Florida, 2002), ‘creative talent’ (The Work Foundation, 2007) and ‘creative hub’ (BOP Consulting, 2007a; DCMS *et al*, 2008).

Interestingly, DCMS’ policy documents promiscuously blend a number of different spatial configurations. In *Creative Britain*, for example, the policy object was variously described as ‘expanded creative sector’ (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 4), ‘creative and cultural sectors’ (*ibid*, page 17), ‘creative and cultural industries’ (*ibid*, page 25) and ‘the creative industry’ (*ibid*, page 42). To be pedantic, ‘creative industries’ was technically a sub-grouping within ‘the cultural industries’ and not an additional set of cultural activities (DCMS, 1998, 2001a). A similar cavalier approach was taken to the word ‘digital’ such as in *Digital Britain*. Asked to explain the shift from a ‘creative economy’ in 2008 to a ‘digital economy’ in 2009, a DCMS official observed:

<sup>30</sup> For a list of policy documents see Appendix Two.

*I could never fathom the difference, really [ ] the idea was that the creative economy was sort of part of the digital economy like some sort of Venn diagram, but no one really bothered to draw out the Venn diagram (M012).*

A noticeable difference is discernable between policy documents produced by DCMS and cultural policy facing NDPBs and BERR/BIS and its NDPBs. The former were more likely to use 'creative' in the title whereas the latter preferred 'digital' (see Appendix Two for a list of policy documents).

Introduced into national policy discourse by the new DCMS, ministerial prose on 'the creative industries' quickly became bombastic in style and content. As early as 2001, the then Secretary of State at DCMS, Chris Smith, was convinced that 'the creative industries' 'have moved from the fringes to the mainstream' (DCMS, 2001: 3). Minister for Creative Industries at DCMS, Shaun Woodward, declared 'One thing I will continue to guarantee is that the days of culture and creativity resting in the margins of Government thinking are well and truly past' (Woodward, 2006: 13). However, two years later (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 4), Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Andy Burnham, asserted the sector 'must move from the margins to the mainstream of policy thinking'. Confused messages and political sound bites also surrounded usage of 'world's creative hub'. In June 2005, DCMS Secretary of State, James Purnell talked of 'making Britain the 'world's creative hub'.<sup>31</sup> At the launch of The Work Foundation's *Staying Ahead* (June 2007), Prime Minister Tony Blair announced 'we have become the world's creative hub'.<sup>32</sup> However, in February 2008 *Creative Britain's* ministerial authors were only just setting off on a journey of 'making Britain the world's creative hub'! This prose exemplifies the mix of political rhetoric and catch phrases that are repeatedly used in national and regional policy documents to narrate 'the creative industries' imaginary and its link to political goals.

Further scrutiny of policy documents reveals other ways in which phrases were deliberately (mis)used by state bodies. Linguistic transitions show that, as citation of 'the creative industries' increased in departmental texts, state bodies became emboldened to extend their territories. For example, publications by

<sup>31</sup> A speech made by Rt Hon James Purnell MP on 16 June 2005 to the Institute of Public Policy Research, London, *Making Britain the World's Creative Hub*.

<sup>32</sup> A speech made at Tate Modern, London on June 2007 by Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Arts Council England (2008) and Creative and Cultural Skills (C&C Skills, 2008; Tims and Wright, 2007) claim governance over 'the creative industries' but the agencies' remit were technically much narrower spreads of cultural activities.<sup>33</sup> By contrast, documents published by UK Film Council either avoid the phrase altogether (UK Film Council, 2007) or else assert film and moving image to be a 'central part of the UK's creative industries' (UK Film Council, 2000: 1). Regional Screen Agencies such as South West Screen took an expansionist and pragmatic approach, shifting from a strategic remit over 'media industries' in the early 2000s (South West Screen, 2004) to a more extended one of 'Delivering the Creative Industries Strategy for the South West region' (South West Screen, 2008: 7). Given the inter-relationship between state power and an agency's public spending allocation (mentioned earlier), it is perhaps understandable that state bodies took advantage of conceptual slipperiness to engage in territorial 'creep' to enhance their sphere of influence and fund-raising powers. This observation will be explored further in the case study of South West Screen whose marking territory was especially proactive.

Regarding the citation and liberal use of quantitative data in a governance context, Mark Twain's adage comes to mind here. He wrote 'there are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics' (1906). This is not to imply state bodies were telling lies but their handling of statistics was sometimes dubious (Crompton, 2006). Indeed, Labour set up the UK Statistics Authority in 2007 to tackle lack of ministerial and public confidence in official data including that produced by state bodies.<sup>34</sup> Bearing in mind criticism of DCMS' statistical bulletins and yearly methodological changes (described earlier), it is perhaps understandable that national and regional cultural agencies took a 'pick and mix' approach to statistics. However, DCMS was keen to promote itself as the authoritative source of 'official' data, asserting:

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<sup>33</sup> As state sponsored bodies, Arts Council England and Creative and Cultural Skills both hold delegated responsibilities for specific areas of cultural policy, the former's focused on 'the arts' and the latter's on 'the arts and heritage'. Technically, neither territory covers the full spread of 'creative industries' as defined by DET.

<sup>34</sup> Under Labour's 2007 Statistics Act, the UK Statistics Authority was set up as an 'arms length' body to manage and monitor the Office for National Statistics for 'the public good' (online, 12 December 2012, <<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/index.html>>).

The figures produced are a vital source of information for many people who develop policy for, champion or work within the Creative Industries. They are one of the only data sources available in this area (DCMS, 2011: 7).

With the delegated lead role for evidence-gathering and analysis of ‘the creative industries’ (DCMS, 2005), DCMS needed to ensure state bodies cited approved statistics as ‘evidence’. Textual analysis of national and regional policy documents shows state bodies were, on the whole, compliant with this directive but harvested data from many different sources (for example, Culture South West, 2008a; SW RDA, 2006; South West Screen, 2010).

Asked about the role of quantitative data in national policy-making, a DCMS official described the process as:

*[Data] get into a briefing just before a speech kind of thing, then the minister knows about it, he sees it and they start repeating it. And particularly if there’s a number like ‘ten percent’ or ‘thirteen million’ or something like that – they love the big numbers, they love the sort of percentages. And then that starts to sort of coalesce into a kind of hardened view in their minds (M011).*

The *big numbers* featured in, for example: *Creative Britain* and the ‘two million’ employed; Nesta’s *The vital 6 per cent* report (2009); and the regional employment figure of 144,000 in SW RDA’s ‘creative industries’ strategy (2007). For specific policy areas, statistics were also an all-important ingredient of the decision-making process as in proposals for film tax relief (HM Treasury, 2005), regulation of public service broadcasting (BIS and DCMS, 2009) and cultural infrastructure plans (Culture South West, 2008b; Curson *et al*, 2007).<sup>35</sup>

Findings from research interviews revealed other and more subtle and flexible ways in which ‘facts and figures’ were used by ministers and state bodies. Contrary to DCMS’ written assertion of a ‘robust and reliable evidence-base’ (2004: 1), an interviewed DCMS official described the annual statistical estimates as:

*[ ] they produce headline findings, they don’t do much more than that; and so the purpose of them is more profile raising, championing the kind of key figures that they can throw out there saying the creative industries are worth 6.2% of the economy (M011).*

<sup>35</sup> An example of the use of statistics in policy-making is exemplified by the Reform of Film Tax Relief consultation outcomes reported by HM Treasury (HMRC, online, accessed 12 December 2012, <<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/films/reforms.htm>>).



Interviewees also revealed how statistics were not always heeded. Asked about the importance of statistical data to ministerial decisions, a DCMS official replied:

*They'll usually sort of start off by saying a thing's important, but then it'll emerge what's really important [ ]. Uppermost in their mind is the party and their political position as a voted-in-MP. So they need to do what's good within their party and how they look to their peers [ ], they need to sort of show that they're effective (M012).*

The point here is that political rhetoric and *big numbers* were vital parts of the changing 'creative industries' narrative but, as the story changed, so the choice of statistics changed. From interviews and the author's experience, politicians and state bodies were not always reading from the same page!

At a regional level, statistics and political prose formed a key component of the regional development strategies for 'the creative industries' (South West Screen, 2004; Culture South West, 2005a). Written as funding applications to SW RDA, the construction of these documents was described by Culture South West as:

[ ] one of translating intelligence into priorities for intervention, and of developing structures and mechanisms for investment which meet sector needs whilst making sense within the evolving regional policy context (Culture South West, 2005a: 10).

Both strategy documents relied on statistical *intelligence* to present a persuasive story to SW RDA based on the premise that: 'the creative industries' was proven to be an economically successful sector but faced acute economic challenges. The rationale was articulated as: 'the creative industries' sector generates wealth and is 'fast growing' (citing statistics); developing the sector has knock-on effects on other sectors (invoking other SW RDA 'priority sectors' such as the ICT and tourist industries) and a positive impact on social and urban development (citing project exemplars); but further success and economic growth are threatened by competition from other regions and countries (more statistics); regional cultural agencies need RDA monies to deliver bespoke programmes that will overcome threats and raise productivity levels (citing speculative statistical projections).

A 'carrot and stick' appeal to SW RDA was heavily reliant on the credibility of each agency's story and fit with SW RDA's own interpretation of 'the creative industries'. For South West Screen, RDA funds were needed for investment in 'the media industries' because of their superior economic performance, declaring:

The Media Industries are a significant sector within Creative Industries nationally and regionally, providing more than 60% of the total Creative Industries' revenue in the South West (South West Screen, 2004: 3).

Culture South West and co-bidder Arts Council England South West chose to tell a more awkward story of 'Creative Industries (non media)' and offered alternative *big numbers*, claiming:

The non media sub-sectors, even excluding the music and advertising industries (classified as media under the DET), were found to employ 68% of the region's Creative Industries workforce, to be increasing their share of regional employment in a more secure pattern than that found in the media sub-sectors, and to be producing 53% of the sector's Gross Value Added (Culture South West, 2005a: 10).

In other words, two state bodies selected statistical data to suit their particular governance territories and rendered it appealing to SW RDA. Interestingly, the division between 'media' and 'non media' industries was unique to agencies in the South West region. The distinction was originally imposed by SW RDA's 'creative industries sector' team in an attempt to make sense of different regional cultural agencies and their state spaces (and discussed more fully in the case studies).

It was well known amongst the three main regional specialist development bodies involved in the 'creative industries' (Arts Council England South West, Culture South West and South West Screen), that SW RDA was sceptical of DCMS mapping data and hyperbole. One regional cultural agent commented:

*We're constantly giving them [SW RDA] evidence or case studies to kind of lobby around our work on the creative economy and they still don't quite get it (F013).*

SW RDA's lack of trust is indicated by the amount of research that it commissioned. Not only did SW RDA co-commission a major regional mapping study with the cultural agencies (BOP Consulting and University of Leeds,

2004), but commissioned additional quantitative studies (Arthur D Little, 2003, 2004; BOP Consulting, 2007a).

A sense of SW RDA's reticence is given by a regional cultural agent who ruefully remarked:

*we must have signed six contracts with the RDA and each one you had to take a step back, write a strategy, write a business plan, justify it, go through all of the hoops and then deliver a year programme in six months (M005).*

SW RDA's doubts were in part founded on an unfamiliarity with the cultural sector and a 'creative industries' concept, and partly a reluctance to invest in perceived 'life style' and 'unscaleable' activities that were already publicly subsidised by, or the responsibility of, Arts Council England and lottery distributors. From the author's experience and conversations with state personnel, SW RDA struggled to understand both the 'media industries' story (South West Screen, 2004) and 'non media' story (Culture South West, 2005a).

Reflecting on SW RDA's reticence and focus on an economic and regional growth agenda, it is perhaps unsurprising that SW RDA was cautious about delegating funds to agencies whose goals were *de facto* mostly cultural development ones. SW RDA needed hard quantitative economic 'evidence of achievements' to report back up to BERR/BIS but their research indicated that not all parts of 'the creative industries' spectrum (media and non media) were 'fast growing' or *scaleable* (see earlier discussion). While 'the creative industries' was identified as a 'key sector' and included in the Regional Economic Strategy (Arthur D Little, 2004; SW RDA, 2003, 2006), the document failed to mention that this status did not apply across all 'DCMS 13'. Like most other RDAs, SW RDA Identified the popular 'creative industries' as a 'key sector' but was selective in its interventions. It was not until SW RDA's Creative Industries Manager wrote a *Creative Industries Strategy for the South West* (2007) that the selectivity was made explicit.

Published almost a year before *Creative Britain*, SW RDA's regional strategy for 'the creative industries' (2007) contains some notable linguistic manoeuvres. First, ownership and leadership of the strategy were unilaterally claimed by 'the

Agency', with little acknowledgement of DCMS' sponsored bodies or cultural agenda. SW RDA asserted:

a series of targeted interventions through strategic investments where the Agency can make significant impact on business potential – acting as a leader / catalyst (*ibid*, page 6).

Drawing on BOP Consulting's value chain model and regional consultation (2007a) as evidence, SW RDA declared 'a significant change in the focus of our Strategy – with a re-orientation of staff and financial resources' (SW RDA, 2007: 9).

Secondly, readers were left in no doubt that only segments of 'the creative industries' would be supported:

The Agency will utilise a series of enabling, transformational interventions. These interventions will be particularly targeted around businesses with scaleable models – most typically found in the creative content and creative service sub sectors (2007: 8).

Specifically, the arbiter of a 'scaleable' business model and target 'sub sectors' was SW RDA itself.

And third, the narrative connected SW RDA to national policy-makers by linking the regional strategy to the as yet 'unpublished national Green Paper'.<sup>36</sup> Both documents use phrases such as 'creative talent' and 'the world's creative hub' (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 5; SW RDA, 2007: 8). Indeed, SW RDA announced the formation and functions of a 'new' body – South West Creative Economy Partnership (SW CEP) (*ibid*, page 17) that reappeared almost *ad verbatim* as a 'new' pilot in *Creative Britain's* Commitment 18. These manoeuvres exemplify some of the key concepts that this thesis seeks to illuminate, of the multi-scalar nature of governance, re-scaling of state space at the micro level and the role of economic imaginaries.

With control over BERR/BIS funds for regional interventions (albeit relatively small amounts), 'the Agency' tightened its grip on 'creative industries'

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<sup>36</sup> Publication of *Creative Britain* was expected as a Green Paper sometime in early 2007 but was its official status was down-graded to an ordinary governmental publication when it finally appeared in February 2008.

governance bodies by proposing (and later funding) the ‘new’ body - SW CEP.<sup>37</sup> Why did SW RDA use the word ‘new’ (SW RDA, 2007: 6) when the proposed members (*ibid*, page 17) were already meeting as a group under the auspices of Culture South West? Leaving aside the issue of ‘who’ set up SW CEP (discussed later in the case studies), the document aggressively re-shaped hierarchies at regional level and positioned ‘the Agency’ as the major player. SW RDA’s language deliberately conveyed a hegemonic message of authority and governance superiority to regional cultural agencies and to those creative businesses it sought to engage.

Analysis of policy documents (including SW RDA’s) reveals a tactic of making linguistic connections to Government departments and key national and regional policy documents, and supplemented with “*big numbers*”. Policy documents provided state bodies with a means of public self-promotion and aggrandisement. A liberal use was made of ‘we’ and ‘our’ to convey governance ownership, patronage and success. For example, SW RDA Chairman Juliet Williams invoked the influential *Staying ahead* report (The Work Foundation, 2007) to make a dubious connection for SW RDA’s actions:

Here in the South West we are making great strides in encouraging creative economy growth, many of which were recommendations in the Work Foundation report (Williams, 2007).<sup>38</sup>

Textual analysis of policy documents and speeches shows state bodies (and politicians) tended to parrot prosaic conceptual thinking on ‘the creative industries’, ‘creative economy’, ‘world’s creative hub’ *et al.* State bodies became adept at selecting phrases and composing their texts to mimic the political contingencies of the day.

#### 4.4 Summary

In summary, the chapter explored the nature and scope of ‘the creative

<sup>37</sup> SW RDA’s ‘transformational’ strategy involved reducing the agency’s ‘current baseline of £1.5 million to £1m pa in 2010/11’ (SW RDA, 2007: 23). Given SW RDA’s allocation of £100,000 to SW CEP and its own ‘targeted interventions’, the funds awarded to other state bodies including the ‘key partners’ must have been very small!

<sup>38</sup> A speech by Juliet Williams at the Creative Economy Summit South West that was held in Bristol on 03 July 2007 (Williams, 2007, online, accessed 17 September 2010, <[http://www.swslim.org.uk/news/news\\_detail\\_page.asp?News\\_ID=1211](http://www.swslim.org.uk/news/news_detail_page.asp?News_ID=1211)>).

industries' as concept and object, and in relation to historical and geographical shifts in political thinking about cultural modes of production over the past two decades. Starting with ideas about definition and measurement, the DCMS Evidence Toolkit (DET) became the governmentally approved standard taxonomy. There was not, however, consensus amongst state bodies on how to interpret, narrate and explain this cultural-economic imaginary at the macro and micro level. A key finding is that 'the creative industries' emerged as an 'imaginary of power' that fitted specific spatial-temporal circumstances. Adopted by politicians and state bodies from the beginning of the 1997 Labour administration, the imaginary served different purposes. For regional bodies, it proved an effective way of marking, defending and articulating state governance space.

Researchers (academic and independent) in 'creative industries' studies, display an enduring fascination with definitional models and numerical accuracy (BOP Consulting, 2010; Chapain *et al*, 2010; Higgs and Cunningham, 2008). Meanwhile politicians and state bodies have taken a more pragmatic and cavalier approach. Under Labour, a lexicon of definitional language and political rhetoric were developed and selectively used by state bodies to articulate versions of 'the creative industries' story. For regional bodies, different definitional models were important hegemonic tools, or imaginaries of power, that they used to practice governance in the South West region. From the heady days of a 'fast growing' creative sector, policy focus turned in economic crisis to high-value 'scaleable' creative businesses and definitional debates became an irrelevance.

In terms of implications for future research, the chapter points to important issues for on-going debate in governmental and academic literature. First, the search for a universal definitional model and data accuracy remains a dominant and contested topic. It was one of the first issues tackled by the new Creative Industries Council set up by the Coalition Government (chaired by a joint DCMS and BIS minister). Moreover, DCMS is currently reviewing classification codes for 'the creative industries'. The department website declares the aim to 'grasp the nettle of how we measure the contribution of the creative industries

(including crafts) to our economy' (DCMS, 2013, online).<sup>39</sup> A new 'dynamic mapping' model from Nesta (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a) and an assertive 'manifesto for the creative economy' (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013b) are driving an agenda for state-funded interventions. So, what is new? These developments are reminiscent of DCMS' initiatives in the early 2000's. Further research might usefully pick up the discourse presented in the thesis that addresses the semiotic dimensions to re-visualisations of 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy'. With no regional intermediaries in place as translators and promoters, there is an issue of the imaginary 'lost in translation' between the macro (of national and international) level and micro level.

The chapter has shown that attempts to fill the statistical 'evidence' vacuum are perceived to be inter-related to better policy-making and tracking economic performance. But as in the past, quantification research and related policy recommendations avoid a more fundamental analysis of the state apparatus. This gap suggests a second area for future research – that is the connection between a re-imagined 'creative economy' and an effective mechanism for its delivery. Under a UK Coalition Government, the state landscape has significantly changed but policy is still assumed to be the responsibility of major state bodies (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013b) including Arts Council England, Creative England, Creative Skillset, Design Council and Research Councils. The author's research explores this issue of effectiveness of state structures and practices at the micro level but there is scope for further research at different scales.

Of definitional and modelling literature produced during the Labour period, the thesis contributes to a more nuanced way of understanding their evolutions and applications. Taking a critical realist-interpretivist stance, and introducing state theory concepts, the author argues for a geo-political aspect to definitions and articulations of 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy'. Her work-based recollections and critical policy discourse analysis adds a richer depth to this sometimes arid area of study.

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<sup>39</sup> DCMS (2013) *Classifying and measuring the creative industries: Consultation on proposed changes*, DCMS, London, online, accessed 18 June 2013, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/classifying-and-measuring-the-creative-industries-consultation-on-proposed-changes>>.

Analysis of the 'creative industries' imaginary shows that it is entering a new stage. Most notably, the state is said to be 'rolling back' from direct intervention in economic activity while information and communication technologies continue to radically transform the way creative content is produced and consumed. Similarly, intermediation is shifting away from state involvement towards more public engagement in a new associational 'creative economy' (Taylor, 2013). It is evident that policy-makers' attention is on high value, 'creative intense' businesses (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a, 2013b), the conundrum of regulation and the dominant goal of economic growth. Analysis presented in this chapter will have a bearing on an as yet tentative debate about the nature of a re-imagined 'creative economy in a (post) neo-liberal regime and the role of state messengers.



## Chapter 5: Policy Environment for the Creative Industries

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*We have become the world's creative hub. We have the most innovative designers and architects, the most popular museums and galleries, the biggest art market, the greatest theatres.*

(Prime Minister Tony Blair, 6 March 2007 speech, Tate Modern, London)

### 5.1 Introduction

Looking at definitional and narrative evolutions of 'the creative industries' concept, the previous chapter pointed to the multi-dimensional and multi-directional nature of policy development and delivery at national and regional level. Politicians, policy advisors and state bodies were proactive players in conceptualisation and take-up of the 'creative economy' story (DCMS *et al*, 2008). To date, policy discourse on 'creative industries' (academic and independent) tends to focus on the object and its proof of concept. The author's contribution is to offer a more fundamental, critical and situated exploration of policy development in which 'the creative industries' evolved as a governable object. To this end, governance arrangements are examined in the context of first national policy evolutions and second, regional ones.

Focusing on inter-relationships, the author will show how moments of coalescence and coherence emerged in the otherwise volatile and failure-prone processes and practices of state governance at the regional scale - sometimes the effect of deliberate acts by state bodies, and sometimes a serendipitous effect. Regardless of circumstance, these spatial and temporal 'moments' (Jones, 2009a) will demonstrate how 'peopled organisations' (Jones *et al*, 2004) shape and are shaped by state forces.

### 5.2 Policy context

Exploring 'the creative industries' from a relational geography perspective, Roger Lee's work on 'circuits' of economies (2008) is a helpful entry point. His analysis suggests interplays within, and between, notions of 'the creative industries' and a creative (or knowledge-based) economy, between certain policy directives and governance structures. Notably, evolution of 'the creative

industries' as a concept is viewed as a process that is designed to sit alongside New Labour's policy imperative of economic growth and the subsidiary ones of cultural and social policy reform. These connections will become more obvious as the chapter progresses. So far, the author's discourse on conceptual definition and articulation has traced some of the major events in this process (see Figure 7 in the previous chapter). From economisation of cultural domains (for example, research by BOP Consulting and University of Leeds, 2004; DCMS, 1998, 2001a), attention turned to other visualisations and culturalisation of economic policy (Nesta, 2006b), translation into national policy directives (DCMS, 2004b; DCMS *et al*, 2008; BIS and DCMS, 2009) and integration into regional policy frameworks (Culture South West, 2008a; SW RDA, 2007).

Throughout these complex and inter-connected processes, 'the creative industries' proved a remarkably malleable imaginary for state bodies to mould and apply. Discourses on contemporary policy developments often seek to frame the process as one of economisation or culturalisation. For some, the process added an economic value dimension to traditional cultural policy (O'Connor, 2007; Cunningham, 2006; Pratt, 2009a), and for others, the process added a cultural dimension to the economy (Howkins, 2001; Potts *et al*, 2008). The author's research found both processes at work in the complex world of governing an economic-cultural object.

For New Labour, the 'creative economy' agenda' also proved a multi-purpose tool when promoting a mode of 'joined up' governance. The imaginary was attached to multiple goals including: economic growth, increased foreign trade, product innovation, talent development, computer literacy, urban regeneration and community cohesion (Garnham, 2001; Leadbetter and Oakley, 2004). A sequence of events and policy realms were connected together in, for example, *Digital Britain*:

The 2008 Report 'Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy' was the fourth major policy document on this important economic area, building on the 1999 and 2001 Creative Economy Mapping documents and the 2001 Green paper, Culture and Creativity: the next 10 years. All these signalled the intention of the Government to join up the worlds of education, cultural

and creative subsidies, training and trading support to encourage the creative industries to thrive (BIS and DCMS, 2009: 106).<sup>40</sup>

This statement neatly tied together four policy documents (with some citation inaccuracies) and ignored others. It implies a coherent transition from one policy to the next. In addition, it presented a centric view of Government directives disseminated outwards to a receptive group of state bodies who would have a common understanding of 'the creative industries' and policy framework. As we have begun to discover, joined up' governance and common understandings were far from reality!

The next step of exploration is, therefore, to address the question of how the idea of 'the creative industries' gained such a foothold in national and regional policy frameworks in such a short period of time and the direction of policy (or policies) travel. In a speech to the Royal Society of Arts (31 May 2006), Geoffrey Crossick observed:

We know that every line in the Chancellor's Budget Speech is fought over, so when Gordon Brown specifically referred to the importance of the creative industries – 'soon,' as he said, '10 per cent of our economy' – we saw how much they have entered the government's thinking (Crossick, 2006: 1).

The author's interrogation of policy documents provides clues to this extraordinary infiltration and is discussed below. The reader is again signposted back to Figure 8 in the previous chapter for a summary of major events and key national and regional policy documents and to Appendix Two for a full list of policy documents that were analysed.

### 5.2.1 National policy environment

A few general points are necessary to set policy developments in context. Under New Labour, there was a proliferation of state funded research, task forces, official reviews and policy directives across all major policy areas (Driver and Martell, 2006; O'Connor, 2006; Pratt, 2005). At the heart of Labour's interventionist and instrumentalist approach was the notion of a 'Third Way' to public service delivery that relied on public-private partnership (Blair, 1998; Giddens, 1998; Labour Party, 1997). In essence, state intervention was seen as

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<sup>40</sup> Written by BERR/BIS, this statement incorrectly cites DCMS' *Creative Industries Mapping Document* and its date of publication as 1999 rather than the actual date of 1998.

a partnership between the public and private sectors, whereby the former's initial support would stimulate positive change/reform/growth and then gradually decrease as the private sector's capacity to deliver flourished. In other words, a 'joined up' mode of governance meant collaboration between state bodies and industry representatives and across policy areas. A 'Third Way' to state-funded interventions in the economic sphere became synonymous with modernisation of the cultural sphere that had been of low priority to previous administrations.

Behind the major events and policy documents (identified in Figure 8) lay the involvement of many different public and private sector organisations. Textual analysis shows few policy documents were produced without multiple sponsors, multi-member steering groups who operated in many different state spaces. For example: DCMS' Creative Industries Task Force was made up of seven working groups, each of which had twelve members drawn from public and private sectors (DCMS, 2006a, 2006b); a regional consultation summarised in *Creative Industry Collaborations* (BOP Consulting, 2007a: 47) involved six public bodies located in the South West, ten steering group members and consulted forty representatives from public and private organisations across the region 'to agree shared priorities for future action' (BOP Consulting, 2007a: 1). The latter document proposed the South West Creative Economy Partnership (SW CEP) model that reappeared in SW RDA's creative industries strategy (SW RDA 2007) and later still as a pilot in *Creative Britain*. Organisations will have had different reasons for participating in broader policy documents. For example, the regional cultural strategy (Culture South West, 2001) was compiled by a consortium of public and private sector bodies whose interests extended beyond 'the creative industries' spread of cultural activities (including sports, heritage, and tourism). Similarly, the regional economic strategy (SW RDA, 2006) briefly mentions 'the creative industries' but had a much wider industrial focus and was 'bristling with can-do bravado' (Jones and MacLeod, 2004: 442). The point to note is the collusion of multiple and inter-related state bodies in promoting 'the creative industries'.

Much of the Blairite rhetoric on 'new thinking' is criticised for claiming a novel 'Third Way' that had already started to emerge in the early 1990s with introduction of the National Lottery (Oakley, 2004; Powell, 2000). In the context

of cultural policy, a 'joined up' approach was perhaps 'new' to the extent that a new Whitehall department encouraged its 'family' of NDPBs to take a more economised approach to interventions and public-private partnership (Lutz, 2006; Selwood, 2002). Writers suggest (Pratt, 2009a; Selwood, 2001) that the unexpectedly large amounts of National Lottery funds stimulated a political re-evaluation of the state's role in cultural activities. A cultural 'turn' by scholars and state towards more industrialised thinking about culture also coincided with digitalisation of the cultural modes of production (Pratt, 1997a) and a more commercial approach by the larger cultural organisations. Labour's pre-election Labour Party Manifesto (Labour Party, 1997) recognised the new concepts, pledging:

We need a new and dynamic approach to the 'creative economy'. The Department of National Heritage will develop a strategic vision that matches the real power and energy of British arts, media and cultural industries (Labour Party, 1997).

Looking at policy documents at national and regional scales over Labour's thirteen year rule, a 'creative economy' strategy was indeed pursued. However, its anticipated dynamism was constantly dissipated by the influences of multiple and often unforeseen forces taking place in political and economic 'fields' (Bourdieu, 1993).

One NDPB who was immediately prepared to take up the challenge was the newly formed UK Film Council who declared in its 'first public statement':

The basic truth is that, at the dawn of a brave, new world of bewildering technological change, without government support (direct aid) and public (Lottery) funding, the film industry in the UK would most certainly collapse (UK Film Council, 2000: 1).

The Competitiveness White Paper on 'building a knowledge-driven economy' (DTI, 1998) set out Labour's 'Third Way' to state intervention:

Old-fashioned state intervention did not and cannot work. But neither does naive reliance on markets (DTI, 1998: 5).

Traditional cultural policy was criticised for a reliance on an 'old fashioned' subsidy model for state intervention that ignored a commercial dimension to cultural activities (Pratt and Jeffcut, 2009). By packaging cultural products and services as 'the creative industries', DCMS had a 'window of opportunity' to re-

think policy. The object was neither wholly reliant on the state nor on market forces; it exemplified a move from old technologies to digital technologies; it connected cultural policy to other policy frameworks (economic, social). Most importantly, the phrase itself imbued New Labour with an image of a modern administration at the cutting edge of innovation and knowledge-intensive production (Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005).

From the outset, DCMS' departmental aim included 'the creative industries':

To improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities, and to strengthen the creative industries (DCMS, 2004b: 2).

National, regional and local state bodies were asked to integrate the object into their strategic plans (DCMS, 1999 and 2004). In just thirteen years, 'the creative industries' featured in the strategies of bodies as diverse as Arts Council England, British Council, RDAs, Technology Strategy Board and even the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.<sup>41</sup> Inevitably, expectations grew amongst DCMS' devolved state bodies (and their private sector partners and networks) for increased public monies to deliver the 'creative economy' agenda. As one state actor remarked:

*We got in there, we were articulate, we linked to this sort of national policy agenda which really came out of a sort of cool Britannia. It wasn't really well thought through, not even at the mapping document level. [ ] we saw the money there and we thought "well let's try and get hold of a bit of that" (F016).*

It is ironic that 'Third Way' thinking about a 'creative economy' and 'strategic unity' led to more, rather than less, demand for state support and greater inter-agency competition for public funds (that is, both Treasury and National Lottery allocations).

As an aside, it is worth pointing out that state funds made available to DCMS and passed on to NDPBs were not substantial in comparison to other departments. A cursory glance at HM Treasury's Comprehensive Spending

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<sup>41</sup> The British Council set up a Creative Industries Unit in 1999 to align Government policy for inward investment in overseas trade with activity around 'the creative industries'. The Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) adopted 'the creative industries' in *Creating Sustainable Communities* (2004) to align local planning with the commercial property needs of creative businesses. The Technology Strategy Board developed a *Creative Industries Technology Strategy 2009-2012* (2009) to align research and innovation development policy with 'the creative industries'.

Review (CSR) data (2004 and 2007) shows DCMS' settlement was one of the smallest in Whitehall. For example, DCMS' Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) for financial resources increased from £1.4 billion in 2004/05 to £1.7 billion in 2007/08; and in the next round only increased to £1.8 billion in 2010/11,<sup>42</sup> Of course, other departments made investments in cultural services, broadcasting, publishing and communication industries that overlapped with 'the creative economy' agenda (for example, BERR/BIS and DCLG). The point is that DCMS had no control over other departments' public expenditure.<sup>43</sup> As one regional body remarked:

[ ] *the biggest advocates for a strong creative industries policy are in the DCMS, but all the spend is in BIS (F001).*

At regional level, SW RDA's support of 'creative industries' programmes was described as "*small change*" (M005) in comparison to its multi-million pound urban capital projects. Anyone working in a regional cultural agency during the 2000s will know that raising public sector funds for programmes was a constant pressure. From 2007 onwards, funding across the public sector was being cut as fiscal reform, 'efficiencies' and economic crisis deepened.

Turning to the specificities of policy travel in relation to 'the creative industries', it is debatable whether Government took advantage or not of the 'window of opportunity'. For some commentators, DCMS lacked policy 'follow through' and simply carried on with a traditional subsidy model that ill-fitted new economic policy thinking (Wright *et al*, 2009; Pratt and Jeffcut, 2009). An interviewee commented "*We have broadcasting policy, we have film policy, we have sort of an arts policy [ ]. But we don't have a creative industries policy*" (M015). A DCMS official disconcertingly remarked "*there isn't really a policy in a way. [ ]*

<sup>42</sup> Analysis of HM Treasury's financial resource allocations to DCMS indicates the low priority given to cultural policy. Figures were extracted from a statistical annex, *Table A4: Total Departmental Expenditure Limits by Department of Comprehensive Spending Review (2004, online, accessed 06 January 2013, <[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20071204130111/http://hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/0/7/sr2004\\_annexa.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20071204130111/http://hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/0/7/sr2004_annexa.pdf)>).*

<sup>43</sup> According to HM Treasury Public Expenditure Standard Analysis (PESA) tables published in June 2009, public service spend on 'recreation, culture and religion' totalled £9.6 billion in 2003/04 and rising to £13 billion in 2008/09 of which a third was spent on cultural services and a third on broadcasting and publishing. Comparison of these functions (and figures) with other functions reinforces the low priority given by Government to 'culture'. Compare, for example, spend on economic affairs (increasing from £33 billion to £39 billion), education (increasing from £61 billion to £82 billion) and health (increasing from £75 billion to £110 billion) (HM Treasury, 2009, online, accessed 06 January 2013, <[http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pesa09\\_chapter5.xls#5.2!A1](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pesa09_chapter5.xls#5.2!A1)>).

*the policy is to champion the creative industries*" (M012). However, he did go on to say "anything that the department publishes where it's making a statement about something is by definition a policy document". Taking the latter stance, let us start with an examination of departmental publications.

First, the mapping documents (DCMS, 1998, 2001a) were concerned with establishing the object's shape and credibility but not policy *per se*. Other documents such as *Creating Opportunities* (DCMS, 2000b) and *Culture and Creativity* (2001b) were published as 'guidance' to encourage the inclusion of 'the creative industries' in regional and local cultural strategies: The former was a Green Paper that began to weave the object into Government's 'core script' (page 3), linking 'culture and media' with mainstream political goals including economic growth, educational achievement and widening participation. DCMS' aim to 'shape the creative journey for individuals through education, excellence and access' (page 10) promoted 'the creative industries' as a means to other (non cultural) political ends.

The creative industries sector is currently one of the fastest growing areas of the economy, expanding at a rate of 16 per cent per annum, so it is vital for our economic wealth as well as our cultural health and personal fulfilment (DCMS, 2001: 32).

In spite of Green Paper status, DCMS' proposals relied on the voluntary engagement of other departments and state bodies to interpret and implement them. With no legislative or regulatory muscle - and actions framed as 'we will ask', 'we intend', 'we shall encourage' – DCMS' powers were limited to relatively small financial incentives, promises of 'leverage' and the willing cooperation of multiple delivery agents (*ibid* page 49-50).

Launch of the inter-departmental Creative Economy Programme in 2005 (a joint initiative between DCMS, BERR/BIS and DIUS) gave some impetus to policy development and a flurry of research reports and recommendations followed (for example, Frontier Economics, 2006 and The Work Foundation, 2007). According to DCMS' website, the Creative Economy Programme was 'the first step in the DCMS goal to make the UK the world's creative hub'.<sup>44</sup> Additionally,

<sup>44</sup> The Creative Economy Programme website (DCMS, online, accessed 10 March 2009, <[http://www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/creative\\_industries/3275.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/creative_industries/3275.aspx)>).



Creative Economy Programme ‘evidence gathering’ coincided with major Parliamentary reviews including: the Cox Review (of creativity in business) and Roberts Review (of creativity in schools).<sup>45</sup> In other words, take-up of the concept was gaining pace and profile but often as an add-on to other policy areas - albeit narrowing towards an economic and market-orientated agenda.

Few policy documents, cultural or economic, were found to solely address ‘the creative industries’ as an object of specific intervention. Many covered several, and sometimes conflicting, policy areas (cultural, economic, and social). DCMS, BERR/BIS and DCLG collaborated on policies and yet each pursued their particular policy agenda. For example, *Leading the Good Life: guidance on integrating cultural and community strategies* (DCMS and DCLG, 2004) advised local councils to develop cultural services in pursuit of social well-being, creativity and innovation, whilst at the same time delivering statutory and priority public services. *Creative Britain* was collaboration between six ministries and multiple policy areas.

The importance of ‘evidence-gathering’ in policy development has, perhaps, been over-exaggerated. For example, a DCMS official mentioned the influence of a ministerial “*chat over dinner*” (M012) and a SW RDA senior manager claimed to “*bend the ear*” of civil servants (M007). More legitimately, Tony Blair wrote to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in May 2006 saying, ‘I want you to give a high priority to the creative economy’ (Blair, 2006). Certainly, reports by The Work Foundation (2007) and Frontier Economics (2007) were commissioned as part of the Creative Economy Programme and cited throughout *Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al*, 2008). However, closer examination reveals curious disparities between policy intervention and data. For example, a DCMS officer confirmed that the map of creative business densities presented on page 70 of *Creative Britain* (and reproduced in Figure 3 in Chapter 3), was used to demonstrate ‘regional creative clusters’ and based

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<sup>45</sup> Sir George Cox’s Review of Creativity in Business (2005) *Building on the UK’s strengths* was commissioned by HM Treasury. Paul Roberts Review (2006) *Nurturing Creativity in Young People: A report to Government to inform future policy* was presented to the newly formed Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

on Frontier Economics' data.<sup>46</sup> Thus, a direct relationship was implied between the map, the policy of 'supporting creative clusters' (*ibid*, page 56) and the specific Commitments. Namely, the South West region was identified in Commitment 18 to pilot 'regional creative economy strategic frameworks' (*ibid*, page 59) because of its evident high level of creative business activity. However, scrutiny of the map shows South West England was not a region of high creative business densities – rather, it shows activity widely dispersed outside the urban centres of Bristol, Plymouth and Bournemouth, none of which were named on the map!

This mismatch raises the question of 'why was South West England selected as a pilot region in *Creative Britain*?' Interviews with regional state personnel reveal a pragmatic and practical rationale that had little to do with quantitative data. With a regional creative industries strategy already written (SW RDA, 2007), SW CEP's manager explained:

*the South West plan effectively was a regional version of the national Creative Britain plan, which is why the South West was put in there as a pilot really; because they [DCMS] knew that we were doing it already. So they anticipated the joining up of those regional and national plans (F011).*

In other words, mapping was a peripheral (albeit necessary) tool in the decision-making process, with greater attention given to the influence of individual state bodies. Within the 'field of power', some people were able to exert more power than others whose 'region' was not selected.

*Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al*, 2008) was flagged up throughout 2007 as a forthcoming Green Paper (DCMS, 2007: 8; SW RDA, 2007: 15) and as the culmination of the Creative Economy Programme.<sup>47</sup> State bodies, such as Arts Council England, UK Film Council, their regional partners and RDAs eagerly awaited policy direction with the authoritative status of a Green Paper. *Creative*

<sup>46</sup> Frontier Economics research (2007) is cited in *Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 66) and, therefore, an explicit connection is made between this data and *Creative Britain*'s policy direction. Furthermore, the notion of the UK as 'the world's creative hub' is reinforced by use of The Work Foundation's circles model (2007) that is reproduced on the front cover and page 2.

<sup>47</sup> A Green Paper is a governmental discussion paper on a specific policy area, prepared by a Whitehall department in the form of proposals for public consultation. A Green Paper is sometimes followed up by a more formal White Paper that is debated in Parliament (see Footnote 2). Thus, policy set out in a Green Paper has no legal or statutory force whereas that in a White Paper will lead to legislation.

*Britain* eventually appeared in February 2008 without Green Paper status and with little publicity. A DCMS official described the documents as:

*a promotion sort of thing; but promotion not obviously to the outside world, but to the Treasury, to other departments who might create or might be thinking about policies that might affect creative industries (M012).*

It is arguable that DCMS failed to win Green Paper status for Creative Britain because of unsuccessful negotiations with HM Treasury during the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.<sup>48</sup> With few statutory powers associated with cultural policy and a small budget, DCMS was in no position to make a forceful policy statement or announce costly new programmes.

Also, a ministerial changeover at the time from James Purnell to Andy Burnham as Secretary of State would have had an influence on policy focus. A DCMS official was adamant: “*oh no doubt [ ] bringing a new minister in usually means wanting to put their own little stamp on policy*” (M011). Ministerial influence on policy direction was explained by another DCMS official as:

*Ministers are always looking for something high profile, something to pick up and go “look, look at how great”, you know, they need something to pick up and go “great”. And pretty much the policy develops like that (M012).*

Under Labour, DCMS was a “*rotating door*” (M012) of ministers on their way to another more powerful ministry. Each minister would take a stance on ‘creative economy’ policy – from Chris Smith’s original mapping work through four more Secretary of States to *Digital Britain*. It is likely; therefore, that DCMS’ Secretary of State at the time lost interest in *Creative Britain* and turned towards co-drafting *Digital Britain* (that was published as a Green Paper in June 2009).

Co-sponsored by DCMS and BERR/BIS, *Creative Britain* presented (rather than proposed) an eclectic mix of twenty-six Commitments that were assigned to named state bodies (see pages 76-77). However, many of the Commitments were already in progress before February 2008. A state body confirmed “*it was quite easy for us to do that because we’d already told them what we were*

<sup>48</sup> According to HM Treasury’s *Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review* (2007: 247-249), DCMS’ settlement was an increase from £1.6 billion in 2007/8 to £1.8 billion in 2010/11. However, this expenditure had to cover all DCMS’ PSA targets including ‘digital switchover’ and successful delivery of London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games (online, accessed 12 December 2012, <[http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr\\_csr07\\_annexd13\\_162.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr_csr07_annexd13_162.pdf)>).

doing” (F011). Of Commitment 13, 18 and 20, these had already been announced in *Creative Industries Strategy for the South West* (SW RDA, 2007). Interviewees’ comments hint at disappointment and frustration. A senior manager described the document as “a shopping list of stuff that had already been bought” (F001). Others were equally disparaging:

*Creative Britain really felt like a collection of not entirely linked ideas kind of shoved together. It didn’t feel like a particularly strategic or coherent document* (M005);

*[ ] it took so bloody long to get written and it was such a painful birth [ ] a bit of think tank stuff, you know, quite a lot of information and evidence around data, but no really policy conclusions* (F001);

*Creative Britain was something ministers were interested in, they came up with an action plan [ ] the aim was not to deliver a creative Britain, but was to deliver the twenty-two or twenty-five commitments* (M007);

*The great disappointment with it was that it didn’t have any money attached to it, it didn’t have any weight attached to it and [ ] it just kind of died a death* (M005);

*[It] was so woolly ....but it provided some noise about creative industries* (F001).

Interestingly, state bodies involved in ‘the arts’ and more traditional cultural policy agenda were more positive. For example, one senior manager viewed the document as a coherent “*collection of commitments*” (F008), which linked together policy areas around the ‘creative economy’ story. This interpretation reflects back the narrative used in *Creative Britain*:

Together this journey provides a coherent and comprehensive set of measures to make Britain the world’s creative hub (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 6).

Regardless of retrospective views, regional state bodies were clearly willing to cooperate with DCMS to develop and deliver *Creative Britain*. The document’s prose exemplifies a ‘joined up’ mode of governance, with its multiple departmental authorship, multiple policy objectives and multiple named delivery agents. The political dialogics were a combination of ‘stick and carrot’. For example, *Creative Britain* urged state bodies:

The creative industries must move from the margins to the mainstream of economic and policy thinking (*ibid*, page 4).

State bodies were later given the challenge of ‘promoting Britain as the world’s creative hub’ (*ibid*, page 63) on the basis that:

The UK has established a position in the vanguard of the world's creative economy. The creative industries, more than most, rely on the UK's reputation for creativity and innovation. They, in turn, have become central to our national identity and brand (*ibid*, page 63).

The reader will be forgiven if s/he is confused about the status of the UK's 'creative industries' and ministerial vision in 2008. Did the 'creative hub' already exist or was the goal 'to make' Britain an international creative hub?

For instance, of the twenty-six Commitments, Commitment 18 reads:

The Regional Development Agencies will pilot regional creative economy, strategic frameworks in two regions, the North West and South West (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 13).

Government's policy directive and specific Commitment were sufficiently vague to allow state bodies, such as RDAs and regional cultural agencies, scope to negotiate their roles and responsibilities. For NDPBs, such as Arts Council England and UK Film Council, compliance was not onerous because their Commitments were already part of their Public Service Agreements with DCMS.<sup>49</sup> For others, such as RDAs, compliance was voluntary and, as already noted, was for SW RDA offered well in advance. As a policy document, *Creative Britain* demonstrates how state dialogics are used simultaneously to articulate a Government's broad direction of travel, as well as avoid any precise detail.

Labour's political 'Third Way' explicitly favoured state interventions that were aimed at economic growth outcomes. Thus, *Creative Britain's* Executive Summary states:

The bedrock on which the strategy is built is the Government's fundamental belief in the role of public funding to stimulate creativity and sharpen Britain's creative edge (*ibid*, page 6).

Exactly 'how' the vision was to be achieved was broadly divided into the twenty-six Commitments and then assigned to state bodies for them to interpret and implement.

<sup>49</sup> Most Commitments added no new activity to what state bodies were already doing. For example, Commitment 21 states 'The UK Film Council in association with Arts Council England and Arts and Humanities Research Council will help develop 'mixed media centers' (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 76). These state-funded bodies were supporting 'mixed media' venues across England and, therefore, diverted funds from some venues to those named in *Creative Britain* including Watershed in Bristol.

Empirical study and the author's professional experience suggest state bodies, at national and regional level, played a proactive role in policy development, or certainly they had a sense of their own influence. A senior manager observed "*the more independent you are of government the easier it is to influence*" (M001). Referring to the inclusion of 'creative industries' in a BERR/BIS key policy at the end of the Labour era (BIS, 2009), a SW RDA senior manager enthusiastically explained:

*So, New Industry New Jobs, Building a Better Britain, is the government's vision of what are the important sectors and clusters that will build jobs and prosperity for the UK in the future. Interestingly, [ ], in the first round, creative industries wasn't there. So I spent some time bending the ear of senior civil servants in DCMS, saying "look, you produced Creative Britain and [ ], you seemed to think it was important, but actually it's not on the radar anymore. If you want us to be doing things in the future, you have to actually ensure that's in the NINJ priorities (M007).*

The regional state actor believed his influence was strong enough to affect national policy. Of course, it may be that other state actors were also 'bending the ear' of senior policy-makers and together they influenced the decision to include 'the creative industries' sector.

Whatever the tactic and outcome, state bodies from both the cultural and economic ends of the policy spectrum, were engaged in 'championing 'the creative industries'. This finding resonates with discourse on the 'peopled state' (Jones, 2011; Jones *et al*, 2004) and their capacity to shape governance space. It is arguable that DCMS' relatively weak powers at the centre (small resource, ill-defined 'creative economy' policy and lack of regulatory powers), contributed to an autonomy felt by state actors at the micro level. How real those powers actually were on the ground will be explored in the case studies.

Thinking about state regulation of 'the creative industries', the author is reminded of New Labour's neo-liberal ideology and aversion to 'hard' regulation (or certainly in the early Blairite years). Textual analysis shows Government's goal of economic growth and a self-organising, devolved mode of state governance were implicit (and sometimes explicit) directives in multifarious policy documents (mentioned earlier). From mapping to *New Industry New Jobs* (BIS, 2009), Labour's approach to 'making Britain the world's creative hub' was

primarily based on 'soft' rules that required little or no coercion or prescription. Admittedly, DCMS' documents (such as the mapping documents and annual technical reports), toolkit 'guidance' and 'best practice' were offered as approved standards but there was wide scope for interpretation and voluntary take-up. Dissension or resistance was in the form of alternative visualisations (such as chain models) and choice of sub-sector priorities (segments and high value businesses).

Of *Creative Britain*, Commitments were already agreed in advance and, therefore, the 'policy' required no consultation or legislation. In other words, state bodies were allowed considerable freedom away from DCMS as long as they delivered economic growth. For many state bodies, DCMS' policy documents, including the co-authored and harder edged *Digital Britain* (BIS and DCMS, 2009), were not matched by departmental power to regulate:

*If you just look at the intellectual property policy...the last government [ ] didn't really want to do anything. [ ] everybody agreed, at least do this. Did they do that? No, they didn't even do that (M016).*

While *Digital Britain* was published as a Green Paper with proposals for a new Communications Bill, by late 2009 progress had stalled in the run-up to a General Election. Under a new Coalition administration, the issue of DCMS' willingness to regulate is no clearer. Indeed, state regulation of broadcasting and publishing is even more contentious now in the wake of a phone hacking scandal and the Leveson Inquiry report.<sup>50</sup> At the time of thesis write-up, DCMS is not expected to introduce a Communications Bill to Parliament until 2014 and de-regulation seems the preferred option.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> The Leveson Inquiry was announced in July 2011 to investigate the practices and ethics of the British media in the wake of illegal phone-hacking during the late 2000s. Rt. Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, appeared before the Leveson Inquiry to explain the influence of media companies on his and his department's policy decisions (Leveson, 2012, online, accessed 12 December 2012, <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/hc1213/hc07/0780/0780.asp>>).

<sup>51</sup> The Communications Review started in 2010 and a White Paper was expected in early 2013. Following phone-hacking revelations and findings from the Leveson Inquiry (see above Footnote), DCMS postponed presenting a Bill until 2014 but its website now states it 'will announce details of the next stage in due course'. A Communications Bill will cover policy on a broad spectrum of telecommunication issues including regulation of public service broadcasting and print media, and the protection of content copyright and intellectual property (DCMS, online, accessed 12 December 2012, <[http://www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/telecommunications\\_and\\_online/9158.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/telecommunications_and_online/9158.aspx)>).

This brings discussion back to the question of ‘creative industries’ policy direction and what state bodies were actually being asked to do. Interviewees accused DCMS of policy that was “*relatively static*”, “*botched together*” and susceptible to “*ministerial whim*”. John Howkins pithily describes DCMS as ‘looking in the rear view mirror’ (Howkins, 2009: 74). Howkins infers a governmental retrospection to policy development of ‘the creative industries’ that relies on historical analysis (looking in the rear view) as a way of moving forward whilst ignoring what lies ahead.

Crossick too accuses Labour of a fundamental misunderstanding of the notion of creativity and the nature of content production:

The consequence of putting the bulk of the creative industries in DCMS has been to privilege creativity over industry, implying that something that is intrinsically, but misguidedly, seen as about rather fluffy and fun people should not be glorified by putting it in the DTI and associating it with aerospace or pharmaceuticals (Crossick, 2006: 16).

An interviewee summarised Labour’s problem as:

*They’re developing policy which they hope will have an impact on either making us a more culturally rich community or a more economically sustainable community. But there’s a huge disconnect between them setting their policy and then people on the ground actually doing something as a result of it (F016).*

These remarks highlight the disruptive effects of increasingly incoherent policy-making at the centre during the 2000s. With multiple policy directives attached to the goal of a ‘creative economy’ and different interpretations of the policy object in circulation, it is unsurprising that DCMS’ sponsored bodies felt frustrated. In spite of outward signs of ‘joined up’ policy-making, DCMS’ ‘creative economy’ agenda was more falling apart than in ‘crisis’.

Opinion of BERR/BIS was no less complimentary as these comments suggest:

*We have a job of work to get them {BERR/BIS} to recognise the creative industries as something that needs addressing (M012);*

*An army of economists kind of like the Treasury on speed (M011);*

*You’ve got a creative industries team which is very small within BIS, within a team of people who don’t think it should be there in the first place (F001);*

*They talked the talk, but then when they’ve gone back into their department*



*they've done exactly what they were going to* (F016).

Given BERR/BIS' prioritisation of high levels of productivity (BIS, 2009), the department's resistance to engagement with the whole spread of 'the creative industries' concept is perhaps understandable. This leaves 'the creative industries' as a floating policy imaginary that was neither fully understood or adopted by BERR/BIS and mishandled by DCMS.

Writers argue (Pratt, 2009a: 12) policy for 'the creative industries' was a form of 'Xerox policy' - that is, 'copied and copied back'. Looking at *Creative Britain* and *Digital Britain*, they read more as promotional tools rather than 'new' policy. A well-written strategy does not, as many state bodies know, equate with good policy or guarantee successful delivery. Knell and Oakley (2007:5) remind us that:

One of the besetting sins of creative industries policy-making is its obsession with the new, its insistence that everything is 'changed utterly' (Knell and Oakley, 2007: 5).

The author concurs with the view that politicians and state bodies failed to understand the distinction between commercial and non-commercial cultural activities and the 'scale of intervention' (Pratt, 2009a: 9). The result was two different policy models: first, a public subsidised model that addressed non-commercial cultural production; and second, a market-driven regulation model that addressed commercialised popular culture.

Reflecting on the different positions taken by state bodies on cultural activities and their policy solutions, the author was reminded of Bourdieu's analysis of the 'field of cultural production' and 'field of struggles' to explain competing articulations. Nonetheless, the author's empirical data and practice-based experience do not entirely bear out a field theory analysis at the regional level. Agreed, national bodies failed to develop a coherent policy framework for a 'creative economy' strategy. A UK Film Council policy on market regulation of film production (2006) and Arts Council England's 'great art for all' policy (2008) exemplify two very different positions and subsequent interventions. However, their policies were specific to a mode of cultural production (the former focused on film, the latter on arts). Neither body was trying to connect the policies within a strict 'creative industries' narrative. At the regional level, however, research

found regional cultural agencies were more acutely aware of the commercial and non-commercial differences because of their need to comply with a SW RDA interpretation of 'the creative industries' and economic strategy. The result was conflicts and struggles between state bodies who each asserted a different version of 'the creative industries' imaginary (discussed also in Chapter 4 and 6). For SW RDA, an economic development policy goal aligned with support of commercialised large-scale production, whereas the specialist cultural agencies (Arts Council England South West and South West Screen) were interested in both commercial and non-commercial, traditional and popular cultural production. Each had to find a position somewhere between that of their sponsoring body/department and SW RDA. With little direction or resource from DCMS to implement a 'creative economy', the regional cultural agencies were more willing to comply with an economic policy directive than their national sponsors. In other words, state bodies are capable of adopting different positions in a particular 'field of power' as an act of compliance or means-to-an-end.

### 5.2.2 Policy environment of South West England

Although some key regional documents have already been mentioned, some historical background to policy development and delivery will give the reader a richer understanding of the case site of South West England. Overall, textual analysis of policy documents and fieldwork found 'the creative industries' imaginary entered regional cultural and, to a lesser extent, economic policy-making and delivery in a relatively short time span. Indeed, an experienced policy advisor suggested that regional bodies "*played a much cannier game*" (M016) than their national partner bodies. The author's research suggests, however, several different *games* were being played in pursuit of a regional (and national) 'creative economy' goal.

As early as 1998, DCMS' Head of Culture at Government Office for the South West (GO-SW) initiated a research study into graduate placements in 'the creative industries' (Culture South West, 1999). This publication, *Stepping into the Creative Industries*, served to promote an unfamiliar concept, particularly to members of the new Regional Cultural Consortium (Culture South West). Bearing in mind DCMS and the Creative Industries Task Force had only just

formed, this GO-SW-led intervention was a bold and *canny* move. Written by the public-funded ‘media industries’ training agency (Skillnet South West), the report signalled governmental support of popular cultural activities and cross-policy connections. It is noteworthy that GO-SW’s Head of Culture also led development of the first regional cultural strategy on behalf of the embryonic Culture South West. A generic cultural strategy, *In Search of Chunky Dunsters* (2001: 4) refers to ‘creative industries’ as ‘Film-making, radio and television, graphic design, publishing, new music technology, architecture, software development’ but not to performing and visual arts or crafts. This separation reflects a common distinction made at the time between ‘the creative industries’ as ‘media industries’, and ‘the cultural industries’ as traditional artforms (see also Definition and Articulation – see Chapter 4). From interviews and the author’s recollection, the distinction was sometimes disingenuously used. For example, the Head of Culture gave a candid explanation to his phraseology “[to] get some of the big employers involved in the consortia who might otherwise think it was all about arts and heritage“ (F009).

Another early and notable state intervention was South West Screen’s *Training for Convergence* programme for ‘the media industries’ (2001-2003). Using grant monies from the UK Film Council and industry sponsors, South West Screen secured ‘match funding’ from the new SW RDA. Like its national partner the UK Film Council, South West Screen was able to adjust its ‘script’ to fit both cultural and economic objectives (South West Screen, 2002 and 2004). New Labour thinking was writ large including notions of public-private sector partners, ICT and digital media, an ‘integrated policy framework’ *et cetera*. Looking at South West Screen’s reporting and interventions between 2001 and 2010, policy shifted towards a ‘business-facing’ approach to ‘the creative media industries’ and less attention was given to cultural outcomes (South West Screen, 2010).

From the author’s prior knowledge of regional state bodies and their research activity, mapping studies played an important part in how ‘the creative industries’ imaginary was differently narrated, understood and in turn, used to influence power relations. For example, South West Screen’s early relationship with SW RDA owed much to its use of statistical evidence on ‘media industries’ and links to ICT that were cited in programme proposals. By contrast, there was

an 'evidence' and 'culture' gap for those involved in championing the 'non media industries' to SW RDA. Hence, Culture South West led the first regional mapping study of 'the creative industries' that then informed its successful bid to SW RDA (BOP Consulting and University of Leeds, 2004). Arts Council England South West (ACE-SW) was particularly active in commissioning and funding 'creative industries' mapping studies in local council areas (BOP Consulting, 2007b). Formalised in Local Authority Partnership Agreements, these funded studies were a way for ACE-SW to influence local arts policy in, for example, Bristol and Devon (BOP Consulting, 2007b; Perfect Moment, 2006). Writers argue that 'the creative industries' concept was a Trojan horse that DCMS deliberately used to carry in 'new thinking' about cultural policy (Pratt, 2005) and the same is arguably true at a micro level. DCMS' sponsored regional agencies and SW RDA all used mapping studies to mark out their governance territories and demonstrate their powers of influence therein.

Looking at the three key regional development strategies for 'the creative industries' (Culture South West, 2005a; South West Screen, 2004; SW RDA, 2007), three observations are pertinent here. First, none of the key state bodies ever conceded leadership to another in spite of forceful claims. For example, Culture South West's delegated RCC tasks included:

To advise the South West RDA and the South West Regional Assembly on cultural issues and the creative industries (Culture South West, 2004: 52).

Taking the whole 'creative industries' remit as its legitimate territory, Culture South West proposed in the 'Creative Industries (non media)' strategy:

To maximise the potential for the Creative Industries to contribute towards the wider policy agendas of social, economic and cultural regeneration and inclusion, and enhancement of regional image (Culture South West, 2005a: 34).

By contrast, South West Screen's 'media industries' strategy made few references to 'the creative industries' or cultural dimension, specifying its aim:

*To support and enable the economic development and business growth of the Media Industries in the South West* (South West Screen, 2004: 10, original italics).

A more aggressive approach was taken by SW RDA in a strategy that pre-empted *Creative Britain* and asserted 'The 'Agency's' aim as:

*To facilitate a step change in the sustainable economic development of the South West's Creative Economy and make the most out of the great creative talents thriving all round the region as part of the UK's progress towards becoming the world's creative hub* (SW RDA, 2007: 8, original italics).

As BERR/BIS' regional partner and lead RDA to DCMS, SW RDA projected an image of a major state funder of (and therefore, powerful influence on) strategic interventions across the region.

Nonetheless, conversations and analysis of organisation reports show SW RDA funds for 'creative industries' (media and non media) business support programmes were relatively small and any capital projects were directly negotiated with the venue - such as £4.5 million grant to Watershed in Bristol. Collaboration with SW RDA was viewed as "*an illusionary*", bureaucratic and pointless exercise – "*it did my head in*" as one senior manager commented (M005)! For SW RDA, the process seems to have been equally frustrating. A senior manager revealed:

*We had the Culture South West as a non-departmental public body; God knows why it was a non-departmental public body, because it was ridiculously expensive* (M007).

The irony is, of course, that the Coalition Government felt the same way about RDAs and abolished them in 2010!

Unwilling to fund two separate programmes, SW RDA co-commissioned with Culture South West a feasibility study (BOP Consulting, 2007a). The rationale was, according to a SW RDA senior manager, to forge a better connection between national economic policy and regional delivery of a 'creative economy': The consultant's *Creative Industry Collaboration* report makes clear the exercise was an attempt to align fragmented power relationships as much as policy goals. A solution to disconnected governance included a proposal for an 'advisory board' to be called SW CEP (BOP Consulting, 2007a: 2).

SW RDA then published 'The Agency's' *Creative Industries Strategy for the South West of England* (2007) and incorporated the consultant's proposals including SW CEP. A SW RDA senior manager explained:

*We created this South West Creative Economy Partnership as a way of trying to bring some of these main stakeholders together [ ] both in terms of [ ] developing our priorities and roadmaps, as it were; and also as a way of trying to streamline and add value to delivery activity (M007).*

Launched in June 2007, SW RDA's strategy failed to coincide with publication of *Creative Britain* and lost momentum. Formal start of SW CEP was delayed until September 2008 and was only fully operational for a year (see case study for details). Some of *Creative Britain's* policy Commitments were managed separately by Culture South West and ACE-SW (such as the 'Find Your Talent' initiative) and had no connection to SW RDA or the regional strategy. Research suggests SW RDA's strategy and articulation of leadership and an 'innovative' approach was a classic example of an 'imaginary of power' that was used to forge a spatial-temporal 'fix'

A second observation is the lack of direct input from DCMS and national cultural NDPBs to regional policy documents. Analysis shows quotes and phrases were copied from key national policy documents but the author found little evidence of direct departmental or national NDPB involvement in regional strategic plans. Asked about having direct influence on regional activity, a DCMS official replied:

*There needs to be more steer for the regional agencies in whatever form to be clear on what we expect of them, what we would see as credible evidence, what we would see as the policy direction they should be taking (M011).*

Commenting on lack of dialogue between national cultural bodies and their regional partners, a national policy advisor observed:

*How the creative industries is perceived at national policy level and how it's delivered at regional and local levels, that has never been resolved (M015).*

A disconnect was possibly not the case between BERR/BIS and SW RDA who shared a generic economic growth goal. A SW RDA senior manager described the agency's approach to 'the creative industries' as "joined up" and, in relation to a particular BERR/BIS policy:

*It's common sense, but secondly, it's actually what NINJ [New Industry New Jobs] flags. [ ] we happen to come at it from the bottom, but the top has come down in the same direction (M007).*

This suggests policy connectivity was more manageable for economic governance bodies than for those having to manage economic and cultural goals at regional scale.

Third, and linked to the above point, is the observation that each regional strategy purported to be a coherent course of action. Taken together, however, they failed to coalesce as a short or longer term 'joined up' plan for achieving a 'creative hub'. Founded on different aims and objectives, different policy rationales and emphases, different sets of public and private sector organisations, and production activities, the documents were at best one-off project fund-raising applications. A SW RDA senior manager assessed the situation thus:

*When I started three years ago, there was a distinct discontinuity between the government and what it did centrally, and the regions and what we did, and what the sub-regions and local authorities did. Each one did its own thing. What has happened in the last year, with Mandelson coming in, is quite a dramatic change (M007).*

How to explain SW RDA's confident assertion of coherence? Influenced by a SW RDA agenda, *Creative Industry Collaborations* document was published as the unified 'regional creative industries strategy'. It is not clear why SW RDA decided to write a new strategy three months later (in June 2007); or how the agency managed to acquire responsibility for delivering *Creative Britain* Commitment 18 and 20 when SW CEP had already started to meet in April 2007! The sequence of events and time lapses are bizarre, if not a case of 'smoke and mirrors'. Nonetheless, a state body (SW RDA) produced a policy document with the endorsement of other key state bodies and, in doing so, managed to (re)shape regional power relations with significant effect. This moment will be revisited in Chapters 7 when findings are discussed. Suffice to say here, this suggests a spatial-temporal 'fix' occurred and coherence prevailed.

Under Gordon Brown's administrations, policy documents (DCLG and BERR, 2007, 2008) and horizon-scanning commentaries on 'creative industries' (Knell and Oakley, 2007; Leadbetter and Meadway, 2008; Wright *et al*, 2009), began to identify a bifurcation between state powers at national and regional scale. In one direction, state powers and responsibilities for public-funded cultural

activities were being decentralised to the micro level (localism); and in the opposite direction, powers over the dominant economic growth agenda were being centralised at ministerial level (centralism). It is argued that Government's response to economic crisis was to increase control over high value production including that in creative content production, and simultaneously discharge responsibility for low value activity. This interpretation will be developed in the discussion chapter in terms of (de)stabilisation of governance arrangements and a re-imagination of 'the creative industries'. Certainly, the shift to high-low value segmentation had implications for how state bodies positioned themselves in relation to each other and to Whitehall departments and how they chose to intervene.

State policy thinking across the governance *terrain* from 2008 onwards was inevitably disrupted by macro events. If the goal of a 'creative economy' was on any state body's mind, it was as a means-to-another-end or synonymous with economic recovery *per se*. Government's message to national and regional cultural agencies was clear - creative production and consumption at the high commercial value end were a priority and not the subsidised lower end.

### 5.3 Summary

The chapter has tracked major policy evolutions at national and regional scale over a period of time roughly between 1997 and 2010. A key finding is the proactive role played by state bodies in embedding 'the creative industries' imaginary into cultural and economic policy frameworks to mixed effect. Guided by New Labour's 'Third Way' thinking, a 'creative economy' policy was multi-dimensional and multi-directional. However, the coherence and connectivity expressed in the various 'creative industries' strategies were momentary and sometimes *illusory*. The author's research reveals these documents were a form of prosaic state governance, used as *imaginaries of power*, to serve different political purposes such as shaping state space, aligning national and regional goals and (re)aligning power relations.

As much as 'the creative industries' has proven to be a 'slippery' imaginary to define and articulate, and to locate in national and regional policy environments,



its institutional context is equally complex. The next chapter explores the institutional landscape of South West England through a series of case studies.

*Scales are not fixed, separate levels of the social world but, like regions/places, are structured and institutionalized in complex ways in de/re-territorializing practices and discourses that may be partly concrete powerful and bounded, but also partly unbounded, vague or invisible*  
(Paasi, 2004: 542)

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter takes a closer look at institutional arrangements and in particular those in South West England during the Labour era through an examination of the empirical data. These findings will build on the evident disconnections between the politically prioritised imaginary of ‘the creative industries’ and the policy environment. State theorists emphasise the importance of situating contemporary forms, fields and forces of state governance in their geographical and historical context, and to look beyond the ‘here-and-now’ of territory and regional space (Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Paasi, 2002). To this end, an account is given of past and some present state bodies that are relevant to understanding how state governance was organised and practised in the case study site between 1997 and 2010. As David Harvey and colleagues observe, ‘Such an approach allows an exploration of the multiplicities and continual processes of the making and remaking of regional space (Harvey *et al*, 2012: 27) and in the case of this thesis, regional institutional space.

Writers suggest that the South West is not like other English regions, describing it as ‘a messy politically constructed space containing different spheres of territorial influence’ (Jones and MacLeod, 2004: 437). Others point to a ‘Southwestness’ that characterises the public-private world of ‘the creative industries’ because of its ‘traditions of mutuality and trust, a belief in self-reliance, unconventional thinking and a strong and contemporary sense of identity’ (J3S, 2010: 2). The author’s research and experience of regional state bodies bear out a picture of messiness but cannot answer for the latter.

Findings will show that the ‘spheres of territorial influence’ and networked mode of governing were not confined to a neat geographical space and stretched far

beyond the 'South West' administrative boundary. Furthermore, findings will show institutional arrangements were extremely dense and subject to constant governmental and organisational change. The selection of different types of state body and their practices described below provides only a partial view of how 'creative industries' policy was managed. The author's examination aims to be sufficiently detailed for an understanding of how governance worked at a micro level and to address the research questions.

Previous chapters have introduced some of the commentators and protagonists including scholars, policy think tanks, politicians and key state bodies. This chapter will look in more depth at regional arrangements in South West England and case study organisations in particular. The reader is reminded that the research focus was on the role of state bodies and, therefore, industrial perspectives (of businesses and private sector networks and their influences) are not included in the exploration. An industry dimension to the dynamics of state governance is, of course, important and admittedly under researched but lies outside the scope of the author's project.

Construction of 'the creative industries' was, as discussed earlier, closely linked to Labour's political strategy for a 'knowledge-driven economy' (DTI, 1999; Hesmondhalgh, 2002). 'New thinking' also coincided with a push towards devolution and decentralisation of state powers to the regional level. Much has been written about Labour's political rationale for regionalism (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Jones *et al*, 2006). It is, therefore, useful to examine briefly regionalism in relation to South West England before homing in on the specifics of regional institutions. Such an orientation will also contextualise the place of key state bodies.

## **6.2 Devolution, regionalism and the South West**

With Labour's election in 1997 and commitment to devolution and regionalisation, a flurry of White Papers and legislation were used to introduce new regional governance structures. Importantly, the Regional Development Act 1998 announced the formation of Regional Development Agencies (RDA) in nine Government Office Regions (GOR) with the aim of 'a better attunement of

national policies and programmes to local needs and concerns' (House of Lords, 1998). Labour's support of regionalism was closely linked to the party's longstanding political commitment to devolved administrations for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to elected Regional Assemblies (RA) for each of the English GORs (Labour Party, 1997).<sup>52</sup>

Constitutional change in England centred on a regional institutional structure of three 'pillars' – GOR, RDA and RA – that would act as the middle tier between central and local government. During Labour's first term (1997-2001): GORs were reconfigured in eight English regions outside London to oversee delivery of national Government policies, some national programmes and EU programmes; RDAs were set up as economic development agencies; and RAs (later re-named Regional Councils) were formed to scrutinise the RDAs and take responsibility for regional spatial infrastructure planning. In the South West, the trio were Government Office for the South West (GO-SW), SW RDA and South West Regional Assembly (SW RA). This landscape is described by Dean and Giordano (2003: 233) as 'a partial and hesitant rediscovery of regionalism by UK policy-makers', implying a re-invention rather than brand new structures. The idea of a 'regional renaissance' (Jones and MacLeod, 1999) was to devolve powers and functions away from central government 'closer to the citizen' and to 'revitalise the English regions' (DCLG, 2002). A synopsis of regional and local governmental arrangements is given in Appendix Twelve.

While devolved administrations were eventually set up in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, devolution in England met with resistance at the local scale. Significantly, an elected Regional Assembly was rejected by voters in the North East and soon after the policy was abandoned by the Labour Party. Most resistance came from local councils who resented a regional tier of government (Hazell, 2006) and central Government's attempts to manipulate local government.<sup>53</sup> Thwarted by local opposition, Labour turned instead to

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<sup>52</sup> Devolution in the UK dates as far back as Gladstone's attempt in the 1880s, Lloyd George's in the early 1900s and Labour's first failed attempt in the 1970s.

<sup>53</sup> For small district councils that were part of a larger county council, unitary authority status offered independence. For some, such as Bath and North East Somerset Council, unitary status gave access to a larger electorate, new government monies and a more powerful voice in the influential West of England Local Strategic Partnership (B&NES, 2003). For

strengthening the functions and resources of the unelected and more manageable regional institutions and particularly those for economic and infrastructure development. In their heyday, regional institutions flourished and were predicted by some to 'continue and continue to grow' (Sandford, 2006).

Apart from loss of decision-making powers, local government's opposition to Labour's regionalised mode of governing was also fuelled by antipathy to central Government's imposition of national targets, national standards and onerous requirement for 'evidence of achievements'. A jaded local council official remarked "*we're all buried under desperate amounts of paperwork and justification and targets*" (M014). With different standards, targets and programmes attached to different policy areas and demands set by local voters, it is unsurprising that local councils became increasingly frustrated at their loss of control and influence over local decisions. By contrast, the unelected RDAs were in a more favourable position to comply with central directives. With a single policy focus (economic development), they were sponsored by a powerful Whitehall department (BERR/BIS) and had access to 'evidence' of regional productivity and national and European funds.

By 2005, relations between local and central government had deteriorated and Labour's manifesto warned:

We will give councils further freedoms to deliver better local services, subject to minimum national standards, with even greater freedoms for top-performing local councils (Labour Party, 2005:106).

Following a 'sub-national' review of public service delivery, a DCLG policy, *Prosperous Places* (2008), set out a 'duty to engage', that directed local councils to collaborate with regional state bodies including the RDAs and regional cultural agencies.<sup>54</sup>

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others, such as Exeter City Council, application to central Government for unitary status was protracted and finally unsuccessful.

<sup>54</sup> Regional cultural agencies were directly or indirectly sponsored by DCMS and acted as the department's strategic delivery partners. In the South West, they were: Arts Council England South West (ACE-SW), English Heritage, Museums Libraries and Archives Council South West (MLA-SW), South West Screen, South West Tourism and Sport England. Agencies began meeting as the Cultural Agencies Group in 1998 under the auspices of GO-SW and was the precursor to the Regional Cultural Consortium known as Culture South West (see case study in 6.4.2).

Applied to cultural policy, the 'duty' was technically unenforceable because most public cultural services were discretionary. Thus, *Creative Britain* named local councils as delivery partners but they had no obligation to, for example, engage in the 'Find Your Talent' programme (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 76). The effects of compliance or resistance by local councils will be observed in the case studies. Suffice to say, local councils who cooperated with regional bodies were more likely to be recipients of public grants and have influence on regional planning decisions (Culture South West, 2008b).

Turning to the regional 'pillars', GO-SW, SW RDA and SW RA were responsible for HM Treasury Grant-in-Aid monies and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme funding. Analysis shows, however, their investment capacities were relatively small. For example, SW RDA reported total programme expenditure in 2008/09 of £160 million (SW RDA, 2010: 55) falling to £128 million in 2010/11 (SW RDA, 2012: 40).<sup>55</sup> Given the agency's annual allocation for a 'transformational' regional 'creative industries strategy' (SW RDA, 2007: 23) was only £1.5 million and reduced to £1 million by 2010/11, it is surprising that regional cultural agencies and local councils viewed SW RDA as a major investor. A local council officer explained SW RDA's influence as:

*about aligning for funding; so, if we're looking for funding in the future we want to be able to say "look, this is how we're delivering your regional policy" (F015).*

Arguably, the actual powers of SW RDA to deliver a regional growth agenda (including 'creative economy') were exaggerated since they had limited funds. GO-SW and SW RA were no better resourced, but their roles were very much focused on influencing regional interventions rather than financial investment and particularly the latter body.

Analysis of the three institutional 'pillars' and their remits, based on website and policy documents, suggests distinct governance roles: (1) GO-SW to ensure nine central government policy areas, and national and EU programmes were understood and implemented and to communicate regional and local issues

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<sup>55</sup> *South West Regional Development Agency – Annual Report and Financial Statements 2011-12* (SW RDA, 2012, online, accessed 06 January 2013, <<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/BISCore/economic-development/docs/S/south-west-england-annual-report-accounts-2011-2012.pdf>>).

back to Whitehall – “*check and challenge in the region*” as described by one GO-SW civil servant; (2) SW RDA to develop and implement a regional economic development strategy; and (3) SW RA to act as the ‘voice of the people’, take lead responsibility for integrated spatial planning and to scrutinise the SW RDA. Reading of major regional policy documents - *Just Connect* (SW RA, 2004), *Draft Regional Spatial Strategy* (SW RA, 2006), *Regional Economic Strategy* (SW RDA, 2006) and Local Area Agreements for several key local councils (see Appendix Two) – suggests a well-functioning integrated institutional system.

However, closer examination (and confirmed in other empirical studies) shows overlaps between remits and incompatible strategic objectives (Hazell, 2006; Jones and MacLeod, 2004). In other words, regional policy coherence was an imagined integration - and similar to the illusionary nature of ‘the creative industries’ strategies discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>56</sup> The temporality of regional ‘pillars’ and their policies is most succinctly demonstrated by abolition of RAs in 2009 and the final two ‘pillars’ in 2010, bringing to an end Labour’s short experiment in English devolution.

Of state personnel within the ‘three pillars’, significant players were GO-SW’s Head of Culture and Tourism and SW RDA’s ‘creative industries’ sector team. From the late 1990s, GO-SW actively promoted ‘the creative industries’ imaginary on behalf of DCMS and was instrumental in formation of two key governance bodies - South West Screen and Culture South West (see case studies below). By contrast, SW RDA personnel took longer to engage with

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<sup>56</sup> The incompatibility of regional plans is exemplified by the statutory *Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West* (SW RA, 2006) and a non-statutory regional cultural infrastructure plan titled *People, Places, Spaces* (Culture South West, 2008b). Both processes were imposed by central Government departments, with the aim of improving ‘joined up’ infrastructure planning across the region. However, they proved highly controversial and contributed to widespread disillusionment with regional governance bodies. For example, housing development quotas specified for local areas were not necessarily compatible with existing or planned cultural facilities and *vice versa*. From the author’s experience, the public consultation processes for both strategies were lengthy and expensive, involved numerous public meetings and yet failed to gain support. Indeed, SW RA and Culture South West were both abolished in early 2009 and spatial planning was abandoned by Labour. Further details are given in a report by the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (2011) *Abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies: a planning vacuum*, *Second Report of Session 2010-11*, HMSO, online, accessed 23 November 2011, <<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmcomloc/517/517.pdf>>.

DCMS' policy and sponsored bodies, but in the end became a major delivery agent for *Creative Britain*. This activity suggests an ever-stronger connection developed between national departments and regional representatives. However, these movements were neither linear nor in isolation from other changes taking place at the time in the 'creative industry' governance landscape.

### 6.3 Regionalism and the Creative Economy

Regionalism and Labour's economic growth agenda coincided with the emergence of 'the creative industries' as an object of political interest and new governance arrangements (Christophers, 2007; Jayne, 2005). An energetic start to Tony Blair's New Labour project saw abolition of the Department for National Heritage, and formation of a new ministry with a Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

Brett Christophers (2007) argues that Labour's 'creative industries' strategy heavily relied on regional state bodies to interpret, shape, promote and strategise the new policy object. Certainly, the author's research found a national and regional institutional landscape rapidly evolved from 1997 onwards. An historical and relational account is given below of key state bodies involved in a South West *terrain* and illustrates their spatialities, temporalities and inter-dependencies.

Writers point to the relationship between Labour's devolutionary ambitions, 'spaces of regionalism' and the 'peopled state' (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; MacLeod and Jones, 2007). Several studies are particularly relevant here, not least because of their focus on the South West region and similar case study organisations. First, scholarship addresses regionalism in England and 'thinking the region spatially', through case studies of devolved bodies such as RDAs and their 'institutional consciousness' (Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Paasi, 2002).<sup>57</sup> Most recently, David Harvey and colleagues at University of Exeter studied the 'practised and

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<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, Jones and Macleod (2004) empirical work on devolved governance at the height of Labour's regionalism strategy was based on case studies of SW RDA and Culture South West.



peopled space' of 'regional imaginaries' in relation to 'the creative industries' in South West England (Harvey *et al*, 2011: 472). Their case studies were Culture South West, Arts Council England South West (ACE-SW) and South West Screen. The author's research findings concur with a view of state personnel as proactive agents and key producers of state apparatus (Harvey *et al*, 2011: 472). What is missing from these studies is the minutiae of intra- and inter-governance body practices and imaginaries of governing 'the creative industries'.

Prior to regionalisation, public-funded cultural services outside London were mostly controlled by well-established national bodies such as Arts Council England and the British Film Institute or by local councils. Any state support of the more commercialised end of content production (media, television and new media) was in the form of training grants through National Training Organisations (later known as Sector Skills Councils). Pre 1997, independent Regional Arts Boards received annual grant allocations from Arts Council England to support traditional artforms (of crafts, performing and visual arts). Their operational areas aligned with old regional boundaries. South West Arts, for example, operated in the 'South West' region. Of 'popular' artforms and more commercialised cultural activities, institutional arrangements outside London were more fragmented and bespoke to different parts of England and sub-sector specialism. In the South West, for example, three public-funded 'media' bodies specialised in cultural film production, skills and training, and film location services respectively (see South West Screen case study below).

In the late twentieth century, Labour's strategy for more economised cultural activity was a potential problem for those bodies with governance remits over traditional artforms (Hesmondhalgh, 2007; O'Connor, 2007). Dating back to 1942, Arts Council England had developed an out-of-London structure based on relationships with territorially-defined Regional Arts Boards. Their operational areas were, however, out of synch with Labour's GORs and RDA territories. This change influenced the Regional Arts Boards to quickly re-structure and re-align with the new administrative boundaries and new economic development bodies (see Figure 3 in Chapter 3). For South West Arts, change meant expanding its governance territory (and for the neighbouring Southern Arts,

losing territory). By 2002 Regional Arts Boards had become branch offices of Arts Council England, and South West Arts was re-named Arts Council England South West (ACE-SW).<sup>58</sup> Thus, structural change in one part of the state apparatus had knock-on and unexpected effects to other parts.

At the forefront of DCMS' plans for a regional mechanism to deliver a 'creative economy' (DCMS, 2000a) were sponsored NDPBs and their regional strategic partner organisations.<sup>59</sup> In the South West, the key state bodies were: the new Regional Cultural Consortium (Culture South West), Arts Council England and ACE-SW, and the newly formed UK Film Council and a soon-to-be merged three 'media' bodies – that is, South West Screen. Additionally, other Whitehall departments and state bodies were to be part of the mechanism and notably those on the economic development side – namely, BERR/BIS, DTI, DIUS and SW RDA, Sector Skills Councils and local councils (to name but a few). It is this institutional landscape that formed the backdrop to the author's empirical study.

Without overcomplicating the *terrain*, it is worth noting the nature of an 'arms length' relationship between a Whitehall department and sponsored body, and how that relationship impacted on power and influence at the regional level.<sup>60</sup> 'Arms length' succinctly describes many public bodies and their relationship to Government and Whitehall departments – that is, an imagined distance between Government policy-maker (Whitehall departments and ministers) and those with devolved powers to deliver that policy (state bodies).<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Prior to 1997, the boundaries of Regional Arts Boards (RAB) were aligned with geographic areas first used by the Ministry of Defence. For South West Arts (SWA), re-territorialisation involved considerable negotiation with the neighbouring Southern Arts into whose territorial space SWA was encroaching. On the one hand, the process was imposed by SWA's main funder, Arts Council England, who needed to comply with DCMS' new regional mechanism. On the other hand, SWA recognised the advantages of re-aligning its operational area with that of GO-SW and SW RDA. It also saw an opportunity to extend its governance reach.

<sup>59</sup> Of 790 public bodies recorded by Cabinet Office (2008), 56 were sponsored by DCMS.

<sup>60</sup> There are different types of 'arms length' public bodies that are officially classified by the UK Government's Cabinet Office and described in *Public Bodies 2009* (online, accessed 10 November 2011, <<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/resources/ndpb>>). Many cultural councils and economic development agencies are classified as Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB). According to Cabinet Office guidelines point 2.2, 'NDPBs have a national or regional remit and carry out a wide range of important functions'. Set up at a distance from government (with charitable or not-for-profit status), their day-to-day decisions are supposed to be made independent of ministerial or civil service interference, but are ultimately accountable to the sponsoring department's minister.

<sup>61</sup> Technically, 'arms length' is a legal term for a relationship between two parties in which neither has control or advantage over the other. In a report for the Calouste Gulbenkian

Contrast, for example, the different organisational status of two ‘arms length’ regional bodies and their power relations. First, ACE-SW was classified as a NDPB because it operated as a regional branch of Arts Council England (DCMS sponsored national body for the arts), and thereby held direct devolved powers. By contrast, South West Screen operated as an independent not-for-profit organisation that held an exclusive but annual contract with the UK Film Council (DCMS sponsored national NDPB for film). Hence, South West Screen held no official NDPB status *per se*, or direct funding relationship with DCMS. Nonetheless, as the UK Film Council’s funded regional strategic partner, and delegated National Lottery distributor, South West Screen’s credentials gave it status as a key state body and regional cultural agency. These organisational arrangements and positional subtleties influenced how they were perceived by other state bodies.

For example, a SW RDA senior manager differentiated between ACE-SW as a “*strategic partner with a remit from government*” (M007) and South West Screen as both partner and supplier. He commented:

*there may be things that [ ] we need to have somebody to come along and deliver this for us and so we go out for an invitation to tender and some of the organisations may say we’re going to take our hat off as strategic partner and put on our hat as a delivery organisation. So, South West Screen, for example, are given money by the Film Council and act as a partner with us in terms of development in the sector, take off that hat periodically and say we’re now going to pitch [ ] to deliver things for you (M007).*

In other words, a NDPB was viewed by another NDPB as a more reliable strategic partner who sticks to instructions from central Government, whereas a hybrid quasi-NDPB (South West Screen) is less predictable and manageable, and more opportunistic. The remark also suggests inter-agency tensions around relational hierarchies and lines of influence.

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Foundation, *Support for the Arts in England and Wales*, judge Lord Redcliffe-Maud applied the term to the relationship between Government and the Arts Council, saying:

‘By self-denying ordinance the politicians leave the Council free to spend as it thinks fit. No minister needs to reply to questions in Parliament about the beneficiaries – or about unsuccessful applicants for an Arts Council grant. A convention has been established over the years that in arts patronage neither the politician nor the bureaucrat knows best’ (Lord Redcliffe-Maud, 1976: 24-25).

Although Labour's economic and cultural goals were not mutually exclusive, in practice conflicts of interest emerged between supposedly inter-dependent state bodies with a shared interest in a 'creative economy'. Tensions and rivalries were patent in comments made during interviews and conversations by state personnel of each other: For example, SW RDA said of Culture South West, *'they were a complete waste of money'* (M007), while Culture South West said of SW RDA *'it was important that the RDA and Culture South West worked together because you don't want conflicting messages getting out'* (F008); and South West Screen said of SW CEP *'it was just a talking shop'* (F001). Such disparaging remarks underline the conflictual nature of state intermediation at the grassroots, and organisational manipulations that could be highly disruptive. This will become more apparent in the case studies.

Events emanating from the macro scale had negative effects on regional bodies and their capacity to govern. Towards the end of Labour's rule, the most dramatic influence was of global economic recession, its impact on fiscal and public sector reform and knock-on effects at the regional and local level. As well as having to accommodate central policy directives and an ever-narrowing economic development agenda, regional bodies with remits that crossed cultural and economic policy had to juggle inter-agency pressures with the needs of front-line organisations.

For ACE-SW, the priority was arts development; for Culture South West, the priorities ranged from London Olympic Games 2012 to a 'creative economy'; and for South West Screen, the priority was creative media businesses support. A creative practitioner might have been surprised and gratified to learn that SW RDA's response to economic crisis was:

*In terms of the recession, we adjusted what we did. So we did a lot less property development as an agency and looked a lot more about how we responded to the needs of business (M007).*

While ACE-SW survived economic-political pressures, Culture South West was not so resilient. After only nine years of operation, Culture South West was removed as a layer of regional governance (DCMS, 2008).

In terms of compliance by regional bodies with multiple political directives (national and/or regional), research revealed funding was a critical factor. Undoubtedly, sponsoring departments and national Naps used other techniques of 'soft' regulation – for example, Public Service Agreements, project contracts and Memorandum of Understanding. But ultimately, the incentive for regional bodies to cooperate was money. From DCMS' perspective, "*we have the most influence over those we have most financial control over*" (M011). And from the regional perspective, a senior manager explained "*It's all about money. So where the money comes from and then what they want us to do with it*" (F001). Funding was also important to inter-agency joint activity. As we will discover in the case of SW CEP, it was lack of partners' funding that de-stabilised the body's permanent place in the landscape and led to its closure.

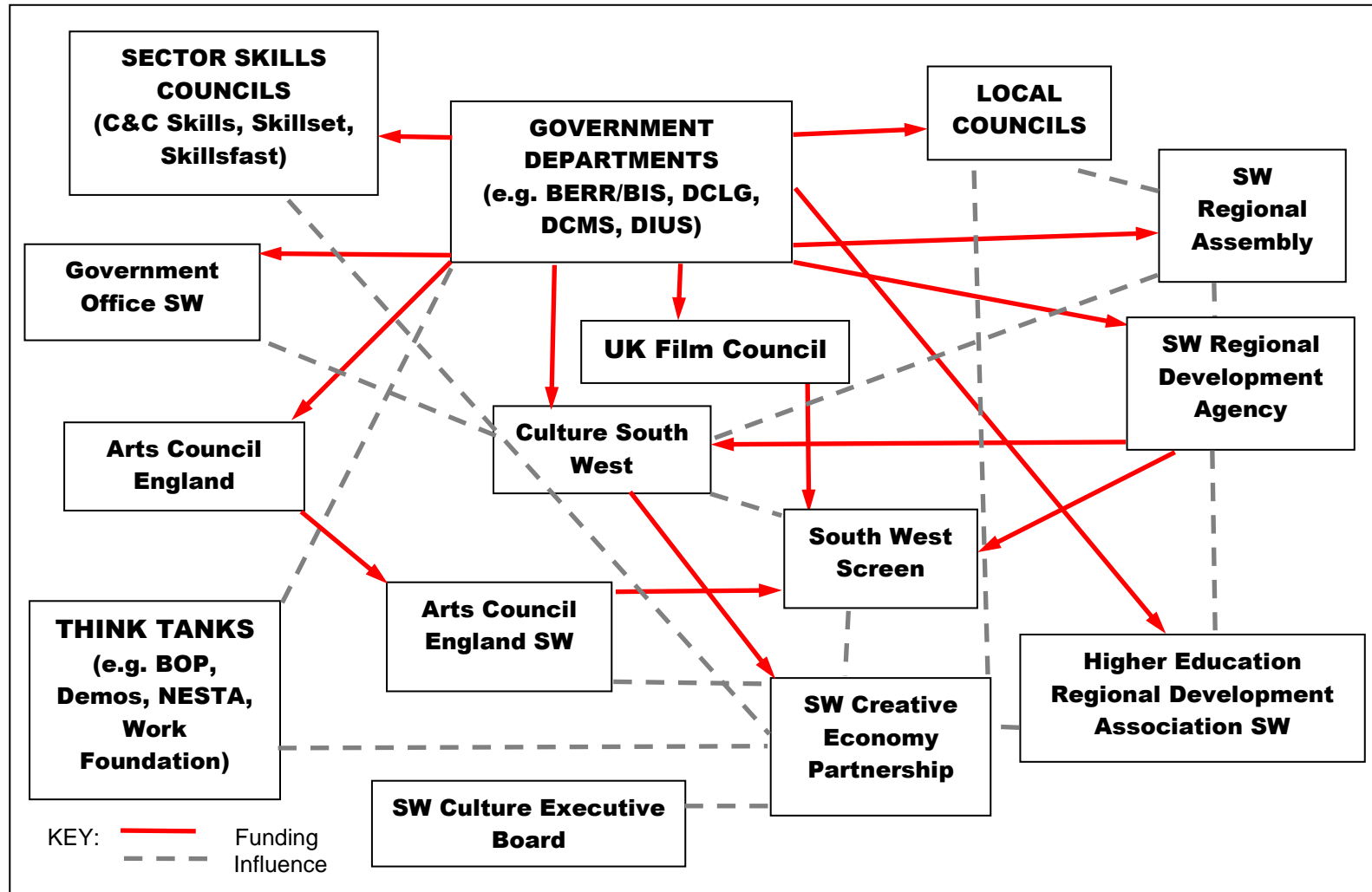
Turning to a 'snapshot' of principle 'arms length' bodies associated with *Creative Britain* delivery in South West England, Figure 9 illustrates some, but not all, of the connections, complexities and scalarities of the institutional 'thicket'. At national scale, the key state bodies included: Arts Council England, British Film Institute, Crafts Council, Design Council, Fashion Council, Museums Libraries and Archives Council and UK Film Council.<sup>62</sup> Many of these bodies in turn, devolved responsibilities and public funds to regional offices (a form of double devolution), or sub-contracted to another state-funded body. The schematic (Figure 9) highlights the messiness of intersecting and multi-directional relationships that existed between national, regional and local bodies to deliver *Creative Britain* policy. Without marking every body and connection, the solid red lines indicate main direct funding relationships, and dashed red lines indicate two-way and non-financial lines of influence.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Desk-based research of DCMS' website identified the relevant sponsored public bodies listed in *Public Bodies 2008* (Cabinet Office, 2008, online, accessed 10 November 2011, <[http://www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/creative\\_industries/default.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/creative_industries/default.aspx)>). Further investigation of the main cultural councils' websites identified their regional partners in South West England.

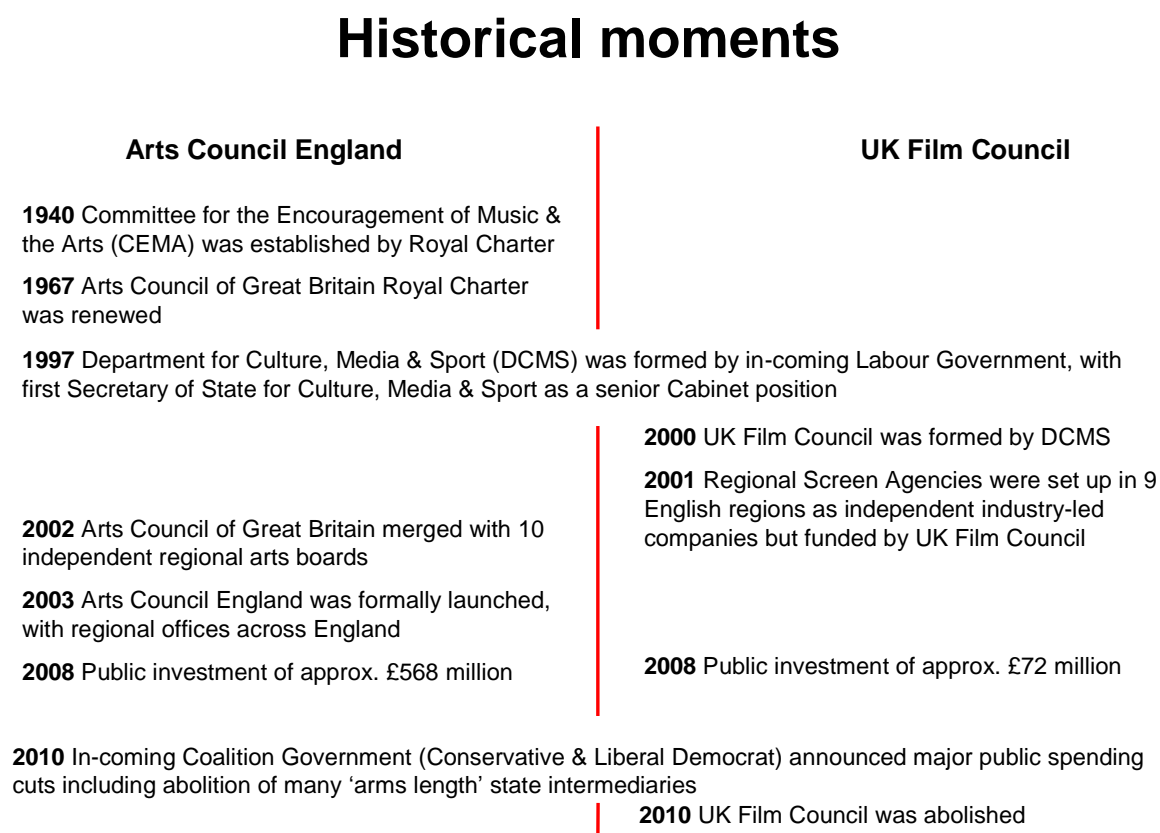
<sup>63</sup> Non-financial relationships between state bodies were identified during textual analysis of policy documents. These included co-membership of strategic groups/ partnerships, and collaborative state projects.

Figure 9: To show the institutional thicket of state bodies involved in delivering Creative Britain in South West England (as of March 2009)



As well as institutional density, the landscape was also an ever-changing one. As writers have observed, state bodies are not a homogenous type of organisation or group of people, and nor are they permanent fixtures (Jayne, 2005; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Harvey *et al*, 2011; Pratt, 2005). Compare, for example, two national cultural NDPBs - Arts Council England and UK Film Council (see Figure 10) – who played an important part in shaping structural arrangements in South West England. Both national cultural councils held official status as NDPBs; both were sponsored by DCMS; and both delivered aspects of a creative economy policy through their regional partners (ACE-SW and South West Screen respectively). Alongside similarities, there were significant differences between the two bodies’ political and organisational histories that demonstrate the fluidity and temporality of an institution’s place in the landscape.

**Figure 10: To show historical moments of political and organisational change for Arts Council England and UK Film Council**



Looking at their histories, the length of time on the state stage varied considerably between state bodies. Arts Council England was established by a Labour-Conservative Coalition Government in 1940 and, with numerous re-structures and name changes, is still going strong in 2013. Whereas, the UK Film Council was set up by a Labour Government in 2000 and abolished by an in-coming Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition Government in July 2010. While these two state bodies shared certain territorial and scalar characteristics, they also managed their governance powers in diverse and (for the UK Film Council) terminal ways.

For commentators (Hesmondhalgh, 2007; Higgs and Cunningham, 2008; O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005), 'the creative industries' is a disembodied curiosity. Whereas for those who practice state governance of cultural activities, the object is a more emotive subject and bound up with how they do what they do. Based on the author's research and working practice, national and regional cultural state bodies were, on the whole, highly specialised and knowledgeable about their area of cultural activity – arts, film, design *et cetera*.

It was a challenge for specialists to re-think previously separate cultural artforms, and to identify with a single and invented sector ('the creative industries'). As 'cultural intermediaries' (Bourdieu, 1984/1979), these powerful bodies were defending different modes of production, some defending the arts while others defended film and television. These different power relations would inevitably result in a 'field of struggles' at national and regional scale.

Of Arts Council England's response to new concepts and mode of cultural governance, a policy advisor commented:

*They are there to support culture. And the minute that you allow in a concept like the creative industries you are taking away what is their most important area which is judging what is art. Because creative industries is about markets (F016).*

Interviews with regional personnel revealed a tactic of both resistance and compliance. For example, ACE-SW staff demarcated their territory as 'the arts' and more specialised areas (dance, visual arts, theatre) and added 'the creative industries' as if the phrases were inter-changeable. South West Screen staff



was equally specific about its territory as 'screen-based media', 'film and television' and 'creative media' and talked of a 'creative economy' agenda. In other words, imaginaries such as 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy' were adopted as political wrappers that enabled the specialist to carry on as usual. One interviewee remarked "*I'm pretty much doing what I was doing fifteen years ago*" (F004). While organisational structures and names changed and changed again in the process of regionalisation and economisation of cultural activities, state personnel found ways to adapt without fundamentally changing their professional practice and outlook.

The author's recollection of how regional cultural agencies initially responded to DCMS' promotion of 'the creative industries' concept was of bemusement and incredulity. Apart from problems with the artificial and crude nature of DET's definition, there were also practical problems. As specialist bodies, DCMS' NDPBs and regional partners dutifully acknowledged a shared interest in developing a 'creative economy', but viewed themselves and their constituency as defined by an artform or industrial group and intervened accordingly. For a start, the word 'sector' had industrial connotations and was not widely applied to traditional arts. The label 'sector' and 'industry' were more familiar to commercialised activities such as film, television, advertising and design.

'Sector' specialists such as ACE-SW and South West Screen struggled to find common ground between the highly subsidised arts and the highly commercialised audio-visual industries (apart from audience development). Although they eventually signed a Memorandum of Understanding to formalise a relationship, their interventions remained almost entirely separate. Tensions between the two bodies centred on this difference of outlook. An ACE-SW middle manager expressed the difference as:

*[ ] RDAs, South West Screen, are very interested in high growth, really clear, understandable kind of high-tech companies and economic value. The Arts Council is interested in economic value and sustainability, but we're also interested in the nature of the creative industries having other outputs like environmental, cultural and social (F013).*

The polarity is suggestive of Bourdieu's analysis of those who defend and challenge different modes of cultural production. In terms of cultural governance, ACE-SW was the more powerful competitor with considerably

more political support than South West Screen. However, South West Screen was better positioned to advocate for 'high value' parts of 'the creative industries' and particularly in relation to SW RDA.

Regardless of differences, pragmatism was clearly a motive for specialist state bodies to occasionally unite around the 'creative economy' agenda as was the case in joint membership of SW CEP (see case study below). Mark Jayne argues:

For creative-industries development to be coherent [ ] projects and initiatives [ ] must be joined up and folded together [ ] across institutions (2005: 554).

The case studies will show that policy documents and strategic initiatives articulated coherence but 'joined up' governance was much more difficult to achieve in practice – although not impossible.

#### **6.4 Case studies**

The following three case studies provide an in-depth and relational exploration of statehood and the 'peopled state' (Jones, 2011). Each case study organisation is presented as a nodal point in a complex institutional landscape and, therefore, the reader will find connections made to the other two case organisations and further a-field (see Figure 9). The histories and geographies of each case study organisation are manifestations of state governance and are examined through rich and revealing empirical material. Much of the discursive analysis is given in the next chapter where the emergent themes are drawn together.

Starting with South West Screen, case studies are examined in terms of history, governance structure, processes and practices, and the effects and outcomes of those spatialities and temporalities. The most detailed case study is South West Screen owing to the extensive participation observation work undertaken and the author's in-depth prior knowledge of its formation and organisational practices.

The historical period between 1997 and 2010 spanned a particularly turbulent one for regional state bodies including the case study organisations. During the

main fieldwork stage (2008 to 2010) there were major changes and all three case organisations have now ceased to exist.

#### **6.4.1 Case study: South West Screen**

##### History

Set up in 2001, South West Screen was the result of a merger between three public-funded regional bodies (Skillnet South West, South West Film Commission and South West Media Development Agency/ SWMDA). Similar mergers of equivalent media agencies took place at the same time in other English regions to form a pan-England network of Regional Screen Agencies. 'Media' was shorthand to describe screen-based industries and notably film, television, video and interactive media. The historical context and coordinates of South West Screen's formation illustrate the sometimes chaotic and contested nature of spatial change in the state landscape as well as occasional coherence.

The major influence on the amalgamation of 'media' bodies came from DCMS and the new UK Film Council who urgently needed a streamlined regional delivery mechanism for film policy delivery and National Lottery distribution. Aligned to New Labour's regionalist rhetoric, the new UK Film Council argued:

The FILM COUNCIL notes the Government's view that funding decisions affecting the English regions should be taken as close to the end-user as possible. For this reason, the FILM COUNCIL does not think it appropriate for it to be taking decisions at the centre about individual funding allocations that have primarily a local or a regional impact (2000: 38, original uppercase).

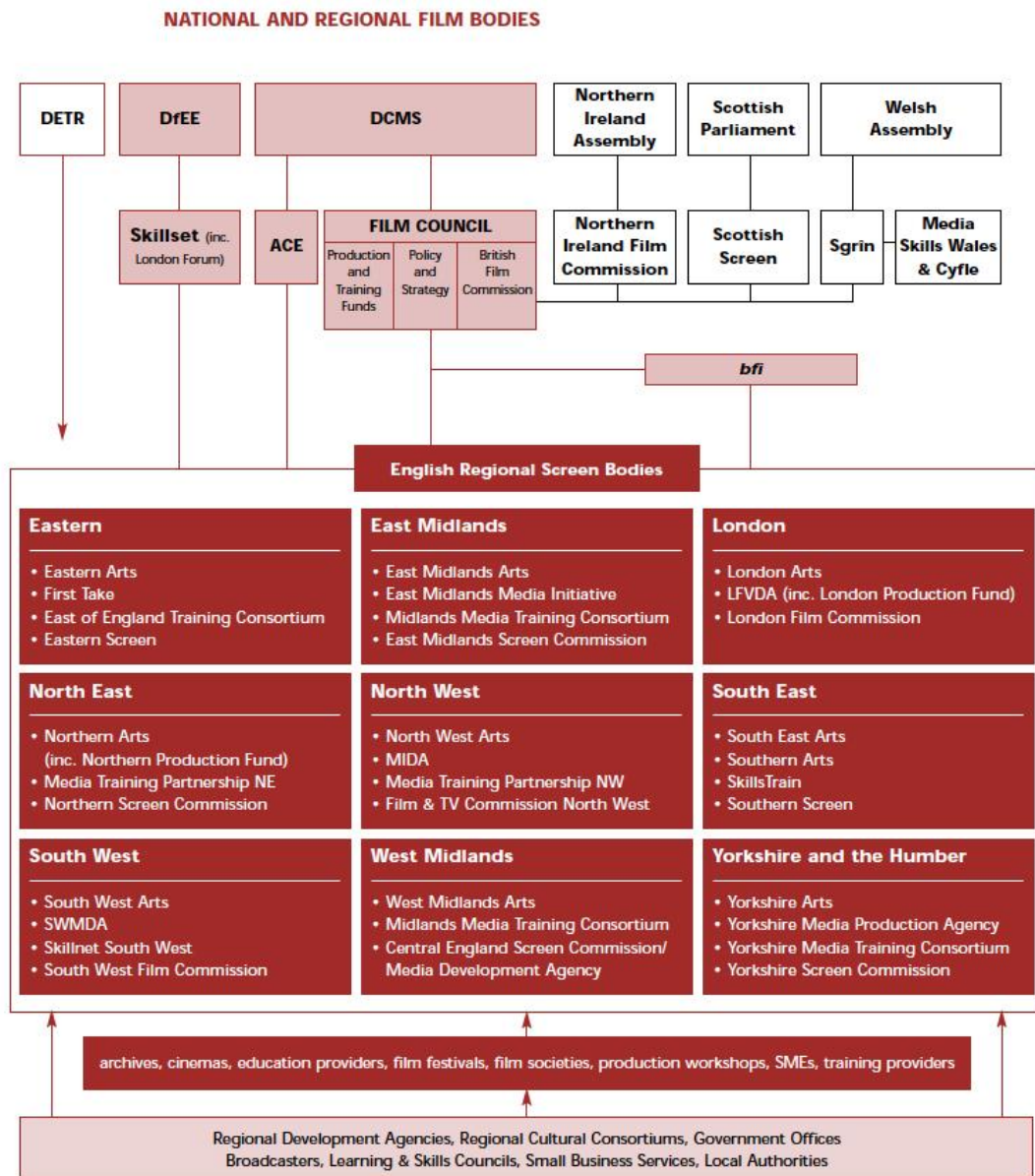
Like other regions, the institutional landscape of South West England was severely over-crowded in 2000 (see Figure 11). A crucial recommendation of *Film in England* (UK Film Council, 2000), was for a single 'integrated' body in each region to act as the national body's strategic partner and to manage public spend on film (Grant-in-Aid and National Lottery). To encourage regional re-configuration, the UK Film Council proposed a Regional Investment Fund for England (RIFE):

This should facilitate the rapid establishment of an integrated regional film agency (or, where more effective, integrated planning across existing

agencies) in each region with the capacity to determine its own industrial and cultural priorities for film and to express those priorities through a three-year business plan for the region which is supported by the FILM COUNCIL (2000: 38, original uppercase).

Based on ‘carrot and stick’, the UK Film Council offered an ‘integrated’ body in each region the exclusive control of public funds and quasi-NDPB status. As the author recalls, this was a powerful incentive to small agencies. Within a year, the three agencies in the South West region merged to become South West Screen and the first of nine Regional Screen Agencies.

**Figure 11: To show national and regional bodies engaged in film policy across the United Kingdom in 2000**



Source: Reproduced from *Film in England* (2000) UK Film Council, London, Appendix D, page 59.

However, the merger process was not straightforward. Inter-agency disputes over leadership of the process were particularly disruptive and acrimonious. Furthermore, one media agency's operational area (SWMDA) was mis-aligned with new GOR regional boundaries because of a service agreement with South West Arts. The UK Film Council acknowledges these difficulties but viewed the solution as 'common sense':

In administrative terms, there are no easy answers to the boundary problem. It is an imperfect situation that will require flexibility, tact and co-ordination on the part of the regions themselves. The FILM COUNCIL's preference to work with GO/RDA boundaries is simply about common sense (2000: 36).

The implication was that GOR boundary changes would require some state bodies to concede operational territory to a neighbouring state body. With contractual and legal commitments between national, regional and local bodies to re-negotiate, the task of re-aligning governance space encountered considerable resistance and resentment.

Because the political directive to re-align came from DCMS, the Regional Arts Boards had no choice but to comply. In the South West, South West Arts and SWMDA gained operational territory, whereas the neighbouring Southern Arts lost out.

Further controversy surrounded DCMS' re-assignment of film policy lead to the new UK Film Council. This had previously been jointly held by the British Film Institute (BFI) and Arts Council England. The impact on these well established NDPBs and Regional Arts Boards was, of course, loss of influence over film policy delivery and related financial resource. From the author's conversations and analysis of newspaper articles, re-delegation of state powers to the new UK Film Council was more controversial than the re-territorialisation of regional space. There was an evident loyalty to 'old' national structures and relationships. One ex-media agency middle manager viewed the change as "*extraordinary and changed the nature of the BFI to an education provider*" (F004). The author recalls a divide in public sector circles between: those who welcomed the UK Film Council as a necessary bridge between the cultural and

commercial side of film policy; those who viewed the new body as New Labour's way of curtailing the powers of Arts Council England and side-lining the BFI.

Ten years later, functions and powers were re-instated at the BFI when the UK Film Council was abolished and there was again outrage. A Guardian online article, *Fade out from the UK Film Council to the British Film Institute* (01 April 2011), commented that 'the UKFC's entire annual budget was a reported £3m, while the cost of closing it down and restructuring was estimated to have been almost four times that amount'.<sup>64</sup> Similar comments were made at the time about the cost of setting up the UK Film Council. This points to the political nature of structural change (and settling old scores) in the state landscape and not necessarily about functional improvement or economic 'efficiencies'.

Meanwhile, arrangements for 'screen' governance in the South West were well advanced. According to UK Film Council's consultation notes:

#### **South West**

A Media Agencies Partnership has been in place for some time. It has recently embarked on assessing the feasibility of forming a single delivery agency or similar mechanism for film and moving image funding, services and development in the South West. Principal partners are SWMDA, the South West Film Commission and Skillnet South West in association with the Regional Development Agency and South West Arts Board (UK Film Council, 2000: 63-64).

The history of the Media Agencies Partnership illustrates the complexities of spatial re-configuration and the active role of state personnel. Much of this account is based on the author's personal experiences of leading one of those media agencies as Chief Executive Officer of Skillnet South West.

#### Media Agencies Partnership

The Media Agencies Partnership (MAP) was formed in late 1999 as a neutral space for three public-funded 'media' agencies to discuss governmental changes. With very different structures, remits, organisational objectives and

<sup>64</sup> The Guardian (2011) *Fade out from the UK Film Council to the British Film Institute*, Friday 01 April 2011, online, accessed 19 November 2011, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2011/apr/01/uk-film-council-british-institute-bfi>>.

sponsorship, MAP provided a forum for disparate industry and public stakeholders. A brief synopsis of the relevant agencies will indicate the differences as well as commonalities between the three organisations and difficulties encountered in forming a single 'integrated' body.

**Skillnet South West:** was set up as an independent organisation in 1993 by South West Arts and Skillset (national Sector Skills Council).<sup>65</sup> From a remit of delivering short vocational training courses for industry practitioners in film, television, video and interactive media, the agency expanded into more strategic programmes and labour market research with funding from Skillset, European Social Fund and industry sponsors. By 2000, Skillnet South West had secured SW RDA funds for a £1.2 million skills development programme – Training for Convergence. Although SW RDA's interest lay in the technological side of 'new media' in pursuit of a regional 'knowledge economy' (DTZ Piedad, 2000), and not in film and television content production *per se*, it supported Skillnet South West's economic-orientated rationale for investment funds. Furthermore, SW RDA cautiously endorsed the merger of the three 'media' agencies, and funded a feasibility and mapping study to scope economic activity in the region and to identify an operational model.<sup>66</sup> With three agencies each claiming to represent the 'media industries', SW RDA was keen to engage with a single body that was approved by the UK Film Council.

**South West Film Commission:** was formed in 1994 as an independent body to provide crew and location services for in-coming film productions to the region. Initiated by South West Arts, the agency's subscribers were local councils, South West Tourism and South West Arts. It was affiliated to a national body - British Film Commission. Apart from practical location services, the agency aimed to promote the South West as a tourist destination.

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<sup>65</sup> Sector Skills Councils were previously known as National Training Organisations and are responsible for delivering Government's skills and vocational education policy and 'standards'. Skillset's governance terrain includes: animation, interactive media, film, publishing, radio, television and video.

<sup>66</sup> A feasibility study was undertaken by Olsberg SPI and funded by SW RDA in 2000 to scope the region's 'media industries' and consult with public and private organisations on options for an 'integrated' or other delivery model to operate in South West England. No copies of this report were found.

**SWMDA:** was set up in 1996 as an ‘arms length’ trading arm of South West Arts, with a focus on artist film and video production. With National Lottery Distributor status from the British Film Institute, it was funded by South West Arts and the British Film Institute to develop cultural film production. Interestingly, SWMDA’s senior manager was the ex-South West Arts officer who had instigated all three ‘media’ agencies and who was keen to lead the new merged South West Screen. Whether these organisational developments were part of her personal career plan is not known but their ‘South West’ prefix suggests an early awareness of the emerging regionalisation agenda.

Each media agency sought to enhance its public-private partnership credibility by appointing senior industry people onto their management boards, and forging relationships with national state bodies and trade associations. In spite of physical co-location in a Bristol office and overtly specialist remits, there was rivalry between agency senior personnel and overlaps between activities such as training programmes and political lobbying. As new regional and national institutional arrangements emerged (of GO-SW, SW RDA and UK Film Council) and the idea of ‘creative industries’ concept began to appear in policy documents (DCMS, 1998, 1999), there was growing recognition that three small agencies were neither cost-effective or strategic.

Reflecting on the formation of South West Screen, an ex-member of a media agency commented: “*it came from the UK Film Council. It just wanted every region to have this one thing – a regional screen agency*” (F004). Ultimately, the merger was driven by a national state-led imperative for a coherent regional mechanism but its roots were local. A regional ex-civil servant who was involved in MAP commented:

*Integration was never going to be an easy process but we got there in the end* (M010).

To assume South West Screen was wholly imposed by UK Film Council or DCMS is, however, to ignore the influence of individual personalities on the outcome. Other options were considered and, if chosen, would have led to a very different organisation to South West Screen. For example, the author remembers SWMDA was keen to integrate the other two agencies into its existent structure as a ‘simple solution’.



Although there is a paucity of archival material on MAP and formation of South West Screen, anecdotal evidence from interviewees and the author's recollections shows a spatial-temporal 'fix' was eventually achieved after a convoluted and argumentative process of approximately eighteen months. At an event to celebrate South West Screen's tenth year of operation (01/11/11), ex-MAP members recalled the difficulties of finding a consensual solution, one industry practitioner commenting "*it was difficult to see the wood for the trees*" (M003). Finally, a decision was taken by MAP members in spring 2001.<sup>67</sup> A MAP voter later remarked:

*[ ] by the time we got to the final vote, we all knew what the decision was going to be and I think it was the right one for the circumstances (M002).*

Rather than subsume two agencies into an existing one, the decision was taken to form a new body under a new board of directors and Chief Executive and transfer all staff to the new organisation. Most staff successfully joined South West Screen including the author who was firmly in favour of a 'new start'. Two media agency senior managers were unable to adjust to the new regime including SWMDA's ex-senior manager.

South West Screen was led by the same Chief Executive Officer (CEO) until closure in October 2011 when she led a merger with other Regional Screen Agencies to form a new national body (Creative England).<sup>68</sup> Interestingly, socio-political forces during 2010/11 were reminiscent of those in the late 1990s when Labour came to power and re-arranged the institutional landscape. Under a new Coalition administration, a major re-configuration of national and regional state bodies occurred and Creative England was formed. Based on informal conversations with South West Screen staff and board members (21/10/10 and

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<sup>67</sup> MAP was a non-constituted partnership of the three media agencies (of Skillnet South West, South West Film Commission and South West Media Development Agency). Each agency was represented by its board chairperson and two other board members. Observer membership (that is, without voting power) included GO-SW, Skillset and South West Arts. Although the three agency CEOs attended MAP meetings and were involved in discussions, they had no vote in the final decision.

<sup>68</sup> Launched in October 2011, Creative England is a new national development agency for 'the creative industries' with delegated National Lottery powers from the British Film Institute. It is a merger of most of the former regional screen agencies such as South West Screen (Creative England, online, accessed 20 November 2012, <<http://www.creativeengland.co.uk/>>).

16/03/11), the author suggests the transformation from Regional Screen Agencies to Creative England was as contested and disruptive as that of MAP.

### Structure and governance role

Having become the UK Film Council's strategic regional partner and National Lottery Distributor Body for film, South West Screen achieved recognition as a regional cultural agency alongside the other specialist 'creative industries' body in the region (ACE-SW). Starting with the strap line of 'film and moving image', the agency's territorial spread shifted over the next ten years. In 2006, the annual report declared South West Screen to be:

The public agency responsible for leading the strategic development and promotion of the film, television and digital content sector in the South West of England (2006: 2).

A board director explained the agency's place in the scalar institutional landscape as:

*[ ] there's the UK Film Council, Arts Council, there's sort of various national bodies who are one step removed from a minister, and then there's agencies which are less concerned with strategy and more concerned with delivery, of which South West Screen would be seen as one (M001).*

Described by staff as a *development agency, enabler, translator and broker*, South West Screen was set up as an independent company limited by the guarantees of board directors.

South West Screen was technically not a full NDPB because of a contractual, rather than governmentally defined Public Service Agreement (PSA), relationship with the UK Film Council. By contrast, ACE-SW (as a regional branch of Arts Council England) and SW RDA were both classed as NDPBs because of direct PSA relationships with their sponsoring Government departments. The UK Film Council's 'at a distance' relationship with its network of independent Regional Screen Agencies ensured delivery of its national agenda through annual grant allocations but minimised its responsibility for regional variations. For South West Screen, 'in between' status gave flexibility and a degree of autonomy to act as both strategic public body and independent service provider.

A board member summarised the agency's role as:

*To try and help build sustainable, commercial activity within the creative industries area within the South West as a whole (M001).*

The agency's strategy was "to become a bit of a courtier [ ] within the court of the Film Council, within the court of the RDA" (F001). However, with different policy foci, this duality was both advantageous and problematic as a senior manager commented:

*I think it's been a disadvantage in terms of having any sort of formal power... we're invited to the top table through the force of our individual personalities and because of our track record and because we know people (F001).*

Another senior manager commented:

*We acted as a kind of a translator between the industry and policy. And sometimes that worked very well, and other times we were being shot by both sides (M005).*

The agency was, therefore, aware of a tension between acting as state body while at the same time acting as the voice of the private sector.

Looking at the structure of other state bodies, however, a public-private sector facing role was not uncommon. The UK Film Council was, for example, widely regarded as a major investor in commercial British film productions in spite of its role as National Lottery distributor and NDPB (UK Film Council, 2007). And SW RDA was openly engaged in highly commercial capital ventures including multi-million pound urban land development in Bristol and Plymouth and Science Park projects (SW RDA, 2008). Indeed, commercialisation of state bodies was part of Labour's Third Way thinking to reform the public sector and overhaul outmoded ways of governing modern business activity.

Interviews and informal conversations with board members and staff revealed their differing perception of South West Screen's governance role and ability to influence other parts of the network. On the one hand, people viewed the organisation as an important part of influencing and delivering governmental policy in the region. Others were cautious about its powers. One board member commented

*I think you could easily exaggerate the role of a sort of two and a half million pound a year organisation of which twenty-eight percent goes on overheads (M001).*

A senior manager felt the agency was “*never part of the region’s governance team, we were having to apply to be part of that team*” (M005) because of a reluctance by SW RDA to accept South West Screen as an NDPB and trusted strategic partner. A South West Screen senior manager explained with some frustration:

*We’re not tasked as a strategic partner. And that’s different in different parts of the country. In the North West, Vision and Media [ ] were almost part of the RDA [ ]. Advantage West Midlands have a completely different relationship with Screen West Midlands (F001).*

Another senior manager viewed the agency’s role as:

*Kind of setting strategy, setting policy, but essentially it was kind of money in, money out. Who could we raise money from which we could then use to further the kind of visions and goals, and how do we distribute that money (M005).*

Commenting on industry practitioners’ perception of South West Screen, a senior manager said:

*Most people, who use us, see us as some sort of financial pot but I think the people who actually find us most useful value the political stuff, they value the fact that we can feedback from industry (M005).*

Overall, senior staff understood their role as a public funder but had difficulty matching the needs of industry to government policies and ‘soft’ regulations that they were required to impose (that is, national standards, targets, tenders, audits).

The agency staff’s unconventional tactic was to act as a strategic governance body at the “*top table*” but a maverick in the field. Indeed, observational work reinforced the difference between people’s careful choice of language and adherence to formal conventions in official meetings (16/02/10, i-Net meeting), and their later de-brief conversations. This is not to imply South West Screen staff were disingenuous or unreliable in how they managed their role. Having been in a similar position, the author is familiar with the state actor’s need to adapt her/his performance to different situations. In doing so, s/he is able to voice opinions and influence decisions at the “*top table*”, whilst taking a less orthodox approach to how those same opinions and decisions are voiced outside the formal setting. South West Screen’s senior staff navigated between

a mode of compliance with the formalities expected of strategic bodies at 'top table' meetings, and resistance to the bureaucratic technicalities of statehood.

South West Screen's board of twelve non-executive voluntary directors were predominantly senior figures working in the film and television industry and higher education sector. An observer place on the board was reserved for the UK Film Council (who, from the author's recollections, rarely attended board meetings). In 2001, a senior staff management team (SMT) comprised a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and four executive directors (of business development, education and skills, communications, and finance). Jules Channer held the directorship of education and skills from 2001 until 2007. By 2009, this management structure had reduced to a CEO and a Director of Finance and Operations.

Located in a central Bristol office, staffing varied between fifteen and twenty-two permanent people plus project-based freelance managers, and was loosely organised within departments (business development, education and skills, audience and talent development, film location services, communications, and finance). Re-structures occurred several times and were triggered by a combination of public funding cuts and staff turnover. A senior manager explained, "*the cuts that we had, obviously influences the structure because the decisions had to be made to get rid of a department [ ] but it tends to change when a member of staff goes*" (F004). By closure, staffing was down to twelve full time people.

### Aims and objectives

Comparison of organisational aims and objectives between 2001 and 2010 shows relatively little change to the core thematic areas. However, the emphasis shifted from a cultural film focus to an economic development of 'creative media' businesses. A senior manager described the agency's approach:

*It still sticks to its original remit, but it's expanded massively in response to the market [ ] And so what we've had to do is to morph to fit that* (F001).

Set up as a state mechanism for delivering traditional film policy (for example, of British independent film production and audience development), South West Screen gradually adapted its programmes to an emphasis on business support.

A senior manager was keen to emphasise a deliberate tactic to align agency interventions with the needs of industry. He commented:

*We were always trying to be responsive to real need and real demand rather than get stuck in a policy world (M005).*

South West Screen's policy documents leave little doubt that activity was driven by a business-led agenda. For example, four strategic objectives were described in 2005/06 as: (1) strategic leadership and marketing; (2) infrastructure, investment in people and competitiveness; (3) developing creativity; (4) participation and audience development (2006: 2). By 2008/09, similar objectives were being used to fulfil a mission to 'make the South West of England an international centre of excellence for the creative media industries' (2009: 3). An industry and business focus to agency activity was confirmed in conversations with staff members (10/12/09 and 30/03/10, Bristol) who were keen to talk about their achievements in terms of an individual project's "success" rather than the organisation as a whole.

A senior manager complained:

*[ ] policy has remained relatively static I'd say, whereas actually the market environment has changed massively (F001).*

For South West Screen, governmental directives and public fund-holders (notably UK Film Council and SW RDA) were out of synch with contemporary modes of content production and industrial practice outside London. A senior manager remarked:

*the Film Council always struggled with this idea that outside of London there was a massive overlap between the industries – that somebody would be working on a feature film one day, a corporate video the next day and a TV drama the day (M005).*

Arguably, South West Screen resisted the constraints imposed by a national policy environment but was ill-equipped to respond to the demands of industry's competitive and fast-moving "market environment" (F001). While middle and senior managers spoke of "fantastically successful" trade missions to South

East Asia and USA (10/12/09 and 02/06/10, Bristol), and “*innovative*” business development programmes such as i-Net (16/07/10, Bristol), they had limited resource to either follow up export activity or substantially support a company’s hi-end needs.

The researchers’ interviews with DCMS officials found that they too were aware of a “*distance*” from what happened in the regions. One DCMS official blamed disconnect on a lack of resources, saying:

*we’re incredibly slow at moving anything forward, but we’ve always tried to give, you know, steer to regional bodies in order to make sure they’re getting the support they need (M011).*

However, another DCMS official admitted:

*The whole landscape to me was completely opaque; I never and I still don’t understand how it operated (M012).*

Thus, lack of national policy fit with South West Screen’s interpretation of a ‘creative economy’, combined with policy-makers’ ignorance of how Government’s regional delivery mechanism actually worked were not conducive to a coherent system of governing.

Furthermore, South West Screen’s interpretation of, and vision for, a ‘creative economy’ differed from those of ACE-SW and Culture South West. A South West Screen board director differentiated between the two bodies, saying:

*I think most people would absolutely say that is the distinction; that we are yes culture, and creativity is really integral to everything that we do, but the thing that we do that the Arts Council doesn’t do is about business and enterprise (M001).*

South West Screen adopted Labour’s ‘new thinking’ on an economised cultural policy and became, as a senior manager described,

*much more reflective and responsive to a new kind of creative economy and a new creative world where different disciplines – film, TV, media, whatever – all interlinked and converged (M005).*

South West Screen’s major problem was articulating a new approach whilst not alienating national and regional strategic partners who held more traditional notions of film policy and mixed views on ‘the creative industries’.

To explain, both UK Film Council and SW RDA required South West Screen to make funding applications in the form of a three year 'Business Plan'. One articulated an economised cultural policy mission to the UK Film Council:

To lead the cultural and economic development of the film, television and digital content sector in the South West region (South West Screen, 2006: 2).

A purely economic development plan was pitched to SW RDA:

**Our Vision** for 2010 is to realise the development of a regional media sector that has met the challenges of the new business environment, built its capacity and reputation and successfully established itself in the global market (2004: 2, original emphasis).

SW RDA was being asked to fund business and skills development support programmes for 'the media sector' in pursuit of economic growth goals. Whereas, the UK Film Council plan covered film policy delivery in accordance with delegated responsibilities that included cultural outcomes. These two planning processes were problematic for all parties.

First, SW RDA failed to understand the distinction between these two plans and could not understand the link between 'media industries', 'film', 'arts' and 'creative industries'. As a South West Screen senior manager in the early 2000s, the author recalls numerous conversations with constantly changing SW RDA staff (who were non-sector specialists) to explain DET and the 'audio-visual' domain and overlap between 'digital media' and 'digital arts'. Second, 'the creative industries' was a SW RDA prioritised economic sector but of no importance to the UK Film Council and only minor interest to South West Screen. Originally, South West Screen had lobbied SW RDA to prioritise 'media industries' but pressure from GO-SW's Head of Culture and Culture South West (and with instructions presumably from DCMS) resulted in selection of 'the creative industries' as the sector label.

Misunderstandings and mistrust continued throughout the 2000s and, although South West Screen secured SW RDA programme funding, the process for each contract was bureaucratic and lengthy. A senior manager commented:



*You had to take a step back, write a strategy, write a business plan, justify it, go through all of the hoops and then deliver a year programme in six months for not a lot of money (M005).*

The author too remembers writing and re-writing applications to deadlines in the form of a 'business plan' that would comply with SW RDA's selection criteria and strict target-driven agenda whilst not losing sight of the original project goals. Few non-state personnel understood the obtuse language and phrases used in these documents and few industry practitioners ever asked to read them!

This suggests one state body was pursuing 'fast track' policy and rapid 'roll out' (Jessop, 2002) while another sought strategic coherence and 'fit for purpose' provision. That said, it was SW RDA and an economic development policy agenda that South West Screen staff felt had most influenced the organisation's mode of governance. Discussion at staff and board meetings (21/10/10 and 01/11/11, Bristol) was dominated by talk of SW RDA and particularly after announcement of its abolition and implications for the organisation's future stability and viability.

### Financial model

Like other Regional Screen Agencies, South West Screen's core funding was allocated by the UK Film Council. Based on a 50:50 split between Treasury Grant-in-Aid and National Lottery funds, South West Screen's annual financial settlement was just under £1 million and paid quarterly against agreed performance targets, milestones, expenditure and 'evidence of achievement'. Although the business plan submitted to UK Film Council was a three year strategy, it was annually reviewed and adjustments made to financial resource.

With a turnover of £2,264,004 reported for 2008/09 (South West Screen, 2009), the agency's main public funders were UK Film Council, SW RDA, European Regional Development Fund, BERR/BIS/ UK Trade and Investment, Skillset and Arts Council England. Thus, sources were from a mix of national and regional, economic and cultural development bodies (see Appendix Thirteen for the schematic of South West Screen's governance *terrain* and main sources of funding). Compared to ACE-SW's reported three

year investment in the region of £55 million (Culture South West, 2005a: 53), South West Screen was a minor investor in programme activity. More difficult to assess is the direct and indirect impact of those investments on the goal of an 'international centre of excellence' regional 'creative economy' although both agencies claimed success. Given South West Screen's aims and objectives and overhead costs, it is questionable whether the vision of establishing the reputation of the regional 'media industries' in the global market (2004: 2) was achieved.

Following DCMS announcement of a thirty percent (30%) cut to National Lottery funds in late 2009 (due to fiscal reform and rising costs of the London 2012 Olympic Games), UK Film Council passed on public spending cuts to its' contracted Regional Screen Agencies and radical changes were made to their financial models. Operational costs and staffing were reduced and 'value for money' became the primary criteria for investment decisions. By November 2009, UK Film Council and the British Film Institute were in discussions to merge. A senior manager commented,

*With less money from the Film Council, the RSA model is becoming less viable. If the Film Council, for example, decided to restructure itself and said "well we won't do regional work like that anymore", of course we'd be wiped out (F004).*

In fact, the UK Film Council was abolished by the in-coming Coalition Government in July 2010 and shortly after, the Regional Screen Agencies began merger discussions under the auspices of their collective national forum - Screen England under the leadership of John Newbiggin. Anecdotally, a senior manager confided that re-configuration of Regional Screen Agencies was inevitable after the UK Film Council and RDAs were abolished. The contentious question for screen agencies was 'how' to merge without each CEO and regional staff teams losing power if not their jobs.

Throughout interviews and informal conversations, funding (and particularly lack of financial resource) was repeatedly mentioned as a key influence on the agency's operational model and sense of achievement. Like other Regional Screen Agencies, South West Screen was reliant on an annual funding

allocation from the UK Film Council and the leverage and official status that such a relationship conveyed to other state bodies.<sup>69</sup>

### Institutional landscape

As a regional body, South West Screen's operational territory was the South West region but activities were also delivered in partnership with a network of Regional Screen Agencies and many other national, regional and local public and private sector organisations.<sup>70</sup> A schematic produced in early 2009 as an interview prompt and then adjusted (see Appendix Thirteen), captures the key public bodies with whom South West Screen was most engaged. It also identifies the agency's principle sources of funding and lines of influence.

Individual personalities and networks played an important part in forging and maintaining relationships and extended the agency's sphere of influence beyond regional scale. An analysis of named individuals who attended strategic meetings indicates the level of the meeting's importance in the national and regional landscape. For example, Screen England was the collective forum for the nine Regional Screen Agencies and attended by CEOs and board chairs. South West Screen's CEO and board chair were members of Culture South West's board of directors. Specialist staff members were more likely to attend the numerous other multi-organisational and activity-specific groups such as the South West Lottery Forum (of National Lottery distributors) and Higher Education Regional Association South West (HERDA-SW) Creative Industries Special Interest Group.

Significantly, a senior manager and not CEO chaired SW CEP meetings until the final meeting in January 2010. Lack of attendance may help to explain the

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<sup>69</sup> An organisation's performance outputs were measured in financial and quantitative terms. According to South West Screen's *Annual Report 2009/10*, performance outputs were: grant awards and investments totalling £1.6 million; over £4 million of match funding and £62 million of inward investment levered into the region; 1,618 filming days and 350 film enquiries registered; 150 jobs created or safeguarded; 125 companies benefitted from financial support; and over 2,000 companies and freelancers benefitted from services (p.4). The reported £62 million inward investment was not directly controlled by South West Screen, or part of the annual accounts, but claimed as an indirect result of agency activity.

<sup>70</sup> Annual reports identify a range of public and private sector organisations with whom South West Screen delivered projects and received grants. Of industry businesses, they included Aardman Animations, BBC, Channel 4, Endemol, HP Labs and ITV.

CEO's perception of SW CEP's meetings as "*meaningless meetings*". Asked about its effectiveness, the CEO replied:

*What did it do? I don't know. It was all about aligning strategies [ ] but what on earth is that then? What's aligning a strategy? (F001).*

By contrast, the senior manager who attended SW CEP meetings made more positive comments: "*there was value in creating a forum where people could know what everybody else was doing or moving in the same direction*" (M005). Multi-organisation groups were variously described as a way of "*sharing ideas*", "*joining up*" (F011) project work and "*just literally a catch-up – and then we would have two away days when we would go off to a hotel and just talk*" (F004). In other words, some meetings were decision-making events and others were information-exchange but both types were part of 'joined up' governance.

The schematic (see Appendix Thirteen) locates South West Screen in a multi-scalar system of governing that contained many more public bodies and inter-connections than shown (note, the size and location of boxes do not correlate to level of a body's importance). Agency staff viewed DCMS and UK Film Council as the principle Whitehall department and NDPB sponsor, whereas BERR/BIS, UKTI and SW RDA were a "*louder voice*" on economic policy. Other strategic partners from the public sector included Skillset, GO-SW, Culture South West, ACE-SW and to a lesser extent local councils. Not shown on the schematic are the intricate network of criss-cross lines that connected many of these organisations. By October 2011, when South West Screen merged into Creative England, this landscape looked very different and many state bodies had disappeared.

### Power relations

Given South West Screen's history and relationships with national and regional NDPBs, the agency's perceptions of its influence on policy development and delivery are noteworthy. Staff opinion vacillated between expressing a sense of power and influence, and a sense of powerlessness and frustration. For example, the UK Film Council and DCMS were viewed as "*simpler*" (F001) to influence than BERR/BIS and SW RDA because of a more direct dialogue and partnership based on cultural goals. However, a senior manager also reflected:

*when the screen agencies were set up, we were very involved in our own establishment and in our own agenda setting [ ] it was a much more fluid dialogue [ ] I would say after about five years, that stopped, and the Film Council became much more centralised [ ] it tried to develop a much more contractual relationship with the screen agencies rather than a more embedded one (F001).*

The author endorses this view of early inter-relations when both organisations were new and relied on each other to consolidate their respective governance spaces. South West Screen needed a powerful national NDPB to represent its interests at the centre and the UK Film Council needed an effective regional network to engage with RDAs and manage its National Lottery and cultural policy targets. Based on work experience and research observational work, the author suggests that it is both the success and failure of these two sets of expectations that undermined relations between the national and regional body. The UK Film Council became focused on national and international film production and relied more and more on Regional Screen Agencies to deliver DCMS cultural policy targets but without increasing their financial allocation. South West Screen became focused on SW RDA and an economic development agenda and was less willing to comply with UK Film Council's demand for cultural and film policy outcomes without increased funds. However, they remained mutually reliant on each other until the end, albeit with the balance of power held by the national NDPB.

The UK Film Council's overly metro-centric perspective and focus on film (as opposed to television and interactive media) were a constant source of frustration to Regional Screen Agencies. A senior manager said of UK Film Council "*I don't think they had a clear enough idea of what we did out here*" (M005). The 'them and us' perception was not, however, shared by South West Screen's specialist in audience development and cultural film production who was more willing to acquiesce with a "*top down relationship for maximising public benefit*" (F004). This co-operation may have been influenced by her specialism in cultural film production and expressed antipathy (02/06/10, Bristol) to the SW RDA's economic agenda and influence on the organisation's direction.

While staff believed they had expertise to govern, and felt they had support from industry people to “voice” industry issues to Government and bodies such as SW RDA, they also felt “*hamstrung*” by their funders. This situation was partly seen as lack of financial power but also lack of “*formal power*” (F001) that restricted their access to central governmental policy-makers. The agency’s quasi-NDPB status and unsatisfactory relationship with SW RDA also undermined its credibility with industry practitioners. A senior manager observed:

*Actually money gives you power and so not having access to those [SW RDA] pots in the way that North West did or the West Midlands did or the East Midlands did mean that all of our filmmakers just thought we were shit (F001).*

BERR/BIS and SW RDA were perceived to be “*controlling*” and “*unwilling to have a strategic conversation with us*” (F001) about ‘creative economy’ policy. Indeed, talking in late 2010 after the General Election and removal of RDAs, a senior manager commented “*it’s only recently that we’ve had a direct conversation with DCMS and BIS*” (F001). This suggests South West Screen’s position in the region’s governance hierarchy was deliberately manipulated to maintain a perceived spatial *status quo*. This remark reminds the author of how ministerial visits to the region during the 2000s were known to be carefully managed by GO-SW’s Head of Culture to present a positive picture of regional governance cohesion. Asked why ACE-SW and SW RDA and not South West Screen had been invited to meet a DCMS minister during a 2008 ‘fact-finding’ visit on the ‘regional creative economy’, a civil servant referred to individuals who might “*pitch in from left field and ruin everything*” (F007). In other words, ministers were not allowed to be lobbied by an individual organisation or to hear negative stories or versions that differed from the official one.

Power relations between South West Screen and ACE-SW were, to an extent, mirrored at national level. A civil servant referred to DCMS “*inner family circle*” (M012) of NDPBs that included ACE but not the UK Film Council and is reinforced in policy documents (DCMS, 2008). In other words, the newest NDPB was excluded from the ‘circle’ of policy influence. At regional level, a similar exclusivity was attempted although ways were sought to improve relations. A South West Screen senior manager explained:

*We have a Memorandum of Understanding with the Arts Council which of course one signs and then it has to be picked up again with the next new structure, so there's always this gap in understanding and cooperation (F001).*

Inter-agency relations were complicated by overlaps in their governance space (in particular development of mixed media venues, independent cinema and cultural film). With less financial resource than ACE-SW but film expertise and a film policy remit, South West Screen was forced to apply to ACE-SW for funds to support interventions in these areas. While South West Screen acknowledged ACE-SW as a funder in its annual reports, ACE-SW made no reference to South West Screen as a strategic partner in its policy document for 'our creative industries' (ACE-SW, 2006).

Formation of the South West Culture Executive Board in April 2009 to replace Culture South West, further isolated South West Screen from a strategic role in 'creative economy' policy delivery. Asked why South West Screen was not included as a core member, a regional civil servant commented:

*I think it stinks, you know it makes a nonsense of all the work that Culture South West did over all those years (F009).*

In other words, the more powerful NDPB regional cultural agencies took the opportunity of Culture South West's closure to re-shape hierarchical power relations in the region – "*institutions guard their patch*" (M006) as a South West Screen senior manager commented. Like the UK Film Council at national scale, South West Screen was viewed by DCMS and the "*inner circle*" of NDPBs as an 'outsider' body and a quasi-NDPB.

That said, analysis of key regional policy documents shows South West Screen was recognised as a strategic partner on paper at least. All interviewees identified the screen agency in their organisation's schematics. Major regional strategies and 'creative industries' initiatives name South West Screen as a strategic partner (BOP Consulting, 2007a; Culture South West, 2005a; SW RDA, 2007; SW RDA, 2010). The curious omission is the South West Culture Executive Board's reluctance to engage with South West Screen in the post-RCC hierarchical arrangement. The author surmises that DCMS' exclusion of UK Film Council from the national 'inner circle' was copied at the regional level

to allow time for the four regional cultural NDPBs to consolidate their positions at a moment of uncertainty in the wider cultural sector.

### Summary findings

A key finding to highlight from this case study is the complex and fluid *shape* and shaping of regional governance state spaces in relation to 'creative media'. From MAP to South West Screen to Creative England in just ten years, the spatialities and temporalities of institutional re-arrangement shifted dramatically. The author was directly involved in formation of the first two bodies and was privileged to witness emergence of the third as a researcher/observer. Bearing in mind this unique historical overview, she can testify to the complex, multi-directional and sometimes contested processes and practices that unfolded. These changes did not take place as isolated or distinct moments in regional structural shaping but evolved over time and space. Observations of South West Screen's everyday management practices, board meeting (21/10/10, Bristol) and reading board minutes reveal the interplay between deliberate and chance events and multiple socio-political-economic forces that impacted on the formation of Creative England. Clearly, the author was looking at only part of a complex system of governing but an argument is made that MAP, South West Screen and Creative England demonstrate a spatial-temporal 'fix' in the state landscape when strategically selected relations coalesced and a moment of coherence prevailed.

Individual state personnel played a critical role in evolving a distinctive semi-autonomous approach to governing 'creative media' that was only confined to territorially-defined space (geographical and industrial) because of constraints imposed by its funders (that is, public funds could only be spent in the South West region). Of the three case studies, South West Screen's personnel were most networked beyond the region, and most directly engaged in delivering support programmes. As adversarial state agents and independent intermediary brokers, their tactics were both political and functional in relation to imaginaries such as 'creative economy' and 'South West' – if it provided "*noise*" (F001), then someone might listen.

Looking at the complex interplays and interactions between South West Screen



and state bodies in its governance *terrain*, findings reveal a state body enmeshed in multi-directional flows of state power and influence emanating from the state (public sector) and industry (private sector). From her personal experience, the author suggests South West Screen tried to occupy too many positions in different 'fields' and 'spheres of influence'. Practising an expert-based and self-organising mode of governing, South West Screen was both powerful and proactive, and powerless and reactive.

#### 6.4.2 Case study: Culture South West

##### History

Formally approved by, and directly responsible to, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Culture South West was launched in 2001. An Executive NDPB of DCMS, its brief was 'to bring together people who can help make the most of culture and creativity' (Culture South West website, accessed 03 July 2008).<sup>71</sup> Culture South West was one of eight Regional Cultural Consortia (RCC) that formed a key layer of governance in DCMS' vision for integrated policy delivery in the English regions and way of embedding cultural policy in mainstream strategies and plans (Jones and MacLeod, 2004). The Head of Culture and Tourism at GO-SW was instrumental in leading the transition of a small Cultural Agencies Group (of five regional cultural agencies—ACE-SW, English Heritage, Museums Libraries and Archives Council South West, South West Tourism and Sport England) into the new body. Indeed, before the first Executive Director was in post, GO-SW commissioned a regional cultural strategy - *In Search of Chunky Dunsters* (Culture South West, 2001).

Following new instructions from the Secretary of State, Culture South West was required to incorporate as a not-for-profit company in 2004. According to the Corporate Plan (Culture South West, 2005b), the rationale for incorporation was to give board members 'greater freedom and flexibility to manage their own affairs within the overall policy framework set by the Department' (*ibid*, page 6). Anecdotal evidence (11/09/09, Bath) suggests DCMS forced incorporation on RCCs for two reasons: first, to instil a more business-like ethos in these loosely

<sup>71</sup> Culture South West closed on 31 March 2009 and its website is no longer accessible at <<http://www.culturesouthwest.org.uk/about/faq.asp#5>>.

constituted bodies; and second, to address criticism from DCMS' national NDPBs and their regional offices who resented the growing power of RCCs to influence cultural development strategies. A short review of RCCs by Margaret Hodge MP in summer 2008 led to the minister's decision to 'strengthen DCMS engagement in regional policy through a new simplified and improved way of working' (DCMS, 2008). This did not include RCCs and, in spite of protestations from consortia board chairs, they were abolished. A GO-SW civil servant explained that DCMS was "*wanting to be closer to delivery, ironically, and not wanting that other layer*" (F009). For SW RDA, Culture South West's closure was a mild inconvenience and easily replaceable. A SW RDA senior manager commented:

*It gave us the ability to have somebody who was neutral that could chair meetings of the South West Creative Economy Partnership. If they hadn't have been there we'd have come up with another solution (M007).*

At a time of economic recession and fiscal reform in 2008, it is likely that DCMS' assessment of Culture South West's performance was linked to Treasury directives on 'best value' and 'value for money' (Cabinet Office, 2009).

Responsibility for the 'simplified' regional arrangement to replace Culture South West was given to DCMS' four 'inner circle' NDPBs (ACE-SW, English Heritage, Museums Libraries and Archives Council and Sport England). Their task was to identify shared priorities and a 'joint plan of action'. With no Culture South West to act as the cross-cultural forum, a South West Culture Executive Board was formed in April 2009. The irony is, of course, that Culture South West replaced a small Cultural Agencies Group whose NDPB members returned to re-occupy the space of cross-cultural governance!

#### Structure and governance role

Culture South West's operational model was based on a public-private sector partnership model, with a remit of cultural development. As a consortium, board membership comprised: a senior manager and board chair (including a few private sector people) from six regional cultural agencies (that is, DCMS' 'inner circle' of four NDPBs plus South West Screen and South West Tourism), and representatives from GO-SW, SW RDA, SW RA, local councils and National

Lottery distributors. Over its lifetime, consortium membership extended to other organisations such as HERDA-SW, Play England and Natural England.

Structural arrangements for the organisation's governance were organised in two tiers – the formal chair (appointed by the Secretary of State and after incorporation 'approved' by DCMS) and management board; and an executive staff team. Starting with a single Executive Director post located at SW RDA's Exeter HQ, staffing increased to a peak in 2007 of six full-time staff including a seconded SW RDA person to manage the creative industries (non media) programme and later a seconded ACE-SW person to manage SW CEP. Interestingly, the Executive Director post was a job share between 2005 and 2009, with both post-holders also job-sharing Head of Culture and Tourism at GO-SW during the same period. These two state actors saw their two jobs as complementary, explaining the GO-SW role was "*checking and challenging delivery of, in my case, our case, DCMS policy*" (F009) whereas the consortium role was "*reacting to regional need*" (F009). However, for a SW RDA senior manager, their dual roles were "*very confusing*" and for SW CEP's manager, "*muddied the waters*" (F011).

With a remit across the full spectrum of DCMS' cultural policy area, Culture South West mission was 'to provide strong strategic leadership in the South West's cultural development. (Culture South West, 2008a: 30). This included 'promoting and supporting the growth of the creative industries' (*ibid*, page 18). Indeed, Culture South West was the first RCC to co-commission (with SW RDA) a mapping study of 'the creative industries' using the DET (BOP Consulting and University of Leeds, 2004). Discourse in the organisation's policy documents and web information promoted a narrative linking 'the creative industries' and 'South West' imaginaries (Culture South West, 2001, 2004, 2005). According to the website page 'What We Do':

Creative industries and cultural tourism are vital both for our economy and the self-confidence we project [ ] 'Culture' in its widest sense is a crucial part of the regional fabric, and it was in need of a body like Culture South West to promote it (Culture South West, online, accessed 03 July 2008).

More accurately, the 'need' was to address the 'non media' side of 'the creative industries' An ACE-SW middle manager explained:

*We'd taken our eye off the ball [ ] Culture South West said "hang on a minute, what about all the non media stuff that is creative", and went to talk to the RDA about supporting some non media stuff (F013).*

The logic was based on an argument of: if 'the creative industries' is a SW RDA priority sector and the 'media' sub-sectors are being supported, then 'non media' sub-sectors must be supported too.

Culture South West and ACE-SW joined forces to promote 'the creative industries' imaginary to SW RDA (with non media sometimes added for accuracy). A joint funding bid was successfully made to SW RDA for a 'creative Industries (non media)' development plan with the vision.

By 2008, the South West's Creative Industries Sector (non media) will be functioning effectively, sustainably and to its full economic capacity. Short-term intervention will have made a lasting impact, catalysing the development of a sector which is independent, proactive, creative and cohesive (Culture South West, 2005a: 34).

Hidden within the economic narrative about 'our creative industries', 'joined up' support and 'a step change', ACE-SW was able to insert its traditional arts policy vision - 'the arts have power to transform lives, communities and opportunities' (Culture South West, 2005a: 52). In other words, the strategy was an 'imaginary of power' that promised a 'cohesive' governance world.

With separate visions, aims and objectives for 'non media' and 'media', the idea of a 'creative industries sector as a manageable policy object was flawed from the outset. South West Screen was steadfastly advocating intervention in 'the media industries' (South West Screen, 2004) while Culture South West and ACE-SW were trying to make a case for 'creative Industries (non media)' (Culture South West, 2005). The author recalls growing tension between the three organisations as the imaginary became the disputed territory. To explain, the regional mapping study (BOP Consulting and University of Leeds, 2004) had marked out the domains and South West Screen had quickly claimed the 'audio-visual' domain for its 'media industries' programme (South West Screen, 2004). Culture South West and ACE-SW decided, therefore, to claim the other domains as 'non media'. Culture South West's contentious move was to present the bid to SW RDA as a whole 'creative industries' strategy that focused on 'non

media' and aligned with a 'media industries' programme. This tactic positioned the consortium as lead body of a 'creative economy' with ACE-SW and South West Screen as sector specialists. However, both South West Screen and SW RDA resisted such a role for Culture South West and the tensions continued.

Recognising the unresolved disconnect between 'non media' and 'media industries' programmes, and in preparation for *Creative Britain*, Culture South West and SW RDA co-commissioned *Creative Industry Collaborations* consultation (BOP Consulting, 2007a). Of governance roles proposed by the consultants for SW CEP and its member partners, Culture South West's was to act as 'a facilitator, providing secretariat services and bringing broader creative industries and cultural sector perspective (*ibid* page 17). Culture South West was positioned as the neutral 'go-between'. Given DCMS' broad cultural policy imperatives at the time, it is remarkable that a RCC (and ACE-SW) chose to tackle the thorny issue of 'the creative industries' sector development. Indeed, an interviewee revealed that 'creative economy' was not a priority for ACE nationally at the time. A likely explanation is that individual state actors were keen to push a 'creative economy' agenda in the South West and were in discussion with DCMS to propose a 'regional creative economic strategic framework' pilot. Events at regional and national scale created a momentum that no one state body was willing to stop.

Martin Jones (2007: 45, cited in Harvey *et al*, 2011: 476) refers to Culture South West taking 'a difficult route between total subservience to, and outright contestation of, state organisations'. The author too found a proactive approach taken by senior managers that was mixed with reactive duty. An ex-senior manager noted:

*at Culture South West, one was more likely to make a case for why something wasn't going to work [ ] what might be wrong; but actually, once the decisions had been taken within DCMS then our role was to make them work (F009).*

The consortium's independence and room to manoeuvre outside ministerial control, however, began to narrow post 2007. Under Gordon Brown's administration, public bodies were increasingly required to respond to centralised directives and specified priorities. The change impacted on Culture

South West's collaborative approach and reliance on other regional and local state bodies. For example, ACE-SW and local councils were coping with major re-structures and public spending cuts and their own policy priorities. *Creative Britain* identified ACE and local councils in the regional pilots but neither DCMS nor Culture South West had any powers to compel involvement. Indeed, RCCs were not mentioned in *Creative Britain* although Culture South West became actively involved in Commitment delivery and SW CEP (see case study below).

Policy documents describe the consortium's role variously as 'catalyst for change', 'conductor', 'broker', 'champion' and 'connector' (Culture South West, 2004; 2005) with an onus on 'relationship building' and 'partnership'. A central theme was 'joined up thinking for joined up action' on initiatives that were of 'regional and cross-sectoral significance' (Culture South West, 2004: 5). The phrase 'joined up' features strongly in document titles such as 'joining the dots', 'finding the dots' and 'dot to dot' – dots referring to individual and organisations (CSW, 2008a, 2008b).

Senior managers saw themselves as non-specialists in cultural sector terms but knowledgeable "*match-makers*" (F009) and "*bringing the policy-makers, funders and practitioners together*" (F011). Although consortium members evidently valued Culture South West's role as connector, criticism was made of their lack of focus: "*What it didn't do was actually [ ] focus on doing two or three things and doing them properly*" (F001). Another person likened the consortium to "*a state within a state*" (M011).

### Aims and objectives

While the two regional cultural strategies (Culture South West, 2001 and 2008a) articulated a 'regional' vision for cultural development (as opposed to an organisational one), the consortium's corporate aims and objectives were closely aligned to DCMS goals (2005). Taking a broad Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) definition of 'culture', Culture South West's mission from the outset was to integrate cultural policy into regional economic development plans. In terms of DCMS' 'creative economy' agenda, Culture South West energetically took up 'the creative industries' imaginary as a tool for lobbying

SW RDA. Having successfully secured SW RDA support for the ‘creative industries (non media)’ programme, Culture South West decided to:

[ ] make a significant shift in ambition, gear and entrepreneurial “drive” – largely as a result of the increased confidence, credibility and capacity we have built up (2005: 7).

A new chairperson and CEO took a more expansionist view of cultural development and moved into the economic sphere of cultural infrastructure and ‘creative economy’ (2005: 6). It is also worth noting that Culture South West’s shift in ambition coincided with two highly committed and work-orientated individuals taking up the post of CEO as a job share, and soon after taking up the GO-SW Head of Culture and Tourism post as a job share.

Culture South West’s second regional cultural strategy, *A better place to be* (2008: 6), identified the ‘creative economy’ as a regional priority for ‘collective effort’ and ‘joint ownership’ (*ibid*, page 3). This ambition was nearly de-railed by DCMS’ unexpected closure of Culture South West. No ministerial plans were in place for ‘who’ would take responsibility for ‘creative economy’ policy delivery and SW CEP. A few weeks before closure, and with much lobbying by the outgoing Executive Director, the Shadow South West Culture Executive Board was “*pushed*” to add an objective to its ‘joint’ action plan – that is, ‘influence and support delivery of *Creative Britain*’ (ACE-SW, 2009) with ACE-SW as the lead body. The author could find no evidence of any further engagement by the Culture Executive Board in influencing or supporting *Creative Britain* (for further discussion see SW CEP case study).

#### Financial model

DCMS was the departmental sponsor of Culture South West and awarded a settlement of £200,000 per annum (Culture South West, 2005a: 16). Although its role was primarily strategic coordination of cross-cultural policy delivery, additional income was raised to deliver joint project activity over and above ‘core’ duties - for example, mapping studies, cultural infrastructure planning (Culture South West, 2008b) and the ‘creative industries (non media) development programme (Culture South West, 2005a).

#### Institutional landscape

Culture South West exemplifies a multi-organisational partnership in the 'peopled state' (Jones, 2007; Jones, 2011) that spawned numerous other sub-sector and thematic network groups across the region. Martin Jones describes this practice as 'coalitions of interests' in territorially-defined spaces (Jones, 2011). The consortium encouraged 'off shoot' multi-organisation bodies such as SW CEP (see case study below) and local cultural partnerships. The schematic (see Appendix Fourteen) shows a dense *terrain* of state bodies, most of whom were located within the South West region. Not shown are the many other working groups, project steering groups, forums and local cultural partnerships that Culture South West set up or interacted with to deliver consortium activity. A networked mode of governance was partly a way of extending the consortium's geographical influence, and partly a solution to limited staff and financial capacity. This resonates with David Harvey and colleagues' study that described Culture South West's mode as:

The operation of an intra-South-West system of networking which worked to reproduce an internally focused and locally embedded set of regional imaginaries: discrete territorial blocks, available for governance (Harvey *et al*, 2011: 477).

The consortium's obvious connections to local bodies, through relations with local councils and local cultural partnerships, were a requirement of their DCMS remit. With a focus on public cultural service delivery, the nature of those relations was more about cultural outcomes (of widening participation and cultural facilities) than a 'creative economy' agenda.

Examination of the strategic partners listed in *A better place to be* (Culture South West, 2008a: 30) and *People, Places and Spaces* (Culture South West, 2008b: 34) reveals the extraordinary number of state bodies that Culture South West counted as strategic partners and 'available for governance' (2008: 30). Territorially defined, the consortium's operational area was confined to the South West administrative area, with very few external links to DCMS apart from a joint RCC forum. Of the three case studies, Culture South West most demonstrates a 'peopled organisation' that was inter-connected to other 'peopled organisations' across the 'peopled state' (Jones, 2011).



In terms of delivering a regional 'creative economy', a SW RDA-funded programme for 'non media' was the consortium's main vehicle between 2005 and 2007. In an effort to find a solution to disjointed governance of 'the creative industries', Culture South West co-commissioned BOP Consulting to undertake *Creative Industry Collaborations* (BOP Consulting, 2007a). After extensive consultation with mostly state-funded and 'non media' bodies, a proposal was made to set up SW CEP and coherence looked possible. But, arrangements were undermined by two significant events: (1) SW RDA soon after published 'the Agency's' creative industries strategy (2007), asserting its leadership role and (2) the much delayed *Creative Britain* policy failed to clarify 'who' was responsible for overall regional policy delivery. DCMS assigned Commitments to ACE and RDAs but made no mention of RCCs. However, Culture South West assumed leadership with ACE-SW of the 'Finding Your Talent' programme (Commitment 1) and negotiated a contract with SW RDA to act as the fund-holder (and *de facto* responsible body) of SW CEP (Commitment 18 and 20). Meanwhile, SW RDA maintained control of Commitment 13 delivery and other high value initiatives (SW RDA, 2007). Thus, a chaotic system of governing re-emerged and worsened when DCMS unexpectedly announced the RCC's closure (DCMS, 02 July 2008).

By late 2008, Culture South West's attention was on administrative and legal matters because of closure, and no institutional arrangement was in place for continuation of SW CEP (or indeed for other joint delivery of cultural projects). Based on interviews and the author's prior knowledge, the attention of most state bodies had moved to other priorities and there was little support for SW CEP to continue. South West Screen and SW RDA had lost interest in SW CEP as a mechanism for delivering joint activity across 'the creative industries' and neither had the capacity (or enthusiasm) for involvement in broader cultural policy priorities. Thus, Culture South West's disappearance from the landscape coincided with destabilisation of other parts of the state apparatus as economic recession and political change began to take effect. Although there was some perfunctory outcry at Culture South West closure, staff seemed sanguine about DCMS' decision – "*it had run its course and it was time to move on*" (F010) commented one person days before she took up a new post at SW RDA.

### Power relations

As an Executive NDPB, Culture South West began with a direct relationship with DCMS and was supposed 'to influence and inform policy and decision making in DCMS (Culture South West, 2004: 4). Policy documents and staff interviews and conversations (12/03/09 and 20/03/09, Exeter) suggest an organisation fully signed up to 'Third Way' thinking about 'joined up' governance and imaginaries of 'creative economy' and 'regional growth'. For example, emphasis was placed on 'working together creates something more powerful than the sum of the parts' (Culture South West, 2001: 5). But examination of policy documents published by several consortium (part)ners - ACE-SW, South West Screen and SW RDA, for example - shows little sign of reciprocal working with Culture South West. Noticeably, ACE-SW remained fixed on its role as major funder and developer of 'the arts'; South West Screen concentrated on business support of the 'creative media'; and SW RDA homed in on high value economic development opportunities.

Consortium documents, website pages and staff interviews emphasise the processual side of Culture South West's mode of statehood – for example, consultations, strategy development, action plans, guidelines, steering groups and forums. As an Executive NDPB, Culture South West was an expert in the art of governing rather than a sector specialist and particularly on the economic development side. Indeed, SW RDA was critical of the consortium's attempts to act as delivery agents saying: "*they really didn't have the capability to do delivery because they weren't delivery specialists*" (M007). Culture South West's influence on 'growth of the creative industries' was primarily mediated through relationships with other state bodies and particularly a close alliance with ACE-SW and local councils. Listings of consultees in consortium strategy exercises (BOP Consulting, 2007a; Culture South West, 2008a and 2008b) point to relations with mostly state-funded representative bodies and not directly with industry practitioners. Of private sector businesses, most connections were made via arts and design networks. A private sector ex-board member commented "*I don't think many industry people would have had a clue who Culture South West were*" (M005).

Talking about state organisations who befriended Culture South West in order to become involved in *Creative Britain*, a senior manager explained:

*one of the reasons people put their hands up is to be part of the process and feeling as if one might be able to influence future delivery by having been on the inside rather than on the outside (F009).*

So, Culture South West's tactic was to actively encourage state bodies to co-operate, on the basis of enhanced *inside* influence to be gained by association with the consortium. With Executive NDPB status and co-location with SW RDA, Culture South West was able to attract key regional state bodies, including the 'three pillars' and larger local councils, for its cross-cultural interventions.

Through prior knowledge, interviews and observation work (20/03/09, Exeter), it is evident that relations between Culture South West and SW RDA were more problematic than policy documents suggest. A major tension was the lack of strategic fit between the former's cultural goals and the latter's economic growth ones. There was also the added difference in how each perceived and articulated cultural production and 'the creative industries'. A SW RDA senior manager remarked of Culture South West:

*[ ] that was established to do a certain role as a non-departmental public body in our region, so clearly they were a stakeholder. And also they wanted to be a delivery partner, because they didn't get enough money from government to do their strategic role, so they had to supplement it by trying to do delivery and compete with the private sector. Then things got very confusing, cos actually they really didn't have the capability to do delivery because they weren't delivery specialists. [ ] Anyway, government eventually realised this was a nonsense and abolished them all, which was great (M007).*

This is a remarkably damning judgement by a generalist state agent of what was supposedly one of his key strategic partners. Reflecting on conversations and observations over many years of different senior incumbents at SW RDA and Culture South West, the author suggests they shared a profound incomprehension of the other's world. Their differences reinforce the view that state bodies are not a homogenous type of organisation but practice governance in diverse and sometimes disruptive and competitive ways.

A network/ partnership *modus operandi* was a vital part of how the consortium managed its relationships and territorial space - "*communications is absolutely key to what we do*" (F009). This observed 'networking the territorially bounded region' resonates with other studies (Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jayne, 2005) and highlights the importance of inter-connectedness to an effective system. Arguably, the consortium's relations became too widely dissipated and weakened its capacity to coordinate an ever-expanding workload. Culture South West's practice of setting up steering groups and forums was criticised for the amount of time spent discussing rather than delivering activity. For SW RDA, its abolition was "*a good thing*" (M007) but for others, Culture South West's closure meant:

*The whole sense of a region disappeared pretty quickly in terms of culture and it became very easy to become much more parochial* (F001).

From the author's experience of working with Culture South West, the consortium understood the effectiveness of a networked governance *terrain*. From set up in 2001, Culture South West was an enthusiastic (and dutiful) promoter of Labour's regionalism and imaginaries of 'creative industries' and 'creative economy'. With little capacity, a 'networked region' was a practical mechanism for the RCC to manage DCMS' eclectic political directives. A cultural spatial plan was one of DCMS' most controversial directives (Culture South West, 2008b) that did much to undermine Culture South West's reputation and particularly with SW RDA.

From 2008 onwards, the economic downturn together with stringent public spending cuts was a major distraction to Culture South West's public sector members. While South West Screen focused on its relationship with SW RDA and high value creative media businesses, Arts Council England was just starting another re-structure and a central directive to fund 'great art for everyone' (2008). Culture South West staff too was preoccupied with securing the agreement of consortium members to approve two major regional cultural strategies (2008a and 2008b). It is unsurprising, therefore, that 'creative economy' policy delivery got lost in this maelstrom. This underlines the fragility of power relations that were built up over years and dissipated within a few months.

### Summary findings

This case study illustrates the temporality of a state body that, at a spatial-temporal moment, was an important nodal point in a region's governance system. From a small Cultural Agencies Group of NDPBs, Culture South West emerged to become an Executive NDPB and active player in governance of 'the creative industries' imaginary. Unable to prove its 'value' to the minister, the consortium closed and was replaced by the self-same original grouping of NDPBs. One moment Culture South West was a spatial-temporal 'fix' in DCMS' regional mechanism and the next it was gone.

Individual state personnel played an important role in shaping Culture South West and how it practised governance. Ultimately answerable to the Secretary of State, the consortium was both reactive to central Government and proactive on the ground. The strength of senior managers' personalities, their political savvy and passion for cultural development compensated for a lack of sector expertise and organisational resource. As a 'peopled' organisation, Culture South West took a network approach to connecting a 'people state' in the South West region.

Relationship-building was practised at every scale on the basis that networking with other state bodies would enhance Culture South West's credibility and, in turn, enhance its influence and effectiveness. Thus, Culture South West made multiple connections to increase its powers of influence over those bodies who would actually deliver strategic programmes. Research suggests, however, that Culture South West's interventions became so prolific and multi-directional within its territorially bounded patch, that its effectiveness was lost in the noise of collaboration.

#### **6.4.3 Case study: South West Creative Economy Partnership**

##### History

SW CEP was a non-constituted multi-organisational partnership that was first proposed by consultants, BOP Consulting, in March 2007. According to the manager, it was formed to take forward *Creative Industry Collaborations* recommendations (BOP Consulting, 2007a) and to address the disconnect between 'non media' and 'media' sector interventions. With a seconded ACE-

SW employee appointed as manager in May 2008, SW CEP re-launched in September 2008 and re-set the clock for delivering SW RDA's *Creative Industries Strategy* (2007) and *Creative Britain* (both of which proposed SW CEP). It immediately becomes apparent that SW CEP's histories were erratic and sequentially complex.

Exactly 'who' was responsible for SW CEP's formation and 'when' remains unclear. According to a SW RDA senior manager, it was his initiative, assigned to SW RDA in *Creative Britain*, and then funded by SW RDA. However, this claim was strongly disputed by SW CEP's manager - '*No, that's not right, Culture South West set up the CEP*'. Apart from parentage and timing, leadership of SW CEP and *Creative Britain* delivery was also contested (see case study above).

Looking at SW CEP's policy documents (SW CEP, 2008a, 2008b), Terms of Reference were agreed in April 2007 and activity commenced.<sup>72</sup> However, SW CEP's concluding statement in January 2010 (written by a South West Screen senior manager and branded SW RDA), differentiates between SW CEP as a steering group for *Creative Industry Collaborations* and its formal adoption as a 'delivery vehicle' in September 2008. An explanation for different historical interpretations of SW CEP's formation may be due its two-stage evolution. Thus, Culture South West could claim responsibly for the first partnership and SW RDA responsibility for the second one. In the competitive world of state governance, 'who' did 'what' and 'when' mattered.

Culture South West's closure in March 2009 was a potential disaster for SW CEP's stability and ability to deliver *Creative Britain's* Commitments 18 and 20. With no legal status, SW CEP was unable to act as the fund-holder and, therefore, arrangements were swiftly made for ACE-SW to "*hold the pot*", and for SW CEP's manager to work on a part-time basis from ACE-SW (from whom she was on secondment anyway). The reader will remember that ACE-SW took responsibility on behalf of the newly formed South West Culture Executive Board to 'influence and support delivery of *Creative Britain*' (ACE-SW, 2009). A

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<sup>72</sup> Two SW CEP papers (showing a Culture South West logo) are dated September 2008 on the first page, but different dates on the final page (October 2008 and November 2008 respectively). SW CEP's manager confirmed that the final page dates were correct.

scenario unfolded in which: an external political force (ministerial decision to close Culture South West) had unintended and possibly negative spatial-temporal effects on other bodies (including SW CEP and SW RDA). However, state bodies were able to mobilise, negotiate a solution, and re-stabilise the governance ground. Such a negotiation process resonates with the state theory idea of ‘noise reduction’ (Jessop, 2003a: 155) whereby state bodies are able to avoid crisis.

Through ‘noise reduction’, SW CEP went on to achieve governance success – that is, delivery of the *Creative Britain* pilot. Asked about progress on regional delivery of *Creative Britain* in late 2009, a GO-SW civil servant replied “we’ve moved on from *Creative Britain*. It’s done, finished” (M012). Looking at SW CEP’s meeting minutes, reports and a closing statement, a moment of spatial-temporal ‘fix’ was indeed confirmed. The closing statement declared ‘DCMS regard the delivery of Commitment 18 as successfully completed’ (SW CEP, 2010: 2), By saying *Creative Britain* was ‘finished’, and declaring Commitment 18 to be ‘successfully completed’, SW CEP’s partners and DCMS were able to move on to new policy imperatives. A DCMS civil servant clarified ‘finished’ as: “I mean it’s finished in the sense that there’s nobody doing anything on *Creative Britain*” (F008). This notion of governance ‘success’ was confirmed by SW CEP’s manager who said ‘There was no appetite left in the DCMS to do more [ ] they had really moved on to *Digital Britain*’ (F011). To say *Creative Britain* was ‘finished’ or Commitment 18 ‘successfully completed’ is, therefore, highly questionable. Nonetheless, state personnel turned some chance events into an opportunity and the outcome was a moment of imagined success.

Looking more closely at exactly what was “finished”, in May 2009 SW CEP submitted a 4-page document, *South West region: Creative Economy Framework Strategy* (SW CEP, 2009), to DCMS. The framework contains a diagram and explanatory points (see Appendix Fifteen) and a two-page mapping of core partners’ investment priorities (with no input from local councils or GO-SW). During the final six months, an independent consultant was then commissioned to:

Propose a number of practical initiatives that would contribute to the overall aim of raising the value and profile of the South West's creative economy (J3S, 2010: 4).

According to the report, the 'practical initiatives' were identified from a series of meetings held between the core partners and consultant. To summarise, SW CEP was formed to take forward a consultant's recommendations and exited with another set of recommendations from another consultant. The whole process illustrates the idea of 'experts' talking to 'experts', with their conversations captured in prosaic tools, which characterise the modern state (Painter, 2006). This relationship between a 'peopled state' (Jones and MacLeod, 2004) and prosaic tools (of strategies, frameworks, toolkits *et al*) is found across all three case studies but most marked in SW CEP.

Regarding SW CEP's closure in January 2010, the rationale is again difficult to pinpoint. The author's analysis of interviews and policy documents elicited different motivations. Publicly, SW CEP was portrayed as having morphed into another regional multi-organisation group that was being formed by South West Screen in early 2010 – the South West Innovation Network (known as i-Net). With the same key state bodies as SW CEP's members, the idea was to migrate SW CEP's functions and 'legacy' to the new 'advisory group' (SW CEP, 2010: 2). However, the closing statement also mentions that SW CEP's funds were 'exhausted'. The manager added:

*we were just dying on our feet anyway, so we didn't really do very much to kind of help. And the RDA [ ] lost interest in the CEP (F011).*

This suggests transition from SW CEP to i-Net was not simply a migration but a significant shift in how SW RDA planned to govern 'creative industries' (namely, support high value innovation businesses). It also offered SW RDA an opportunity to change the mix of public and private sector bodies towards more commercial interests.

A significant recommendation in the closing statement reads:

The SW CEP would recommend that this group [i-Net] also seek to ensure that the legacy and ongoing activity are explicitly connected to the Culture Executive Board (and Culture Officers Group) in order to embed industry representation within the DCMS structure (SW CEP, 2010: 2).



The author suggests this paragraph was inserted to connect ACE-SW and South West Culture Executive Board to new industry-facing spatial arrangements (and *vice versa*). With South West Screen in control of the i-Net group, 'creative economy' policy delivery was heading towards a cultural-economic policy divide with an onus on the latter side. The author suggests SW RDA attempted to re-align power relations in the region by pushing the South West Culture Executive Board into a more strategic role vis-à-vis 'creative industries' policy than DCMS' *inner circle* NDPBs had planned. Such a tactic would ensure i-Net remained a less powerful but necessary industry-facing 'advisory' group' under the control of a quasi-NDPB.

After SW CEP's closure, an ACE-SW middle manager referred to SW CEP as an "*entirely voluntary grouping with no line of accountability to DCMS*" (F013). This is a curious retrospective description of a SW RDA (and ACE-SW) funded body that 'successfully' piloted Commitment 18 and 20 of *Creative Britain* and had, according to the manager, "*fed directly back to DCMS*" (F011). By downgrading SW CEP, ACE-SW was possibly re-asserting its role as regional NDPB lead on 'creative economy' policy in the region on behalf of the accountable South West Culture Executive Board. If true, this re-write of past history was an effective way of asserting the regional hierarchy and re-aligned power relations that prevailed at the time of research.<sup>73</sup>

#### Structure and governance role

SW CEP's model was based on an 'alignment of the main strategic and delivery agencies' (BOP Consulting 2007a: 18). A policy document described the body as:

An advisory board, to provide collective strategic leadership and the opportunity to align activity and investment for the sector (SW CEP, 2008a: 2).

However, a SW RDA senior manager viewed SW CEP quite differently, saying:

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<sup>73</sup> After the General Election in May 2010, RDAs were abolished, i-Net became a short-term support programme and South West Screen became part of a national body (that is, Creative England) for 'the creative industries'. With GOR regions abandoned, the South West Culture Executive Board had no duty or DCMS remit to deliver a 'joint action plan' and, with occasional meetings, the group disbanded in 2011.

*We created this South West Creative Economy Partnership as a way of trying to bring some of these main stakeholders to help us in terms of developing our priorities and roadmaps (M007).*

One focused on 'collective' collaboration and the policy object, the other invited external others to its internal planning process. These two interpretations point to the first of many flaws in how SW CEP was structured and understood. Namely, SW CEP core partners and manager thought they were engaged in high level joint investment planning, whereas SW RDA (as funder) viewed them as useful helpers. A hierarchy of regional relations could not have been made clearer.

A two-tier structure divided the executive group of key state bodies from a larger Creative Industries Reference Group. Membership is shown on a schematic (see Appendix Three). Core executive members were ACE-SW, Culture South West, South West Screen and SW RDA. Four local council members were supposed to represent all local councils in the South West but the manager observed "*that didn't really happen they just represented themselves*". Asked about HERDA-SW's membership, the manager was again unclear whether the person attended to represent HERDA-SW's Creative Industries Special Interest Group or his own university. Sector Skills Councils were also members of the executive group.

Interviews revealed some confusion over the make-up of SW CEP's membership. The manager boasted of how key state bodies "*brought those [industry] connections into the partnership*" and gave the group credibility – "*they were the right people to be in the [ ] partnership*" (F011). However, in the same interview, she also said "*the wrong people were in the partnership*". Significantly, other interviewees mentioned "*fluctuations*" (M005) in attendance. SW CEP's chair concluded that in the end "*people didn't see a value in turning up*" (M005). Such comments point to a group of key state bodies who momentarily coalesced around the 'strategic framework' and declared 'success', and at another moment failed to find a common ground and fragmented. This duality will be discussed in the next chapter when these findings are more fully interpreted.

Turning to the wider Reference Group, it was described as “*almost anyone else who was interested really in how the sector worked*” (F011), and reported to be seventy people (SW CEP, 2008a). Policy documents present a well-functioning system for sector development planning that was informed by a public-private sector Reference Group as a “*two way exchange back and forth*” (F011). In practice, however, the larger group was “*local authority driven*” and met once in Plymouth and possibly two smaller local meetings. Although claimed by SW CEP, a *meeting* held in 2007 was more accurately part of Culture South West’s ‘non media’ support programme and not a ‘joint’ SW CEP “*meeting*”. This blurring of events and timings were noticeable when compiling this case study. ‘Who’ hosted an event and ‘when’ seems trivial but, in terms of state dynamics, ownership by SW CEP was a way to demonstrate its influence and competence.

The author found it difficult to disentangle SW CEP’s activity from that of Culture South West or ACE-SW. Perhaps, the blurriness was understandable because of the manager’s employment by ACE-SW, secondment to SW CEP and location at Culture South West’s office. For example, the manager’s account of SW CEP’s formation was muddled up with the end of Culture South West’s ‘non media’ programme. She explained:

*When the money ran out in March 2008, we said “hang on, we need to get the RDA to buy into this in the next kind of spending round”. So we commissioned BOP to do the ‘Creative Industries Collaborations’ piece of work (F011).*

Asked who the ‘we’ referred to, the manager replied:

*We being the Partnership which was the new...which actually was the Creative Economy Partnership effectively. So in doing that piece of work, which was done in, sort of, 2006 to 07, well say 2007 (F011).*

But SW CEP was proposed by BOP Consulting and did not meet until April 2007. More accurately, she conflated together a steering group for Culture South West’s SW RDA-funded programme with the later SW CEP wider partnership. These confused loyalties may help to explain tensions between SW CEP’s core members and their “*loss of appetite*” for joint working. In Culture South West’s case, a state actor’s conflict of interest was also highlighted and its problematic affect on governance clarity.

SW CEP was fully operational for twelve months, between May 2008 and May 2009. A full-time manager was appointed (seconded from ACE-SW) for an eighteen month period. With closure of Culture South West and an ACE-SW re-structure, she returned to ACE-SW “*in order to safeguard my job*” (F011).<sup>74</sup> Having submitted the ‘regional creative economy strategic framework’ paper to DCMS in May 2009, the manager’s activity “*virtually stopped*” (F011). An externally commissioned ‘advocacy toolkit highlighted the role of:

powerful and charismatic individuals [ ] who ‘have a common factor of “South Westness” that should be explored (J3S, 2010: 26-27).

Why such people were not able to explore practical initiatives during SW CEP’s preparation for the ‘strategic framework’ and numerous “*meetings*” was not discovered. The author’s analysis points to ever more chaotic events unfolding around SW CEP and its individual partner bodies that were outside the control of any one or two state bodies (individual or organisation).

SW CEP’s role was originally set out in *Creative Industry Collaborations* but the manager thought “it all got a bit muddy” when other delivery objectives were added from SW RDA’s strategy and *Creative Britain*. Textual analysis shows SW CEP’s role expanded more on paper than practice, shifting from an advisory board to a ‘delivery vehicle’ for SW RDA’s pilot Commitments. Based on conversations and the author’s recollections, the body became entangled in multiple events taking place at local, regional and national scale. Some have already been mentioned – economic crisis, budget cuts, organisational re-structures and threat to RDAs.

Reflecting on the inadequacy of SW CEP’s role, a partner commented:

*you had a kind of secretariat or administration role, someone to kind of herd the cats, but you had no kind of resource to say “right, we’ve all agreed this is what we’re going to do” (M005).*

For him, SW CEP’s problem was a resource issue. Having been attracted to *Creative Britain* delivery by a reputed £3 million DCMS ‘pot’, SW CEP partners were presumably disenchanted when this money never materialised. It is arguable that the “*right people*” (F011) were round the table but their capacity to

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<sup>74</sup> Having returned to ACE-SW, this individual was then made redundant as part of Arts Council England’s national re-structure in late 2009. When interviewed in March 2010, she was a few weeks away from leaving ACE-SW.

agree joint interventions relied on having access to joint funds. The importance of funding to a state body's capacity and powers should not be under-estimated and is mentioned elsewhere in the case studies.

### Aims and objectives

SW CEP's aims and objectives were based on the principles of collaboration and shared activity:

Where more than one Partner is working in a common area. It is designed to allow greater co-ordination of shared priorities (SW CEP, 2009: 2).

Analysis of SW CEP's policy documents shows a state body with aspirations far beyond its human and financial resources. In October 2008, two objectives were identified (Culture South West, 2008a: 5):

- To oversee the development of the Creative Economy Development Framework
- To undertake joint strategic development projects that increase the profile of and attract investment into the Creative Industries sector.

A month later, activity had been refined to 'developing creative places' and 'access to new markets' (2008b:1).

From SW RDA's interpretation, SW CEP's objectives were synchronised with those of 'the Agency' in order to "*share what we interpret in terms of delivery*" (M007). Unashamedly top-down, SW RDA's senior manager viewed the Regional Economic Strategy (2006) as the master plan for all other strategic plans. SW CEP's various partners were expected to identify common ground for 'joint strategic activity' and then (re)align their investment plans. Although the principles of a 'strategic framework' were 'successfully' piloted, it is clear from interviewees that 'joint investment' planning failed. According to SW RDA, "*we didn't find sufficient common programmes for them*" (M007). As discussed above, other SW CEP partners pointed to lack of resources (from DCMS and SW RDA) rather than lack of commonalities.

In terms of effectiveness, the manager confidently boasted of the 'strategic framework', saying:

*They'd [DCMS] signed that off, said "thank you very much, that's good, that's really good example of what we need", and of course then they put it on a shelf somewhere I suppose (F011).*

A SW CEP partner expressed frustration at the group's inability to turn the framework strategy into something other than "*high level mush*" (M005). Indeed, the manager admitted "*There was no new activity that ever came out of that partnership*" (F011). Nonetheless, state bodies colluded in the verbal and written articulations of "*success*". State theorists would be less surprised at these tactics and redundancy of the framework document. As 'technologies of power', they have little value in themselves but are highly effective imaginaries (Christophers, 2007; Jayne, 2005; Rose and Miller, 2010). For SW CEP partners, the 'framework' served to demonstrate their powers of governance to DCMS and in turn, DCMS could tick Commitment 18 and 20 off its list and move on to other policy matters.

Looking at the closing statement (SW CEP, 2010), SW CEP's main achievements were paper-based articulations of regional spatial connectivity. The manager described the 'strategic framework' method as a process of "*going round and asking them [partners] lots of questions then putting it together and putting it on paper*". Such a process reinforces the idea of policy documents as *imaginaries of power* that state bodies construct with impunity and a contestation that is being developed in this thesis.

#### Financial model

As mentioned in the Culture South West case study, funding for SW CEP was channelled from SW RDA via Culture South West. An estimated budget of £100,000 was mentioned to cover the manager post, administration costs and a £35,000 consultants' report (J3S, 2010). There were also rumours of additional DCMS funding for *Creative Britain* delivery but this was never made available to SW CEP.

When Culture South West closed, funds were transferred to ACE-SW. At the closing meeting in January 2010, the partners agreed that financial resource was 'exhausted'. A regional civil servant explained:

*there was no further possibility of the CEP continuing, because it didn't have any resource behind it in terms of capacity, officer time or anything; so once the funding from the RDA [ ] that finished in December, that was the end of that resource (F008).*

Thinking about SW CEP's evolution, it was able to function as an informal body prior to SW RDA funding but proved unviable as a formal funded body... Arguably, a group of state bodies were willing to occupy a 'collective' state space on the basis of common purpose and funded delivery of *Creative Britain*. But they had no appetite to waste time on an ever-expanding SW RDA agenda that had no funds attached. This scenario is reminiscent of Culture South West's progression from informal to formal multi-organisation partnership. These type of state bodies seem more fragile than the more specialist bodies such as ACE-SW and South West Screen.

#### Institutional landscape

SW CEP's place in the south west state landscape was very temporary. For a brief moment, it made an inter-connection between a group of key state bodies and a connection to an amorphous Reference Group (see Appendix Three schematic). Although the lines of influence shown on the schematic are mostly two way, the reader should be cautious about the reality of these flows and claims to a multi-level mode of operation. Certainly, the manager observed that there was "*very little kind of disseminating outside our partnership*" (F011).

SW CEP viewed itself as a network of partner members and, through them, networked to smaller hubs across the region. But with a lack of *dissemination* outside the partnership, and little evidence of external networking beyond the region (apart from a one-off "*meeting*" with a North West pilot group), it is difficult to verify SW CEP's imagined connectivity. At national level, SW CEP's manager attended "*meetings at DCMS*" where she "*represented the RDA*" (note, not SW CEP). Research studies of the networked state and regional imaginaries (Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jones and MacLeod, 2007) support the author's observation on the networked nature of the state landscape and its close connection to regional spatial imaginaries such as the 'creative economy' and 'creative clusters' (J3S, 2010).

SW CEP's manager placed great importance on convening and attending "meetings". She explained:

*Local Authorities were having meetings and, you know, the sector people have meetings, and economic development people have meetings. And so after that Plymouth meeting we then had two sub-regional meetings (F011).*

Not only were "the right people" important to a network, but "meetings" were viewed as an integral part of building an effective regional networked infrastructure and avoiding "isolation" (F011). State bodies gave the impression that a 'network' was synonymous with a 'meeting'. Like strategies and frameworks, meetings were convened and attended by state bodies as a form of 'technology of power'. A meeting was a place where a state body could influence others and attendance signified a person's or organisation's level of importance. If a meeting's attendance list included the name of a key state body's chief executive officer or senior manager, then the event was important and worth attending. For example, a SW CEP partner indicated he would not meet a local council officer "below the first two levels". Looking again at SW CEP's institutional landscape and those of the other case studies, the reader should be aware of complex inter-connecting relationships between state personnel that criss-crossed those *terrains*.

### Power relations

SW CEP was founded on a transitory set of relations between a small group of key regional bodies. Findings show there were inter-dependencies between the partner members but it is not clear whether SW CEP was a critical unifying factor. Did delivery of *Creative Britain* Commitments depend on SW CEP? The manager observed "There was no partnership activity ever really generated that was as a result of coming together" (F011). This contradicts, of course, the earlier finding, endorsed by DCMS, that SW CEP had 'successfully completed' the pilot. The manager's version of the SW CEP story was perhaps coloured by her unexpected return and subsequent redundancy from ACE-SW.

Asked about the influences on SW CEP's decision-making and 'joint strategic priorities', the manager replied "somehow we knew" (F011). Of objectives not prioritised, the reply was equally enigmatic, saying "That wasn't our role to try to



*kind of make things happen where they weren't*" (F011). A SW CEP partner said:

*We all knew what the problems were, we all knew that we kind of agreed and where we disagreed and actually we had to make something happen and there was a frustration that we hadn't made something happen* (M005).

SW CEP was evidently a knowledgeable collection of the region's key state personnel and yet this expertise was not enough to "*make something happen*".

Thinking about SW CEP's proclaimed inertia, the author noted the different stances taken by individuals to SW CEP. Opinions ranged from the moderately positive to outright negative. A partner reflected on his fellow partners:

*there's generally some person who will want to turn up to the meeting because it's a meeting and that fills their day, but doesn't want to do anything because that exposes them to risk. [ ] There's always someone [ ] that kind of bit of a hothead round the table who's actually quite useful in kind of shouting things but actually never really does anything apart from turn up to meetings* (M005).

This raises questions about the nature of SW CEP's internal power relations. Careful analysis of the interviews, policy documents and timeline for SW CEP (see Appendix Sixteen) suggests a group of state bodies whose partnership was a perfunctory one. With no tangible 'joint' investment activity and no prospects for any new SW RDA or DCMS resource, partners were said to have "*lost interest*".

### Summary findings

This case study reveals the spatialities and temporalities of a multi-agency body whose foothold on the institutional landscape was quickly de-stabilised by external forces. Whether SW CEP migrated into another body or simply ceased to exist is unclear but by January 2010 "*the world had moved on*" (F011).

SW CEP's *modus operandi* was bureaucratic with an emphasis on the processual and prosaic side of governance (networks, groups, meetings, strategies, frameworks, consultations) and paper-based tools that were used as *imaginaries of power* and *imagined success*.

SW CEP's partners and manager recognised the limitations of the body's effectiveness but, with 'noise reduction' (Jessop, 2002), managed to successfully deliver the 'strategic framework' to DCMS. In doing so, a spatial-temporal 'fix' was achieved and a moment of governance success prevailed.

*[ ] the ability of ideas to gain purchase within the world depends upon the effectiveness of the socio-technical networks within which they are produced, with whom the ideas are associated, and how skilfully the proponents of these ideas are able to enrol allies and supporters to ensure that they circulate more widely beyond their immediate epistemic communities*

(Lee et al, 2008: 1112)

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a critical discussion of the study's empirical findings and relates them to the project's underpinning theoretical and conceptual framework. First, research questions, theoretical and conceptual framework, and proposition are re-visited as a reminder of the project's scope and argument. In answering the questions, a discourse is developed around evidence from the case studies under four main themes that have been flagged in the previous chapters.

The themes are: *structure and shaping*; *coherence*, and *effectiveness*. In addition, the notions of *serendipity* and *imaginary of power* are considered as cross-cutting themes that contribute to an understanding of power relations. The first, and over-riding, theme addresses the nature and scope of inter-relationships in the shaping and re-shaping of state space at the micro level. Interpretation is made of the mechanism whereby state bodies organise and operationalised their socio-political relations, focusing on structural arrangements and capacities. The second theme is concerned with spatial-temporal 'fix' and the dynamics of *coherence* and *effectiveness* of state governance. The idea of *serendipity* is explored as a way of explaining the unplanned coherence that sometimes occurs in a volatile state landscape. An important cross-cutting theme is the role of 'Imaginaries of power' in the ever-changing world of state governance. As a discursive method, themes should not be read as compartmentalised data belonging to discrete themes as if some information is relevant to one explanatory theme and not another. State structures, processes and practice are discussed across the themes and serve

to illustrate the complexity of state governance. A thematic approach enables the author to move in and out of the research findings and draw out key points.

## 7.2 Research questions, proposition and recap

The question that lies at the heart of the project is ‘how do state bodies manage to do what they do?’ This was not posed as a facetious question or indeed to place an emphasis on any one *do*. Rather, the author’s curiosity was stimulated by a genuine interest in the political geographies of everyday state governance as it manifests at the micro level. From this original question, and spurred on by reading *Creative Britain* and its policy directives, literature review of extant scholarship raised more fundamental questions about state space and the nature of power dynamics.

A theoretical and conceptual framework was developed for the research study that engaged primarily with state theory and ‘thinking state/space’ (Jessop, 2007; Jones and Jessop, 2010) and concepts associated with the complexities, fluidities and inter-dependencies of statehood. Discourse pointed to the processes of (de)centralisation, (de)stabilisation and (de)territorialisation in which state bodies act as mediators of broader political-economic forces (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 2007). With less attention given in the literature to how these processes operate at the micro level, and empirical study mostly focused on RDAs and devolved administrations (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones and MacLeod, 2004; Jones *et al*, 2004; MacKinnon, 2001), there was an opportunity to contribute to this *corpus*. Although regional cultural agencies were on a much smaller scale to RDAs and local councils, they were powerful intermediaries in their own political spheres. Also, the project’s case study organisations featured in other relational geographies (Harvey *et al*, 2011; Jones and MacLeod, 2004). While these studies focus on ‘the region’ as the spatial imaginary, the author’s objective was to move the research telescope inside the structures and practices of statehood in relation to the economic imaginary of ‘the creative industries’.

Drawing on notions of multi-scalar governance and re-scaling local space (Goodwin and Jones, 2012; Goodwin *et al*, 2004; Pemberton and Goodwin,

2010; Jones, 2009a; Jones and MacLeod, 2004), the project turned to the specificities and complexities of inter-agency power relations. To operationalise the author's curiosity, key state bodies operating in South West England were identified who were delivering DCMS' 'creative economy' policy. Much is written about 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy' in terms of economic value, location and need for better governmental interventions (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a; Chapain and Comunian, 2010; Comunian, 2011; Higgs and Cunningham, 2008; Pratt and Jeffcut, 2009). Conceptual modelling and quantitative mapping studies point to where and how state interventions should be made. While quantitative studies produce statistical 'evidence' and offer policy solutions, they rarely venture into the political geographies of institutional arrangements and their efficacy for delivering state projects (Christophers, 2007). It is the complex nature and composition of this institutional 'thickness' that is significantly lacking in much definitional discourse. Rejection of 'creative industries' as a figment of New Labour's imagination (Roodhouse, 2006; Cunningham, 2007) is too simplistic and overlooks the international appeal of this concept and widespread adoption.

Hence, an alternative and qualitative approach was taken in this study to the mechanisms that support – or now more accurately supported – Government's strategies for 'making Britain the world's creative hub'. As Chapter 4 findings demonstrate, state bodies were heavily involved in definition and articulation of 'the creative industries' concept. Originating in academic discourse on contemporary cultural production, 'the creative industries' was rapidly transformed by New Labour into a 'hard' economic sector and a governable object for policy intervention. To understand the rationalities and policy narratives that evolved between 1997 and 2010 (without implying a start and finish), and role of state bodies, the author used a blend of qualitative research methods. Interviews, textual analysis of policy documents, ethnographic work and participation observation were all used to build up description of state governance of 'the creative industries'. What could not have been foreseen was the abrupt cessation of Labour's regionalisation in 2010 by an in-coming Coalition administration and disappearance of regional bodies as a delivery mechanism. The author's findings provide, therefore, insights of a mode of governance that is no more. The imaginary of 'the region' as an administrative

territory has gone, whereas that of ‘the creative industries’ endures. These transitions illustrate the fragility and selectivity of political imaginaries that are noted elsewhere (Paasi, 2004; Rose and Miller, 2010). Nonetheless, the significance of imaginaries to the author’s research is not that one is stronger than another, but that they act as hegemonic devices, or ‘imaginaries of power’, at a moment in time and space.

The thesis addresses the research questions of: (1) how are state power relations organised and operationalised in an English region; (2) through what processes and practices is state power exercised over something so intangible as ‘the creative industries’ and at the regional level; (3) what role do imaginaries play in policy development and delivery, such as ‘making Britain the world’s creative hub’; (4) and to what effect.

The research study set out to test the proposition that: state bodies with delegated powers and operating at the micro level, seek to control – in this instance, witnessed in South West England - through *imaginaries of power*, that are complex, multi-directional and hegemonic devices. Furthermore, state bodies, as ‘peopled’ organisations (Goodwin *et al*, 2004; Jones *et al*, 2005), are motivated more by multiple socio-political expediencies, than a single policy directive, such as ‘making Britain the world’s creative hub’. Sometimes the effect of these structural forms and processual relations and forces is that of governance success and a spatial-temporal ‘fix’ occurs; and sometimes the effect is failure. Triggered by deliberate acts or chance events, fixes are critical to (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals.

### **7.3 Structure and shaping**

The first theme of *structure and shaping* is embedded throughout the study, from examination of definition and articulation of ‘the creative industries’ in Chapter 4, of policy environment in Chapter 5, to institutional arrangements and case studies in Chapter 6. Research found that the state landscape of ‘the creative industries’ was as inter-related, multi-level and inter-connected as suggested by the theorisation (Jones, 2009a; Jessop, 2007; Jones and

MacLeod, 2004). Analysis of the institutional schematics (see Appendix Three, Thirteen and Fourteen), immediately confirm the densities, scalarities and relationalities of any one state body's *terrain*. Taking just one example, South West Screen was networked at local, regional and national level and their policy documents further extend relationships to European and other countries. Comparison of different schematics further reinforces this interpretation of a highly networked and multi-directional connectivity beyond the administrative borders of South West England. Like nodes in a complex system, state bodies were inter-connected in a system that then connected to other systems at many different scales. To talk about regional governance misrepresents the multiple layers in which state bodies operate.

To some extent, there are similarities between schematics that suggest an institutional 'bloc' (Jessop, 1997: 60, cited in MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999a). Policy documents (reports, strategies, consultations, meeting minutes) too identify the same core state bodies as the acknowledged specialist agencies in the region. However, public and 'visible' articulations of an institutional 'bloc' were not so solid on closer examination. If we look at SW RDA's schematic (see Appendix Seventeen), then the relationships begin to diversify and extend to different state bodies and scales and networks of government. Also, the nature of relationships between state bodies varied, ranging from formal funding agreements (for example, between DCMS and Culture South West), bureaucratic arrangements (UK Film Council and South West Screen), to project collaboration (for example, between SW CEP and its partner members). Their interactions were, therefore, influenced by complex inter-sections of territory, place, scale and network. As Jones and Jessop (2010) recognise, such dimensional couplings are fluid and inter-relations quickly change (as in the case of Culture South West's abolition).

Having taken a TPSN approach, the impermanence and fluidities of power relations can be understood as both simple and complex. A 'simple' re-scaling is shown if SW CEP's schematic in March 2009 is compared to a revised version in March 2013 (see Appendix Three and Appendix Eighteen). Closure of SW CEP in January 2010, whose position was tenuous anyway, coincided with that of most other regional bodies in its network. The causal effects varied

for each body but mostly related to public sector cutbacks and/or cessation of regional structures. As demonstrated in Appendix Eighteen, DCMS now engages with national councils (Arts Council England, Creative England and Sector Skills Councils), who in turn engage (or not) with local government without any regional bodies in between. In other words, the major force for change emanated from the national level.

At the other end of the project's historical timescale, the formation of South West Screen in 2001 was a more complex manifestation of space shaping (see Chapter 6.4.1). With three regional media agencies and political pressure from DCMS and UK Film Council, an inter-section of multiple socio-political relations and forces coalesced and a new state body emerged. In state and complexity theory terms, the forces identified by the study capture only a partial view of what was taking place across the English regions and at a macro level. Nonetheless, the dynamics of South West Screen's formation can be understood as an inter-section of strategically selected relations in different TPSN dimensions and within a particular system of governing.

Research found an institutional 'thicket' of key state bodies (individuals and organisations) that are said to characterise a self-organising and complex system of governing (Jessop, 2007). An argument is made here that, while regional state bodies were significant to 'creative industries' policy delivery in South West England, most of them operated in specialised economic and political 'spheres of territorial influence' (Jones, 2009a). As nodes in a complex adaptive system (CAS), the key regional agencies interacted within a close network of 'peopled organisations' (Jones *et al*, 2004; Jones, 2011), who were able to mobilise around national policy directives including mapping studies, consultations and *Creative Britain*. Reflecting on the case study organisations and CAS principles (see Figure 5) findings support a highly connected, hybrid, open and self-organising system. Linking to other systems, regional bodies acted as mediators and 'institutional filters' (MacKinnon, 2001) between a national Whitehall department or national HQ and other regional and local state bodies.



On an individual basis, there was evident enthusiasm to collaborate and “*make something happen*” (F011) as in the case of Culture South West’s consortium mode and SW CEP’s ‘advisory board’ structure. Additionally, there were said to be ‘charismatic people’ (J3S, 2010) who were often the key drivers behind political strategies and initiatives in the ‘peopled state’ (Jones, 2011). Whether for good or ill, SW RDA’s ‘creative industries’ manager was one such person who took a proactive role in shaping governance arrangements. Research highlights the importance of individual personalities at the micro level to how hierarchical relations were shaped as in the case of SW RDA’s assertion of strategic leadership. With a relatively small selection of state bodies to choose from, a large-scale organisation (in this instance, SW RDA) will find it comparatively easy to re-shape arrangements to suit its political purposes.

Conversely, the relatively small number of people involved at the regional scale limited the amount of experts and viewpoints in circulation. Relations between SW RDA and Culture South West reveal problems with the effects of over-personalised relations – in this instance, the SW RDA’s resistance to the role of RCCs and cultural policy. Despite the amount of interactions between state bodies (particularly the number of meetings and consultations), regional bodies seemed to have had little influence at national level and partial influence at regional level. Certain state bodies (sometimes individuals) were favoured by the more powerful bodies (for example ACE-SW was considered one of the DCMS ‘family’ and not South West Screen) more than others and given access to decision-making powers and resources.

The nature and scope of inter-relationships between regional bodies and local councils varied but were founded mostly on straightforward financial reasons. For local councils: ACE-SW was a regular and known investor in local arts organisations; SW RDA was an investor in urban capital projects; SW CEP promised access to ‘strategic’ investment funds; and South West Screen was a useful partner for local film location service. These rationalities were pragmatic and highly selective and only vaguely related to DCMS policy for a ‘creative economy’. Given the number of references to ‘creative industries’ in local council cultural strategies (Bath and North East Somerset Council, 2002; Exeter City Council, 2002 – see Appendix Two), and a few dedicated ‘creative

industries' strategies (Bristol City Council, 2005), the lack of connection is noteworthy. Interpretation points to the marginalised position of local councils in a political 'field of power' for delivering a non-statutory 'creative economy' policy. Apart from a small amount of investment funds for non-statutory activity, local councils had few incentives to inter-act with regional agencies. This disconnection between regional and local layers intensified as the study drew to a close in March 2013. With abolition of Culture South West and the three regional 'pillars' and no further need to input to spatial strategies, local government involvement in developing a 'creative economy' has become isolated. Under regionalism, regional state bodies and local councils viewed themselves as co-located in the same 'creative industries' governance world, even though their interactions and resources varied considerably. Some bodies occupied central and influential positions (as in the case of ACE-SW and those local councils that sought strategic arts engagement), whereas others were more peripheral (such as South West Screen and smaller rural councils). The dynamics have been mentioned and point to the proactive nature of some relations – for example, some local councils helped to shape state space because of perceived benefits to their cultural services (as in the case of SW CEP membership and engagement with SW RDA). That said, these social, economic, political and cultural relations were fragile and easily disrupted by changes in the state apparatus.

Power is understood throughout the thesis as necessary and an emergent effect of specific sets of relationships at different moments in time and space. It is argued that those same sets then affect other sets. This inter-connectedness was a critical mechanism of governance in the case study site. Relations between national and regional bodies had knock-on effects to inter-agency relations. This path dependency was most overt in a state body's official status and relationship with a sponsoring Whitehall department that then had effect on power relations at regional and local level. Power relations were stabilised as, for example, in: a formal funding agreements (between BERR/BIS and SW RDA or DCMS and Culture South West); a strategic alliance (as in the case of SW CEP partners); and project collaboration (between SW RDA and South West Screen or SW RDA and SW CEP). While these particular relationships enabled a state body to exercise power, they were temporary, conditional and changed.

Furthermore, a state body's position in one 'field' was not necessarily replicated in other 'fields'. In the case of Culture South West, Executive NDPB status gave the RCC a powerful position to influence regional cultural development and to engage at senior level with the region's 'pillar' bodies. However, Culture South West's position in the cultural 'field' had little impact on SW RDA's economic development agenda. Indeed, DCMS decided that RCCs were dispensable and abolished them.

Given the complexities of 'how' state structures are shaped and change over time and space, a 'phase space' analysis points to the multi-directional processes and practices of structuration. A single imposed political directive from Government may summarily remove an institution (as in the case of RCCs), or a whole tier (as in the case of regional 'pillars'). However, state bodies were found to be resistant to, or active in, new space shaping. This supports the view that institutional space is multi layered, with power exerted at different inter-sections. An interpretation of how Culture South West or South West Screen were formed suggests the over-riding force of national imperatives such as Labour's regionalisation, economisation of cultural policy, DCMS' requirement for a regional delivery mechanism for a 'creative economy'. This explanation is true of Culture South West and the sequence of directives and events that led to its emergence and closure is unequivocal – from DCMS through GO-SW to regional cultural agencies. However, analysis of South West Screen's formation (see point 6.4.1) reveals a more complex mix of multi-directional and multi-level forces. Most pressure came from DCMS and UK Film Council at the national level, but there were other forces at the regional level that influenced the three media agencies' joint decision to merge.

On an institutional level, the autonomy of state bodies affected their daily functioning, inter-relations with other bodies as strategic partners, and their capacity to govern. Culture South West had, for example, a limited amount of autonomy because it was reliant on funding and policy direction from DCMS who had little awareness of how the region operated. However, it is insufficient and inaccurate to simply blame central Government for how Culture South West managed its responsibilities. Barriers existed at a regional and local level that constrained Culture South West's capacity to deliver DCMS' 'creative economy'

goals. Importantly, the consortium's insistence on a cultural value dimension to state intervention in 'the creative industries' was incompatible with SW RDA's economic agenda. By contrast, South West Screen's more ambiguous official status allowed it to adopt several different positions in order to accommodate SW RDA's market-led mode of governance and DCMS' cultural one. When SW RDA and UK Film Council were removed as gateways to central Government, again South West Screen took the opportunity to re-align relations and forge a new state space – Creative England. An argument is made here that while state bodies may be passive, they also actively seek autonomy within the constraints of their governance *terrain* and funding regimes. It is clear that some bodies are more autonomous than others and this affects their ability to manoeuvre and to seek alliances further a-field.

Turning to the rigidity of state spaces, the study found state bodies were acutely aware of the artificiality of administrative and industrial sector boundaries and were constrained only where necessary. In relation to the physical 'region', studies point to the 'unbounded' nature of regional space (Amin, 2004; Harvey *et al*, 2011) and ways in which state agencies practice those spaces. Harvey concluded that ACE-SW's awareness of the flexible idea of 'region' 'refutes the notion that there is some fixed and bounded territory over which governance actors can have any effective "control"' (Harvey, 2011: 479). The same analysis applies to the imaginary of 'the creative industries' as an (un)governable object. What became apparent, however, when inter-agency practices were examined in relation to territories of cultural production (that is, sub-sector specialism), state space was more contested. On the one hand, state bodies were aware of 'the region' and 'the creative industries' as flexible concepts but they also were aware of how they defined their operational areas – and infringements were resisted. An argument is made here that ACE-SW and South West Screen both shaped their industrially-defined territories in order to broaden their areas of 'control' (particularly in the disputed area of digital and cultural film) and in doing so, came into conflict. These disputes were not helped by both agency's awareness that spatial configurations of industrial activity can no longer be (or ever were) compartmentalised into precise governable spaces.

Throughout the Labour years, repeated attempts were made to define and measure ‘the creative industries’, in terms of size and industrial scope and economic values. In spite of considerable efforts, definition and mapping studies have failed to articulate an imaginary that satisfies the needs of a diverse group of state bodies. As ‘technologies of government’, mapping studies at national and regional scale grapple to territorialise and demarcate areas of cultural production and consumption and render them governable (Hesmondhalgh, 2006). For Jessop, a significant moment in the development of an economic imaginary is the emergence of crises that necessitate changes in the semiotic and extra-semiotic social relations and forces, and opens up space for strategic re-interpretation and opportunities to re-shape state spaces. This was shown in the conceptual shifts from a DET model of ‘the creative industries’ towards a ‘creative economy’ of high and low ‘value chains’ of production, the latter motivated by economic crisis.

An economised visualisation of cultural activities evidently proved problematic for state bodies. A DET model was interpreted, for example, in the South West to legitimate a territorial division between ‘media industries’ and ‘Creative Industries (non media)’. When the preferred model shifted to a ‘value chain’ and fragmented content production into segments of high and low value creative businesses, state bodies were compelled to find new positions. For state bodies (perceived to be) at the public subsidised and cultural value end of the spectrum (ACE-SW and Culture South West), they moved towards a whole ‘creative economy’ imaginary and a remit over ‘creative talent’ and ‘place-shaping’. For SW RDA and South West Screen, they consolidated their positions in the economic value end of cultural production. Regardless of the artificiality of such bifurcation, a binary division between subsidised-commercialised, and high-low values, in a ‘creative economy’ was treated as a heuristic device (O’Connor, 2007) by some state bodies. In state theory terms, economic ‘crisis’ and public spending cuts necessitated SW RDA to distance itself from ‘the arts’ and re-assert a market-led strategy.

As semi-autonomous, hybrid and self-organising bodies, state agencies were able to manage their differentiated roles vis-à-vis delivery of *Creative Britain* Commitments. This suggests several points about definitional models as

'technologies of government' (including DET tools, statistical bulletins, definitional models). First: they are 'hard' instruments for making decisions about state interventions in one or another industrialised territory. Second: they are *imaginaries of power* that are used to demarcate a state body's territory and economic and/or cultural importance in different spheres of territorial influence. The imaginary helps to convey official status, sector specialism, authority and a demarcated governance space. As others have argued (Rose and Miller, 2010), state bodies must find ways to make sense of their domains of political operation. SW RDA would not have considered investment in 'the arts' or engagement with ACE-SW if the latter had not made claims to 'the creative industries' and legitimacy as a major NDPB investor.

From a theoretical perspective, DCMS' tactics resonate with Foucault's (1979/1991) ideas of governmentalities:

The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security (Foucault, 1979/1991: 102).

Research findings support a Foucauldian notion of 'technologies of power' that are devised to exert social control over a wide range of objects, ranging from control of the self to large-scale populations. Applied to DET and 'value chain' models, they act as a state technology for controlling certain forms of cultural activity. Certainly, many writers have observed that DET creates an 'irksome definitional impasse [that has] hindered the development of policy and academic debate' (Fleming, 2004: 106). To this end, a governmentality epistemology moves debate beyond the definitional tool itself, towards one of complex relations of power between state bodies.

Taking Foucault's idea of 'technologies of government' further, and the 'rationalities of rule', statehood beyond the centre encourages a semi-autonomous role for state bodies. On the one hand, decentralisation reduces interference from national Government, whereas the densities of state bodies and an additional tier of regional government points to more not less 'rule at a

distance' (Castree, 2010: 23). The author's suggest both scenarios prevail and will depend on the socio-political circumstances.

At a regional scale, research of state bodies confirmed their role as active *champions* and *translators* of Government's 'creative economy' agenda. Their compliance was partially imposed by central Government, but also undertaken willingly. Rather than a shared position on 'the creative industries', DCMS-funded state bodies held different views on cultural activities and marked and defended their territory accordingly. Those closest to DCMS were more likely to adopt a cultural mode of governance, whereas those on the commercial side defended a market-led mode of governance. Interestingly, DCMS forged alliances with other Whitehall departments and a multi-policy approach to 'the creative industries', as in *Creative Britain*, and left regional bodies relatively free to choose their position and shape their spatial arrangements. The case study organisations confirmed a view of state bodies as 'peopled' organisations whose networks and expertise evolved around these positions.

Prior to SW RDA's publication of a 'creative industries' strategy in June 2007, lack of national policy direction on 'the creative industries' contributed to a fragmented and DET-demarcated approach taken by state bodies. The only incentive for the specialist regional cultural agencies (ACE-SW and South West Screen) to acknowledge 'the creative industries' as a policy object was its prioritisation in the Regional Economic Strategy (SW RDA, 2006) and promise of investment funds. This suggests DCMS used NDPBs and their regional partners as 'institutional channels' (MacKinnon, 2001) to promote 'the creative industries' imaginary and persuade RDAs to invest in cultural activities that RDAs would not have otherwise considered worthwhile. Decentralisation of powers by DCMS to the regional scale was, however, counter-balanced by simultaneous decentralisation of powers by BERR/BIS to RDAs whose policy goals were different. To an extent, these flows can be interpreted as a form of devolution (or even double devolution) of Government responsibilities downwards without losing control at the centre (Jessop, 2002). This links to Jessop's 'hollowed out' state (Jessop, 2004a) in which space is 'filled in' at a variety of different scales by different governance bodies (Goodwin *et al*, 2005). However, this ignores the openness and multi-directional flow of interactions

across scales and between different state bodies (and private sector organisations). State bodies were found to manage multiple national and regional policy directives at the micro level. Also, national policy directives were valued differently in different situations (economic policy and its delivery agents having greater status and powers than cultural policy and its agents). These challenges are significant to state governance outside of Whitehall departments where delivery is an active and often negotiated process and practice. The loss of one state body will have had imperceptible affect on the regional infrastructure, but that of the whole tier will have profound affects on how 'creative industries' policy is delivered in the future.

Larger state bodies were more likely to react to national policy directives than take a proactive approach to local and regional circumstances. SW RDA's response, for example, to the lack of co-operation by regional cultural agencies in a BERR/BIS 'creative economy' agenda, was to write its own 'creative industries' strategy. While this document preceded *Creative Britain* (and would appear to have informed DCMS' policy), its content privileged mainstream national economic policy and asserted SW RDA's leadership role. Analysis of smaller state bodies found a more proactive and semi-autonomous *modus* to that of SW RDA in which they adapted to different spheres of influence. Differences between regional bodies (of, for example, their departmental sponsor, official status, financial resource, policy objectives, organisational structure) were significant to the position(s) a state body could occupy at any one moment in a 'field of power'. These differences in turn impacted on how a state body interacted with others. Thus, a position in one network was not always replicated in another one. South West Screen was particularly active in adjusting its position to suit different state spaces (for example, relations with DCMS, BERR/BIS, SW RDA and industry). However, this tactic and a quasi-NDPB status were not always advantageous to the agency's ability to exert power and influence. In some situations, as in relations with SW RDA, flexibility was viewed as disingenuous.

Research supports the view that state bodies are far from a homogenous type of body or unified group of people, and are impermanent fixtures in a state landscape (Jones *et al.*, 2004; Pratt, 2005). While new structures were formed



to deliver a 'creative economy' policy under Labour at the national and regional scale, institutional arrangements were volatile throughout the period. State bodies may have shared certain territorial and scalar characteristics, as in the case study organisations, but they also managed their governance powers in diverse and sometimes terminal ways.

#### 7.4 Coherence and effectiveness

Relational discourse of 'creative industries' governance (Jayne, 2005; O'Connor, 2007; Pratt, 2005), points to a lack of 'fit' between institutional structures and policy frameworks. Given the entangled institutional *terrain* and recursive changes that the research found, the idea of 'joined up' governance, let alone achievement of a political goal, would seem unlikely. Contrary to total lack of 'fit', investigation at the micro level of state intermediation in South West England reveals signs of success and failure. With the focus here on spatial-temporal 'fix', coherence was found to prevail at 'different moments' (Jones, 2009a) of state governance, when things coalesced in space and time. Bearing in mind the complexities of state bodies described in the case studies, discontinuities of structure, process and practice were undoubtedly problematic for those who sought to govern. Examination of multiple sets of power dynamics points to the co-existence of coherence and incoherence. Research found three critical issues are important to an understanding of the dynamics of coherence: structural connection; the nature of governance success (deliberate and/ or unintentional); and the effect of a spatial-temporal 'fix'.

Taking SW CEP as a discursive focus, the dynamics of state coherence become clear. Structurally, SW CEP emerged in 2007 as an ensemble of state bodies who agreed to act together as a multi-organisational partnership. With partners drawn from a diverse range of regional and local state bodies, and whose political and sub-sector interests in creative economic development varied considerably, SW CEP's alignment was an achievement in itself. In a spatial and temporal sense, multiple state organisations were 'structurally coupled' (Jessop *et al.*, 2008) to form SW CEP at inception (April 2007) and decoupled at the moment of closure (January 2010). Territorially, SW CEP

positioned itself within the state governance landscape of South West England as well as 'extending and connecting' to national and international partners. In terms of scale-network dimensions, SW CEP's policy documents articulate moments of institutional coherence – of what Jessop calls 'strategic coordination' - when state bodies came together as a network of networks around certain political objectives including the *Creative Britain* Commitment (SW CEP, 2008) and were able to declare them 'successfully completed'. Such a multi-dimensional analysis does not, of course, ignore other socio-spatial relations and forces that were simultaneously taking place in other state spaces. Apart from belonging to SW CEP, the constituent partners were meshed in other sets of 'structural coupling' and 'strategic coordination' that extended far beyond a 'creative economy' imperative. Critically, these semi-autonomous bodies were able to collectively forge a structural connection at a moment in time and space.

Looking at SW CEP's structural 'fix' in this way chimes with a complex and multi-dimensional SRA approach. To understand the micro (and macro) dynamics of state connectivity, the researcher is encouraged by state theorists to avoid a one-dimensional entry point while recognising s/he is looking at only part of a much bigger state system. Taking SW CEP as an example, effective spatial-temporal 'fix' occurs where there is inter-section of territory-place-scale-network. Moreover, the alignment of state bodies is a temporary and spatial moment of stability that co-exists with disruptions taking place in other parts of a state system. The latter do not negate the empirical connection of the former. Hence, state bodies are both autonomous and connected entities whose structural couplings can be coherent at one 'moment' (as in the case of SW CEP in January 2010) and incoherent at others (abolition of Culture South West in March 2009) without necessarily de-stabilising the whole system (or that particular nodal point). This interpretation does not ignore the de-stabilising effects of 'crisis' in a system of governing.

To what extent spatial-temporal 'fix' is forged through deliberate or chance acts and events is difficult to pinpoint. Jessop implies 'fix', in a self-organising decentralised state such as the United Kingdom, is a theoretical inter-section of chance events (Jessop, 2007). His writings focus, however, more on the macro

national/ global scale and particularly the territorial dimension of governance. Of dynamics at the micro level, the author's analysis indicates 'fix' emerges as a connectivity of both intentional and unintentional actions or events. An argument is made here that state bodies are (semi)autonomous and proactive shapers of their governance world and, enmeshed in a complex state system, are subject to external and sometimes unexpected forces. Given the complexities of statehood at the regional scale described earlier, exactly how a spatial-temporal 'fix' occurs is not easy to encapsulate. State personnel involved in SW CEP seemed highly proactive in, for example, shaping its inception and closure, aligning membership and policy goals. With de-centralised powers exerted by different sponsoring Whitehall departments and NDPBS, SW CEP's partners were able to collectively organise and mobilise themselves. Apart from a disparity about 'who' instigated the partnership, state bodies acted together.

According to SW CEP's closing statement, SW CEP unanimously concluded that its last act should be that of its own abolition (2010: 1). Was the declaration of policy completion and closure a deliberate act or a culmination of chance events? Or perhaps both? Of influences on SW CEP's decision to close, most directly or indirectly related to monetary matters. At the time of closure, state bodies were feeling the impact of Government's fiscal reforms and economic recession, as well as preparing for radical political change or abolition. With SW RDA funds at an end for delivering *Creative Britain*, SW CEP declared its tasks 'successfully fulfilled' and "*done, finished*". In other words, governance success is sometimes a serendipity convergence of multiple unexpected circumstances, an intentional act and/or a blend of both the unintentional and intentional.

Drawing on Joe Painter's work on prosaic geographies, SW CEP's assertion that *Creative Britain* was 'successfully completed', can be viewed as prosaic dialogics. Joe Painter observes:

the complex geographies of central – local relations, contribute to the production of unintended state effects and to state practices that escape the control of the actors who initiated them (Painter, 2006, 763).

In the case of SW CEP's closing statement, coherence emerged alongside externalities that were indeed imposed from outside. However, the effects were only partially 'unintended' and uncontrolled. Firstly, SW CEP deliberately fixed a

moment of coherence and closure in January 2010 using the prosaic dialogic device of a written statement to “*draw a line*” (F011) as the senior manager explained, under the past regime and in preparation for a new political climate. As a Foucauldian ‘technology of government’, the statement marked the end of a state formation (SW CEP) and enabled the partners to move from *Creative Britain* to other policies. However, investigation found some SW CEP members were more in control of decisions than others and some more pleased with the outcome.

Of control, SW RDA was the sole cash funder of SW CEP and was keen to move on to new BERR/BIS economic policy and *Digital Britain* (BIS, 2009; BIS and DCMS, 2009). Also, South West Screen was preparing to deliver a new SW RDA-funded creative economy programme (i-Net) and neither body wanted SW CEP as the strategic ‘advisory board’: SW RDA’s manipulation is indisputable. SW CEP’s closure was a mix of unintended and deliberate state effects that ‘escaped’ the control of some partners and provided a moment of serendipity for others. With powers unevenly distributed in a devolved self-organising state (Jessop *et al.*, 2008), it is unsurprising that certain state bodies are found to have more influence and decision-making powers than others. Nonetheless, as the case study shows, the dynamics of effective intermediation are multi-dimensional and multi-directional and cannot be reduced to a single causal action or political directive.

In terms of a semiotic dimension to state governance, the dynamics of language and prose are evidently of huge importance to state bodies. Policy discourse analysis reinforced a widely held view that state bodies use ‘fast policy’ (Jessop, 2002) to articulate their authority and control and convey their particular ‘spin’ on ‘the creative industries’ story. *Creative Britain* was much criticised by interviewees but they also recognised its other meanings and meaning-making and to make “*noise*” (F001) about ‘the creative industries’. SW CEP was able to ‘successfully’ deliver a ‘regional creative economy strategic framework’ on four pages of paper and SW RDA was able to assert its authority and agenda through publication of a regional strategy document.

During the Labour era, proliferation of state bodies was accompanied by a similar avalanche of reports and regional strategies. As ‘technologies of power’, policy documents imagine ‘the region’, ‘the creative industries’ and governance success. Drawing on Foucault and state theory, an argument is made here, that policy documents render the policy object (such as ‘creative economy’, ‘the creative industries’) not only thinkable but also governable. Foucault talks about discourse transmitting and producing power. Taking this analysis further, state bodies select and hone a policy discourse in order to articulate their own interpretation of coherence and thereby forge a spatial-temporal ‘fix’. Following Jessop’s advice, the author did indeed examine numerous policy documents and found a process of ‘selection and retention’ of meanings and meaning-making that played a crucial part in performing governance.

Reflecting on coherence and incoherence in South West England, and the interdependencies of state structures, strategies and practices of state personnel, empirical material challenges a dominant and often sceptical view of state bodies. Research shows Jessop’s earlier conclusions about the ‘public ironist’ (Jessop, 2003a) and their propensity to fail, underestimate their effectiveness and particularly at the grassroots. On the one hand, SW CEP’s response can be understood as that of an ‘ironist’ who:

must seek creative solutions whilst acknowledging the limits to any such solution, [ ] ... she may need to combine passion and reason to mobilize support behind the project .... the ironist adopts a satisficing approach (Jessop, 2003a: 10).

In reacting to SW RDA’s withdrawal of funds, as well as wider political and economic turbulence, SW CEP’s spatial-temporal ‘fix’ in January 2010 can be understood as an imaginative and tactical move. Jessop’s analysis continues:

She accepts incompleteness and failure as essential features of social life but continues to act as if completeness and success were possible (Jessop, 2003a, 10).

Contrary to ‘incompleteness and failure’, SW CEP exemplifies the capacity of state bodies to shape their governance world in the face of adversity (Goodwin *et al.*, 2006). At a time of acute upheaval and ‘crisis’, SW CEP proactively managed to declare *Creative Britain* ‘successfully completed’ and closed – ergo, a spatial-temporal ‘fix’ occurred and governance success prevailed.

Finally, the 'successful' delivery of *Creative Britain* in South West England that was fixed in policy discourse (reports, strategies and statements) shows the nature of effectiveness in the practice of statehood – that is, an imagined fixity. Such an imaginary is critical to state bodies who must either deliberately create moments of imagined coherence and success, or take advantage of unexpected circumstances to lay claim to governmental achievement. Empirical findings support the author's argument that there is an important serendipity to state governance, whereby state bodies take the opportunity to 'fix' a moment of coherence and declare 'success' (imagined or not). Witnessed in South West England, SW CEP took advantage of some chance events to 'fix' a moment in time and space, and was able to demonstrate its governance success.

Imaginariness are, of course, familiar constructs in relational geographies of state governance including that of 'the state' (Jessop, 2005b), 'the region' (Amin, 2004; Harvey *et al.*, 2011; MacLeod and Jones, 2007) and 'the creative industries' (Hesmondhalgh, 2006; Pratt, 2005). Of economic imaginaries, Jessop observes:

Economic imaginaries identify, privilege, and seek to stabilize some economic activities from the totality of economic relations and transform them into objects of observation, calculation, and governance (Jessop, 2005b, 145).

Based on the author's research, an argument is made that imaginaries of state coherence are similarly 'technologies of power' in the everyday spaces of regional governance and are used to similar effect. They are both tools and forces whose purpose is to: (re)produce hierarchical positions, (re)align power relations, and most importantly, (re)affirm a state body's capacity to govern.

For Culture South West, the dialogical imaginaries (of regional cultural strategies) proved unconvincing to the minister (DCMS, 2008) and, compounded by departmental 'cost savings and efficiencies', the body was abolished. Looking at the dialogics of SW CEP that were articulated in a progress report and 'regional creative economy strategic framework' (2009) and Closing Statement, there is little evidence of tangible outputs apart from 'a forum for presentation and discussion' and 'a platform for joint sector responses

to policy consultation'. Of *Creative Britain's* Commitment 18, there is a diagram and a declaration of 'successfully completed'. Nonetheless, the prose and partners' endorsement created an illusion of success. As heuristic devices, the written material conveyed the required messages to department and regional and local bodies, and marked 'the end'.

Policy discourse reinforces the importance of the semiotic dimension to the practice of governing and a 'successful' outcome. Arguably, an imagined solidity is as important a requisite of state intermediation in a devolved system as the imagined object of governance. This interpretation is supported by Jessop's analysis of 'fast policy' as a pragmatic tool (Jessop, 2002) although the author's findings refute his view that policy destroys 'institutional memory'. New Labour and 'new' spatial formations *et al* proved to be not as 'new' as the prose claimed and state agents were well aware of policy 'spin'. Under Labour, governance of a 'creative economy' required, in the first instance, an economic imaginary - 'the creative industries' - to convey a new meaning of economised cultural production. And second, other imaginaries were required to track the progress of inter-departmental initiatives (such as the Creative Economy Programme) and policy delivery (*Creative Britain*). The author's research shows that state bodies are crucial mediators in this tracking process and, most importantly, are able to imagine and 'fix' governance success. At a micro level where the network of state bodies is smaller and personalised, imagined 'success' is a vital part of (re)defining territories, (re)aligning policy goals and relations, and (re)affirming their legitimacy and ability to govern.

## 7.5 Serendipity of governing

Having examined the turbulent world of state governance and the complex practices of state bodies in South West England, the author was drawn to the idea of serendipity to help understand the proactive manoeuvres of state bodies. This idea was suggested when trying to explain SW CEP's statement that *Creative Britain* was 'successfully completed' and the only evidence was a short diagrammatic document published in May 2009. Reflecting further on SW CEP's imagined governance success, the author considered the question of 'under what circumstances were the statement made?'. Explanation pointed to

a combination of imaginary ('the creative industries' and 'creative economy'), plus the chance events that were occurring and needed 'crisis management' (Jessop, 2007). For SW CEP (see point 6.4.3), socio-political events were spiralling out of control. To name but a few forces, they were: the need to deliver a 'regional creative economy strategic framework' and *Creative Britain* Commitments; the unexpected closure of Culture South West and consequent 'host' body for SW CEP's manager; re-structure of ACE-SW and potential redundancies; withdrawal of SW RDA's funds and loss of resource. SW CEP's collective membership turned these chance events and chaos into an opportunity in January 2010 by (1) declaring the policy delivery 'successfully completed' and (2) disbanding the partnership. A similar serendipity interpretation was applied to other moments in the case site and again the spatial-temporal co-ordinates were found to be a mix of imaginary, intentional acts and unanticipated events.

The validity of this interpretation requires further research in order to explore strategic relational dynamics in other spatial configurations. Certainly, the idea of serendipity resonates with a SRA approach to multi-level state space and 'different moments' in phase space (Jones, 2009a). The study has answered questions of state governance at the micro level and how power relations are forged and coalesce at the inter-sections of territory-place-scale-network-semiotics. More specific attention could now be given to those serendipitous moments of governance success and failure when the effects are both positive and negative.

In the author's study, state personnel were found to act in specified and controlled ways (set out, for example, in their Public Service Agreements and national standards and targets). However, they were also capable of taking a proactive role in governing. This refutes the more passive characterisation given by state theorists, whereby their role is presented as facilitators and dutiful mediators (Brenner *et al*, 2003; Jessop, 2007). By contrast, the thesis presents state bodies as active and passive agents who operate in complex forms, fields and forces that change over time and space. With different responsibilities, resources and territorial spreads, state bodies must constantly compete for political support and legitimacy and seek opportunities to enhance their



positions (Jessop, 2002: 6). The author's empirical material adds to that of other studies that reveal the tenacity and inventiveness of state bodies (Harvey *et al.*, 2011; Jones, 2007).

A temporal analysis is not, of course, simply a series of historical events. State theorists highlight the contradictions and tensions, rivalries and 'socio-political' struggles that emerge in the exercise of state power (Jessop *et al.*, 2008; Jones and Jessop, 2010). Reflecting on SW RDA's view of South West Screen, the effects of institutional change and political events become clearer. Abolition of UK Film Council and RDAs in 2010 was unwelcome for those particular bodies but embraced by South West Screen. A re-configured political landscape enabled South West Screen to go on to become a new national agency and to develop a direct relationship with government departments. As South West Screen's senior manager remarked:

*until very recently the middleman was always the RDA. So it's only since the abolition of the RDA in the last couple of months that we've had a proper conversation with DCMS about creative industries policy (F001).*

This quote reinforces the transitory and opportunistic nature of state intermediaries who adapt or not to the political ideology and expediencies of the day.

Governance literature tends to emphasise the contradictions and tensions, rivalries and struggles that state bodies are enmeshed within and their 'crisis management' responses to those conflicts (Jessop *et al.*, 2008). While these criticisms are valid responses to exaggerated claims by state bodies about governance success, they underplay the *effectiveness* of such bodies. At an individual 'peopled organisation' scale (Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Goodwin *et al.*, 2006, Jones *et al.*, 2004), SW RDA demonstrates the capacity of a state body to shape, as well as be shaped by, the forms, fields and forces of the environment in which it operates. Published almost a year before *Creative Britain*, SW RDA's 'creative industries' strategy (2007) announced a 'new' partnership - SW CEP - and its role of developing a 'regional creative economy strategic framework'. The same partnership model and tasks then appeared almost *verbatim* in Commitment 18 of *Creative Britain* (page 59) as a 'new' pilot of 'regional creative economy strategic frameworks in two regions, the North

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West and South West'. The symmetry is striking and supports the author's contention that regional bodies were proactive agents in delivering policy coherence and affirming their own governance success.

In summary, the author's proposition proved a sound one. That is:

- state bodies are complex and inter-dependent socio-political entities that operate and interact at multiple scales;
- state bodies seek to control and regulate, individually and collectively, the object(s) of their governance - such as 'the creative industries' and 'creative economy' and witnessed in the administrative area of South West England – through a non-linear, co-evolutionary, self-organising mode of governance;
- these objects of governance are 'imaginaries of power'; that are semiotic and hegemonic devices that evolve and change over time and space;
- and moving beyond scale, state bodies, as 'peopled' organisations (Goodwin *et al*, 2006) are motivated more by multiple socio-political expediencies than a single decentralised policy directive, such as 'making Britain the world's creative hub' (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 6);
- whether intentional or unanticipated, the effects of structural and processual relations and forces are occasional 'moments' (Jones, 2009a) of coherence, when territory, place, scale, network and/or semiotics coalesce;
- 'moments' of spatial-temporal 'fix' are critical to (re)producing hierarchies, (re)affirming power relations and (re)aligning political goals.

*[ ] In short, objects are space, space is objects, and moreover objects can be understood only in relation to other objects*

(Jones, 2009a: 5)

### 8.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the submission of the author's thesis. A review is made of the thesis as a whole with reflections on its contribution to extant scholarship, its limitations and suggestions for future research. An outline is given of research issues that emerged during the project and that warrant further investigation. Moreover, implications of the findings are extrapolated for policy-makers and policy advisors who are involved in the on-going political goal of a 'creative economy'. A look is also taken at the field of 'creative industries' studies in the light of, for example, the political shift in the UK from regionalism to localism and (de)regulation of powers in a shrinking state landscape.

### 8.2 Reflections

The thesis contributes to state theory debate on re-scaling state space and notions of multi-scalar governance and possibilities of success and failure. Drawing on extant scholarship (Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones, 2009a; Jones, 2011; Jones and Jessop, 2010; MacKinnon, 2001; Pemberton and Goodwin, 2010), the thesis adds to a growing *corpus* of empirical material on the nitty-gritty of statehood at the local scale. While governance studies mostly focus on large-scale economic development agencies and devolved administrations, the author's study extends into the cultural policy domain and smaller-scale state bodies.

Framed by Labour administrations between 1997 and 2010, the study period coincided with a remarkable period of structural change in the English regions. Labour came to power in the 1997 General Election with an overwhelming majority (43.2 per cent of the vote), and immediately set about transforming the British political landscape. With devolution, regionalism and aspirations for a 'creative economy', a plethora of institutions sprang up in the new English

'regions'. By the time the thesis was completed in early 2013, a new Coalition Government had dismantled 'big government' in favour of 'Big Society' and a new localism.<sup>75</sup>

Thinking back to the start of doctoral study, 2008 was probably the peak of Labour's political interest in 'the creative industries' *per se*. In terms of a South West context, the year started with DCMS' publication of *Creative Britain* and, in September 2008, a new state body (SW CEP) was launched to deliver ambitious plans for 'regional creative economy strategic frameworks' (DCMS *et al*, 2008). As the reader will now know, from 2009 onwards the political and economic environment for state intervention at every scale began to shift towards hard-nosed economic recovery. In-depth research was conducted with state personnel who were managing the raw realities of public spending cutbacks including staff redundancies and office closures. Their co-operation and frankness during interviews provided the researcher with extraordinary insights into space-shaping in action. It is likely that some people were 'setting the record straight' and others were posturing in readiness for new sets of power relations. That said, the subjectivities of an interview situation are unavoidable and, therefore, the author has quoted state bodies' own words to help convey an authentic story of governing.

Reflecting on limitations to the study, the author is conscious of two issues, both of which lend themselves to future research. First, case studies were planned of local councils with an active engagement in developing aspects of 'the creative industries'. Although two were selected and interviews conducted, the data were not sufficiently 'rich' to warrant in-depth case study work and were too dissimilar to the other case study organisations. It was, therefore, decided to concentrate investigation at the regional scale. With a resurgence of localism and formation of new Local Enterprise Partnerships in England, there is an opportunity for future research of new state bodies at local level.

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<sup>75</sup> The idea of 'rolling back the state' and 'Big Society' was set out in a speech by Prime Minister David Cameron and refers to less state intervention in local public services and more responsibility taken by private individuals (Rt. Hon. David Cameron, 15 February 2011, London, online, accessed 28 November 2011, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-on-big-society>>).

The second limitation to the study is the absence of ‘the industry’ perspective and its connectivity to regional governance arrangements. This aspect was considered at the project’s early preparation stage but deleted because of practical reasons. To research an industry practitioner dimension to power relations was a whole new line of enquiry that would have detracted from the focus of the doctoral study. Interestingly, two of the case study organisations had industry people on their board of directors and some were interviewed. However, these interviews did not explore an explicit industry practitioner’s view of the organisation in question but sought their views as integral to that organisation’s *modus operandum*.

There is also the limitation of a historically specific study. There is no longer a governmentally defined ‘regional’ space; the regional ‘pillars’ have been abolished; national NDPBs and their out-of-London regional partners have either amalgamated or are in the process of re-scaling. This means the study is most definitely a ‘historically specific’ geography of state configurations and there is no opportunity for another researcher to replicate the study with either the same state bodies or in another English GOR.

Theorisation developed around a critical realist philosophical paradigm, state and complexity theories (Jessop, 2002, 2007; Mittleton-Kelly, 2003), as well as the relational literature, governance and regional studies (Amin, 2004; Goodwin *et al*, 2005; Jones, 2009a; Jones, 2011; Jones *et al*, 2005). A starting point was to ‘ask questions about the “how” of power’ (Foucault, 1983/1991: 216). A SRA-CAS framework proved a useful way to systematically approach the complex socio-political relations between state bodies in a multi-dimensional state environment. The addition of semiotics to the TPSN dimensions was particularly helpful when applied to an understanding of imaginaries as ‘objects of space, and space is objects’ (Jones, 2009a: 5). The result was an empirical study that supports a view of power as practice and emergence - the greater the fit between what state bodies do and say, and the forms, fields and forces within which their powers are enacted, the greater the likelihood of a spatial-temporal ‘fix’ and outcome of governance success. Clearly, the reverse is also true whereby the effects may be chaotic and negative.

Given the evident complexities, fluidities and inter-dependencies of state bodies, the author concludes there is nothing predictable about spatial-temporal fixings. Indeed, the trajectories of strategically selected relations in the research site were found to be possible compossibilities. Furthermore, the author concludes state bodies use many different imaginaries as 'technologies of power' to narrate and manage their world and occasionally, and sometimes by chance, achieve governance success. As non-productive experts and 'cultural intermediaries', state bodies are positioned somewhere between (or in) the 'field of cultural production' and the 'field of power' (Bourdieu, 1993). Their imaginaries conjure up 'our region', 'the creative industries', a 'strategic framework' and 'success' and are the powerful semiotics of effective governance.

In conclusion, the 'creative industries' is a much contested object-subject that continues to intrigue researchers and policy-makers alike. Developed in the 1990s, this spatial and territorial configuration initially emerged to describe a certain cultural mode of production and to reflect rapid changes to prevailing political and economic paradigms. Drawing on a spectrum of definitional discourses, the thesis found that a consensual definition of the 'creative industries' was a futile exercise, and indeed quantification proved equally problematic in spite of numerous methodological attempts. While 'creative industries' studies still chase definitive meanings – about, for instance, the (dis)connection between cultural activities and 'creative industries', the size and scope of industrial categories, and the validity of economic *versus* cultural value – the nature of cultural content production and ideas about a 'creative economy' have moved on.

Creativity is again at the forefront of academic and policy think-tank debates as demonstrated by a flurry of new publications on the subject (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a; Pratt and Jeffcut, 2009; Wright *et al*, 2009). A re-conceptualised mode of content production is being advocated, that is bound only by the spaces in which creative and innovative content is produced, and not artificially confined to a set of cultural domains and industrial classifications. From conceptualisation as 'the creative industries', debate is shifting to that of a 'creative economy' and implications for policy development. According to the

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author's policy discourse analysis, the imaginary of 'the creative industries' achieved remarkable prominence in cultural and economic state strategies at national and regional scale. The thesis explored this transformation and how spatial inter-dependencies evolved and changed over time between the various layers of state bodies.

Some writers and policy-makers assume a common meaning and move swiftly on to the problem of intervention (Garnham, 2005). Others grapple with definitional issues, conflating terms such as 'cultural' with 'creative' industries or 'screen' with 'film', and then move on to solutions. For the author, these assumptions and obfuscations are what make 'the creative industries' such a curious and malleable object of governance and study. How can an object be governed, if the relevant state bodies and politicians have little or no shared understanding of what it is they seek to control? And similarly, how can scholars compare 'creative industries' interpretations when they are sometimes talking about different economic imaginaries? The answers to such questions lie in the notion of an imaginary and the related different positions that state bodies (and academics) adopt to reflect their viewpoint.

### **8.3 Implications for future research**

Having confirmed the thesis' contribution to scholarship, some implications for future research are discussed here. Constant changes in a state landscape, and specificity those in the study site, present certain problems for further human geography research. The study inadvertently coincided with a period of remarkable economic and political change, and revealed much about the complex nature of multi-scalar governance and re-scaling state space in local England. Although all three case study organisations and a regional structure have been dismantled, there are real questions to be raised about whether new localism will alleviate or exacerbate the difficulties encountered under Labour's regionalism and devolution agenda. Devolved responsibilities for 'creative industries' have shifted from regional bodies to national bodies and local government. With fewer people on the ground, and traditionally different policy paths taken by DCMS' sponsored bodies, there is nothing to suggest a better mechanism will evolve.

Research findings and discussion point to further lines of enquiry. First, there is a need for more research into past and present state apparatus that supports, as opposed to justifies, state intervention in relation to 'the creative industries'. Of significance is research that better informs structural arrangements that support state projects. Lessons are still to be learned from Labour's regionalisation and before new evolving structures make the same mistakes or forget the best practice of the past. It is unlikely that economisation of cultural activities will reverse in the foreseeable future and nor will academic interest in a cultural political economy (Taylor, 2013). The 'new' political turn is towards less state intervention and greater involvement by the private sector and individual citizen in delivering economic-political imaginaries such as a 'creative economy' and 'big society' (see Footnote 75). This shift has implications for how imaginaries are understood and implemented by state-funded bodies including specialist national development councils and local councils. Research could usefully examine these spatial dynamics as they evolve and their impact on cultural policy development and delivery vis-à-vis 'the creative industries'.

The author's findings are time and site-specific and a similar study would be difficult to undertake in other parts of England for the purpose of comparison and knowledge gathering. Every GOR 'region' was organised differently vis-à-vis a regional delivery mechanism for DCMS and national NDPBs. Notwithstanding, there is some validity to further examination of the geo-politics of institutional arrangements in other regions during the Labour era, where combinations of possibilities were differently configured and re-configured.

An 'interventionist' approach to research of 'the creative industries' remains a popular area of regional studies, including notions of 'creative clustering' and the creative 'city region' (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a; Chapain and Comunian, 2010; Comunian, 2011; Curson *et al*, 2007; Harrison, 2007). The author's findings suggest a disconnection in academic discourse between that focused on the problematics of mapping and modelling 'the creative industries', and that on state governance space. The two areas are not mutually exclusive and have much intellectual and practical knowledge to exchange. For policy-makers, this doctoral study offers important insights to the inter-relationship between policy



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object, delivery mechanism and the role of state bodies far from Whitehall. With recent changes to economic and cultural governance arrangements in England, there is an opportunity for academics and policy-makers to reflect on regionalism and regionalisation of state space.

Looking to the future of 'new state space' thinking (Brenner *et al*, 2003), there is fertile ground on which to consider the loss of 'region'. While regional imaginaries have faded and are unlikely to return soon as administrative areas, there is no sign that an ever-more economised mode of cultural production and consumption will reverse. What is 'new' and worthy of research are the processes of de-regionalisation and de-governing the cultural realm. Under a Coalition Government, greater emphasis is being placed on private-public partnership at the local level. This trend has implications for how a re-imagined 'creative economy' is harnessed as an 'imaginary of power' by state-funded bodies at macro and micro levels. In terms of contemporary economic policy and governance of 'the creative industries', responsibility is being placed on private sector (as opposed to state) investment in return for de-regulation. These trends point to the emergence of new power dynamics between national and local mediators and new ways of practicing 'creative' space.

The second area for further investigation relates to how this research might be applied elsewhere. It is useful to examine the specificities of state bodies and these findings provide a framework for thinking about governance in other parts of England and other policy areas. It is clear from the study, however, that the situation in South West England was a 'moment in time' and any similar situation no longer exists. Certainly, a retrospective study of 'creative industries' governance in another GOR region is possible and would throw more light on power relations between equivalent bodies to those studied here. Such study would also add to scholarship on an historic political period in which 'the creative industries' was first introduced as a policy object, and the regional mechanism that evolved to support its delivery.

More importantly, the author's research has application to other groups of state bodies and indeed those that are now evolving to deliver a Coalition Government's 'creative economy' agenda at national and local level. Given the

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speed at which regional structures formed in the early 2000s, there is every reason to suppose that new formations will reveal more about the dynamics of statehood and power relations.

#### 8.4 Finale

Do state bodies manage to do what they do? At the time of writing, those state bodies who survived the ‘scorched earth’ of a new administration are re-assembling in new state spaces. So, in a sense some bodies manage and some do not. The study has shown that in the past, regional bodies played a pivotal role in formulating and embedding ‘the creative industries’ imaginary into regional policies of the day, and acting as delivery agents for directives set out in Government’s *Creative Britain*. The opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games in July 2012 and accompanying hyperbole of ‘creative Britain’ demonstrate a continued political commitment to promoting Britain as a ‘creative hub’ (BOP Consulting, 2012). While Labour had a regional infrastructure to deliver *Creative Britain* and a ‘creative economy’ agenda, it is difficult to see how a small group of specialist national bodies can sustain a ‘creative industries’ policy *per se*. Thinking state/space (Jones and Jessop, 2010) suggests state bodies manage to adjust their imaginaries to suit the prevailing economic and political circumstances and there is every reason to suppose that they will manage to do so again.

### RESEARCHER'S BIOGRAPHY

Born in Edinburgh, Jules Channer grew up on the Netherlands Antilles island of Aruba and later moved to Malvern, Worcestershire. She studied for a Bachelor of Science (BSc) Honours in sociology at the University of Bath (1974-78) and also completed a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) within that 4-year vocational education programme. In 2007, Jules returned to academia at the University of Exeter where she received a Master of Research (MRes) in human geography before commencing a doctoral study in 2008 that was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

Starting her professional career in teaching, Jules taught as a Lecturer in Sociology, Psychology and Media Studies at Further Education colleges in Bath and Trowbridge. Later she transferred her skills and interests to vocational training and skills development programmes for the audio-visual industries, working for clients such as BBC, ITV and Aardman Animation. In 1997, A Winston Churchill Travel Fellowship in 1996 enabled Jules to undertake research in USA and France, investigating the potential of assistive technologies for training people with visual impairments.

Jules became Chief Executive of Skillnet South West, a media training agency, and led its merger with two other media agencies to form South West Screen in 2001. She was Director of Education and Skills at South West Screen until 2005 when she became an independent policy advisor and researcher, specialising in strategic planning and cultural and creative industries studies. Since 2005, Jules has managed the Culture Module of the South West Observatory (an online research and information resource) on behalf of a consortium of public sector cultural agencies and local authorities in South West England.

## APPENDIX TWO

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### LIST OF POLICY DOCUMENTS

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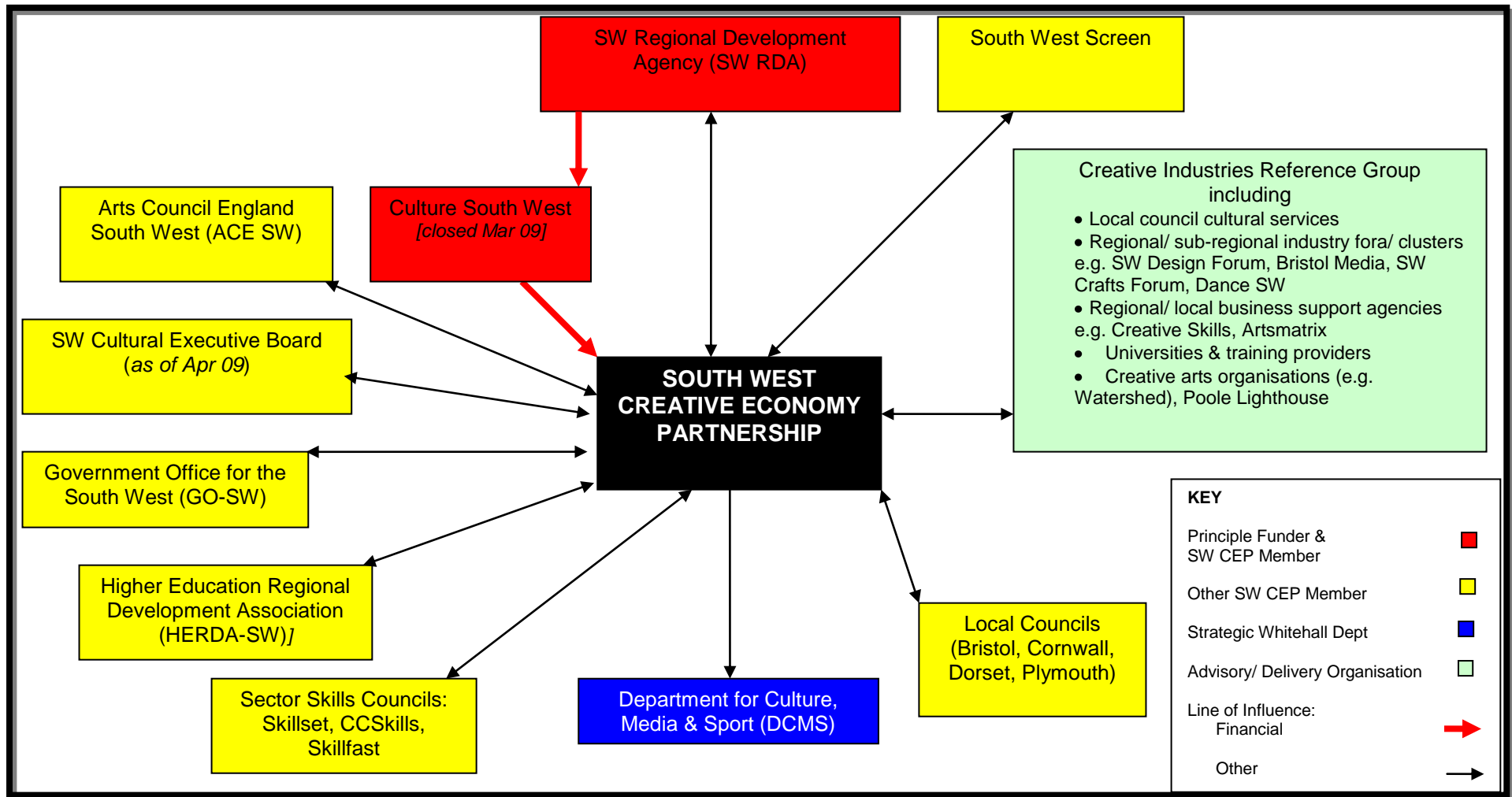
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APPENDIX THREE

EXAMPLE OF SCHEMATIC OF SOUTH WEST CREATIVE ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE TERRAIN (AS OF MARCH 2009)



## APPENDIX FOUR

### LIST OF KEY STATE BODIES BY SELECTION FACTOR

Organisation Name	Selection factor			
	Geographic coverage	Location	Governance status	Sector coverage
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform/ Business Innovation & Skills (BERR/BIS)	N	NC	GD	G
Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG)	N	NC	GD	G
Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)	N	NC	GD	ALL/SS
Government Office for the South West (GO-SW)	R	RC	GD	G
Arts Council England	N	NC	NDPB	SS
British Film Institute (BFI)	N	NC	NDPB	SS
UK Film Council	N	NC	NDPB	SS
Creative & Cultural Skills (C&CS)	N	NC	NDPB	SS
Skillfast	N	NC	NDPB	SS

Skillset	N	NC+RC	NDPB	SS
Arts Council England South West (ACE-SW)	R	RC	NDPB	SS
Culture South West	R	RC	NDPB	ALL
South West Creative Economy Partnership (SW CEP)	R	RC	IO	ALL
South West Cultural Executive Board	R	RC	NDPB/IO (group)	ALL
South West Screen	F	RC	Q-NDPB	SS
South West Regional Development Agency (SW RDA)	R	RC	NDPB	G
South West Regional Assembly (SW RA)	R	RC	NDPB	G
Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES)	L	LTC	LC	G
Bristol City Council	L	LTC	LC	G
Cornwall County Council	L	LTC	LC	G
Dorset County Council	L	LTC	LC	G
Exeter City Council	L	LTC	LC	G
Plymouth City Council	L	LTC	LC	G
Higher Education Regional Development Association South West (HERDA-SW)	R	RC	IO	O/ALL
BOP Consulting	N	NC	IO	ALL/SS

Demos	N	NC	IO	ALL/O
National Endowment for Science, Technology & The Arts (Nesta)	N	NC	NDPB	ALL
The Work Foundation	N	MC	IO	ALL/O
<b>Total = 28</b>				
<b>KEY</b>				
Geographical coverage: N (national), R (regional), L (local), O (other)				
Location: NC (national centre), RC (regional centre), LT/C (local town/city), MP (multiple places)				
Governance status: NDPB (Non Departmental Public Body), Q-NDPB (quasi NDPB), GD (government department), LC (local council), IO (Independent or other)				
Sector coverage: All (all-creative sector); SS (specialist sub-sector of 'creative industries'); G (generist), O (other)				



## APPENDIX FIVE

### BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT INTERVIEWEE CHARACTERISTICS

M001	Male, retired/board director, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 06/03/10)
M002	Male, retired/board member, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 01/11/11)
M003	Male, retired/board member, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 01/11/11)
M004	Male, board member, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 07/08/09)
F001	Female, senior manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 06/10/10)
F002	Female, senior manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 05/10/10)
M005	Male, ex senior manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 02/11/10)
M006	Male, ex senior manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 01/11/11)
F003	Female, middle manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 13/08/10)
F004	Female, middle manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 13/07/10)
F005	Female, middle manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 13/07/10)
F006	Female, ex senior manager, regional, quasi-NDPB, South West Screen (interview 01/11/11)
F007	Female, senior manager, regional, Government Dept, GO-SW (interview 10/03/10 and as Culture South West 15/03/10)
F008	Female, senior manager, regional, NDPB, Culture South West (interview 15/03/10)
F009	Female, ex-senior manager, regional, NDPB, Culture South West (interview 10/03/10)
F010	Female, middle manager, regional, NDPB, Culture South West (interview 26/03/10)
F011	Female, secondment senior manager, regional, NDPB, SW CEP (interview 23/03/10)

Brief Information about Interviewee Characteristics

M007	Male, senior manager, regional, NDPB, SW RDA (interview 20/04/10)
M008	Male, senior manager, regional, NDPB, SW RDA (04/04/10)
F012	Female, middle manager, regional, NDPB, SW RDA (interview 01/11/11)
M009	Male, ex senior manager, regional, NDPB, ACE-SW (23/03/09)
F013	Female, middle manager, regional, NDPB, ACE-SW (interview 24/05/10)
M010	Male, retired civil servant, regional, Government Dept, GO-SW (interview 23/03/09)
M011	Male, civil servant, national, Government Dept, DCMS (interview 12/11/10)
M012	Male, civil servant, national, Government Dept, DCMS (interview 09/09/10)
M013	Male, civil servant, national, Government Dept, DCMS (interview 12/06/09)
M014	Male, senior manager, local, local council, Exeter City Council (interview 19/04/10)
F014	Female, senior manager, local, local council, Bath & North East Somerset Council (interview 13/05/10)
F015	Female, middle manager, local, local council, Bath & North East Somerset Council (interview 20/07/10)
F016	Female, policy advisor, national, independent other, BOP Consulting (interview 19/05/10)
M015	Male, policy advisor, national, independent other, BOP Consulting (interview 19/05/10)
M016	Male, policy advisor, national, independent other, BOP Consulting (interview 19/05/10)

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### Introductory remarks

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Check room lighting, heat, noise ambience

Confirm person is aware of recorder and is happy for it to be switched on (agreed in advance)

Summary of research project and purpose of interview

#### Interview questions

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Today's interview is framed around some key themes that I would like to explore with you, using your past experience and tapping into your knowledge of the creative industry.

#### 1.0 Relationships and influences

##### 1.1 Could you briefly describe your role at [named organisation]?

Looking at the schematic of public and private sector organisations in your organisation's operational world (see schematic):

1.2 Does this schematic accurately represent the world in which you operate? Discuss.

1.3 Which relationships do you consider are/were most important to your work and why?

1.4 How do/did these significant bodies influence [named organisation] e.g. through formal agreements, policy directives from DCMS/ BIS via UKFC and RDA, Board members, other channels e.g. cluster groups, public consultations. Can you illustrate with some examples?

1.5 Where in this schematic do you have most influence?

1.6 Are influences on you, and by you, sometimes negative? And if so, give some examples.

1.7 Do relationships change over time?

1.8 To what extent do national bodies influence you more than regional or local ones? Give examples.

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**1.9 Turning to Government's goal of making Britain "the world's creative hub" and Commitments set out in *Creative Britain*, what role did your organisation play in delivering Government's creative economy policy?**

**1.10 Was SW CEP an effective mechanism? Discuss**

**2.0 Governance structures and economic performance**

**2.1 What effect does the performance of the UK economy as a whole have on your organisation's mode of operation? e.g. shifts from growth to downturn and recession.**

**2.2 How are major management decisions made at [named organisation]? e.g. policy, investment, structural change.**

**2.3 Does the economic performance of the creative industries influence your organisation's decisions and why? e.g. more focus on a particular sub-sector, choice of Board members, policy priorities.**

**2.4 Is [named organisation] interested in the whole of the creative industries or only some sub-sectors?**

**2.5 Does this sectoral span change over time? Did political/economic changes influence your membership of SW CEP?**

**3.0 Wider structural and political changes**

Turning to other factors that influence [named organisation] mode of governance:

**3.1 How do major structural changes taking place elsewhere in the terrain (see schematic) affect your organisation? Give examples e.g. abolition of Culture SW, ACE re-structure, formation of SW CEP.**

**3.2 How would you describe your role in relation to Government departments (DCMS, BIS/ UKTI)?**

**3.3 At a local level, how do changes of, for example, Elected Members or senior officers within the region's local authorities affect your organisation? (change of strategic priorities)? Give examples.**

**3.4 What are your views on the amount of influence an individual person has, as opposed to that of an organisation as a 'bloc'?**

**3.5 Does an individual's influence matter more at one geographic level than another?**

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#### **4.0 Links to the industry**

**In terms of links with the creative industries:**

**4.1 What influence do industry practitioners have on [named organisation] decisions, modus operandi? e.g. input to consultations, project steering groups.**

**4.2 Do some practitioners have more influence than others? Why?**

**4.3 How would you describe [named organisation] role in relation to the industry? Discussion of [named organisation] as a state intermediary. Is this role understood by industry practitioners?**

**4.4 Did SW CEP engage with industry and, if so, how?**

#### **5.0 Government policy and Creative Britain**

**Returning to Government's goal of making Britain the "world's creative hub", and the *Creative Britain* Commitments, including SW pilot:**

**5.1 Does the success or failure of Government's political goals affect [named organisation]'s status as a state-funded intermediary? Discuss.**

**5.2 What national, regional or local policies have most influenced your organisation in recent years? Why?**

**5.3 What amount of power do you think [named organisation] has to deliver Government policies? e.g. economic growth, creative economy, cultural participation.**

**5.4 What was SW CEP's role in delivering *Creative Britain*? Did it succeed? Discuss.**

#### **6.0 Conclusion**

**6.1 Are there any other comments you would like to make about [named organisation] and its role as a policy delivery agent?**

## APPENDIX SEVEN

### EXAMPLE OF A FACTUAL DATA SHEET: CULTURE SOUTH WEST

Organisation	Annual Service Area Spend	Staff Officers	Board Members	Key Documents
<p><b>CULTURE SOUTH WEST</b> Sterling Hse Dixs Field Exeter EX1 1QR</p> <p>NOTE: co-located in SW RDA offices</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:pippa.warin@culturesouthwest.org.uk">pippa.warin@culturesouthwest.org.uk</a></p> <p>Web: <a href="http://www.culturesouthwest.org.uk">www.culturesouthwest.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Organisational status:</b> Regional Cultural Consortium Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) Responsible to Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)</p> <p>Established July 2001 Closing: 31 March 2009</p>	<p>Annual 'core' grant allocation of approx. £200,000</p> <p>Project funds (variable) included funds for: Culture Module, CI (non media) Programme; PPS consultation study; SW CEP budget-holder</p>	<p>CEO (job share): Libby Grundy &amp; Pippa Warin</p> <p>Projects Manager: Jodie Potter FTE Administrator: FTE</p> <p>Previously had 4 FTE + freelance project managers and seconded posts</p> <p><b>Description of Management Structure:</b></p> <p>Secretary of State for DCMS Consortium Board of Directors + Chair CEO</p>	<p>Chair: Adrian Vinken</p> <p>Board Members represented the consortium organizations of: ACE English Heritage MLA Sport England SW Screen HERDA-SW/ U-SW SW RDA SW RA Local Authority reps (Bristol)</p> <p>Observer status: GO-SW</p>	<p><i>In Search of Chunky Dunsters</i> (2001) Culture SW</p> <p><i>Joining Up:</i> (2004) CSW [review of 'In Search of Chunky Dunsters' and 2004/06 Action Plan]</p> <p><i>A better place to be</i> (Culture SW, September 2008)</p> <p><i>People, Places and Spaces: a cultural infrastructure development strategy</i> (Culture SW, September 2008)</p> <p><i>Creative Industries (non media) sector strategy</i> (2005) CSW</p> <p><i>Creative Industry Strategy</i> (June 2007) SW RDA</p> <p><i>Creative Britain</i> (DCMS, BERR, February 2008) <u><i>Creative Britain</i></u></p> <p><i>A Passion for Excellence: An improvement strategy for culture and sport</i> (LGA, DCMS, March 2008) <u><i>A Passion for Excellence</i></u></p> <p><i>New Industry, New Jobs</i> (BERR, April 2009) <u><i>New Industry, New Jobs</i></u></p>

## APPENDIX EIGHT

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### EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW INVITATION TEXT

#### INTERVIEW: SW REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

##### An Introduction and Interview Briefing

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###### Introduction

A doctoral study, 'Devolution, Economic Governance and the Creative Industries', is being conducted by Jules Channer of University of Exeter, and is a 3-year applied research project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) that commenced in autumn 2008.

The study explores the processes involved in policy development and implementation at regional and local scales in England, using the example of the 'creative industries'<sup>76</sup> in South West England. With the launch of *Creative Britain* (DCMS and BERR, February 2008) and *Digital Britain* (BIS, DCMS and DCLG, June 2009), Government has placed the creative industries and innovation at the forefront of economic and cultural policy. Taking a directive from *Creative Britain*, of 'making Britain the world's creative hub', the project looks at how such a political goal is translated and delivered by key public funded governance bodies<sup>77</sup> through a series of case studies.

A number of critical 'how' questions are addressed during interviews with policy-makers and decision-makers - how are decisions made about cultural and creative economy policy, and at different geographic levels?; how do governance structures evolve in the dense world of public sector bodies?; and how do these structures and processes inter-connect?. While these questions are approached predominantly from an academic perspective, the researcher is also interested in working with public sector bodies, such as cultural and economic development agencies and local authorities, to help develop a

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<sup>76</sup> 'Creative industries' in this research project align with a definition used by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, that incorporates: advertising, architecture, art and antiques, crafts, design and designer fashion, video film and photography, music and the visual and performing arts, publishing, software computer games and electronic publishing, radio and TV.

<sup>77</sup> Publicly funded bodies, for the purposes of this research project, refer to regional and local organisations that hold devolved responsibilities, from Government Departments, for cultural policy implementation e.g. regional cultural agencies such as Arts Council England, South West Screen, SW RDA and Local Authorities. These organisations play a significant 'state' role in the cultural and economic governance of the creative industries.

better and mutual understanding of the dynamics of creative industry governance, at a time of rapid change.

Jules Channer has over fifteen years of professional experience, working with organisations in the public and private sector, as a senior manager, advisor and cultural researcher. In 2008, she was awarded a Master in Research of Human Geography (MRes with Merit) from University of Exeter, and is now in the second year of PhD research. Bearing in mind the applied nature of the project, her aim is to build on these experiences and produce a thesis that explains the actualities and complexities of state governance in devolutionary Britain, while contributing to wider discourses outside the academy.

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### **Interview scope**

In order to better understand the dynamics of creative industry policy development and implementation, discussion will be framed around the following thematic areas:

- Organisational facts** (a Factual Data Sheet will be sent, in advance, to establish the accuracy of e.g. names, job titles, management structure, key strategy documents)
- Relationships and influences** (a Schematic of Creative Industry Governance Terrain will be sent, in advance, to identify e.g. key stakeholders, internal and external relationships with other public and private sector bodies)
- Governance and delivery model and economic performance** (a wider discussion of the model used to govern and deliver policy, particularly that related to the *Creative Britain* agenda of talent development and creative business support; and to what extent the model is affected by the economic performance of the creative industries)
- Structural changes near and far** (discussion of 'how' **SW RDA** adapts, or not, to changes taking place in other parts of the cultural and economic policy world such as re-structures to regional cultural and economic development agencies, new cultural partnerships, new Government policies)
- SW RDA links to the industry** (using the Schematic of Creative Industry Governance Terrain, discussion of direct and indirect interactions with cultural and creative practitioners)

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### **Interview arrangements**



An interview date, time and venue will be arranged, well in advance (March-June 2010). The interview is expected to take about 1-1½ hours and will be recorded for research purposes only. No individual will be named in the final doctoral thesis and no tape recording will be made available to any individual or organisation outside of the University of Exeter.

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**Contact details**

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Amory Building

University of Exeter

Exeter EX1 4RJ

## APPENDIX NINE

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### LIST OF MAIN ETHNOGRAPHIC AND PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION ENCOUNTERS

1. (12/03/09) CSW, staff informal conversations, Bath
2. (20/03/09) CSW, staff informal conversations; staff meeting; part of board meeting Exeter
3. (16/07/09) SWS ex-board member informal conversation, London
4. (11/09/09) CWS post-closure informal conversation, Exeter
5. (10/12/09) SWS staff informal conversations, Bristol
6. (20/01/10) SWS staff meeting, Bristol
7. (28/01/10) SW CEP meeting; conversations, Exeter
8. (16/02/10) SWS participant observation, i-Net meeting, Bristol
9. (30/03/10) SWS informal conversations, Bristol
10. (24/05/10) SWS staff meeting, Bristol
11. (02/06/10) SWS participant observation, Bristol
12. (02/08/10) SW RDA informal conversations, Bristol
13. (31/08/10) ACE-SW informal conversations, Exeter
14. (18/06/10) SW RDA, informal conversations, Bristol
15. (16/07/10) SWS participant observation, Bristol
16. (21/10/10) SWS board meeting, Bristol
17. (16/03/11) SWS ex-board member informal conversation, Bristol
18. (01/11/11) SWS staff and board meetings, cultural sector event, Bristol

APPENDIX TEN

EXAMPLE OF TEXTUAL ANALYSIS FIELDS (POLICY DOCUMENTS)

Publication Title	Author/ Date	Type	Geographic coverage	Sector coverage	Ref to CI	Ref to CEP	Ref to CE policy	Ref to other policy	Ref to Creative Britain
<i>Creative Britain: new talents for a new economy</i>	DCMS, BERR & DIUS (Feb 08)	Policy/ Strategy	England	CI	all p.6, 10, 13	p6, 13 CEP pilot p24	p6, 13		p6, 13
<i>Creative Industry Strategy</i>	SW RDA (Jun 07)	Strategy	SW Region	CI	p3, 7, 8, 11	SW CEP pilot p14	p2		p2, 8, 22
<i>SW CEP Strategic Framework</i>	SW CEP (Oct 08)	Action Plan	SW Region	CI	p1, 3	SW CEP p1			
<i>New Industry New Jobs</i>	BIS (Jun 09)	Policy	UK	Generic					

### DEFINITIONAL MODELS

Different models were developed to define ‘the creative industries’, starting with Regional Cultural Data Framework (RCDF) that soon became the DCMS Evidence Toolkit (DET). Motivated by a need for statistical data on its departmental activities, DCMS began to examine the concept of ‘cultural industries’ and ‘creative industries’ (DCMS, 1998). The RCDF approach divided cultural activity into seven cultural domains, of which four were singled out in *Creative Industries Mapping Document* (DCMS, 2001) for a ‘creative industries’ grouping. These four were:

- Audio-visual
- Books and Press
- Performance
- Visual Arts and Crafts.

Treated like other industrial activity, each of these broad domains was defined according to a taxonomy of Office for National Statistics (ONS) standard industrial classification (SIC) codes and standard occupational classification (SOC) codes.<sup>78</sup> Basically, ONS assigns codes to different types of business (SIC) and occupation (SOC) and then adds digits to indicate greater levels of detail. For example, the 2001 DET methodology used 4-digit level SIC coding to interrogate Audio-visual domain’s industrial categories (or sub-sectors) of: Film and Video, Radio and Television, Advertising and Music.<sup>79</sup> Later 5-digit coding enabled DCMS (2010) to exclude non-creative activities. Data under each sub-sector is then aggregated together to provide economic counts or ‘values’ of, for example, the number of businesses, number of people employed, and Gross Value Added (GVA).<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> The UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities (SIC) classifies businesses by the type of activity they engage in. For further details of technical application and a new SIC coding system introduced in 2007, see DCMS (2011) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website at <<http://www.ons.org.uk>>.

<sup>79</sup> For example, under the 4-digit DET industrial category of Film and Video, the standard industrial classification (SIC) codes include: 92.11 motion picture and video production; 92.12 motion picture and video distribution; and 92.13 motion picture projection.

<sup>80</sup> Value refers to economic value added or the rate of return on investment. According to DCMS’ technical report (2011), Gross Value Added (GVA) ‘represents the amount that individual businesses, industries or sectors contribute to the economy. Broadly, this is

A DET definition of 'the creative industries' reads from the 2001 mapping document:

*those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property* (DCMS, 2001: 5 original italics).

Thirteen industrial categories were identified: advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio.

Since 2002, DCMS has published an annual *Creative Industries Economic Estimates Bulletin* that acts as the departmental evidence base for reporting to HM Treasury. Each one contains caveats about refinements and variations to the previous year's DET method and statistics. In 2006, DCMS asserted:

The bulletin presents the latest statistics on the state of the creative industries in the United Kingdom and reflects on how to provide more timely and consistent data on the sector in the future (DCMS, 2006c: 1).

However, the 2009 edition warned:

The classifications used by international convention for official statistics do not reflect the structure of the Creative Industries and as such it is difficult to capture the extent of activity. Due to these constraints the figures throughout the bulletin estimates and are not classed as National Statistics (DCMS, 2009: 1).

By 2010, DCMS presented the data as 'experimental statistics' because of the introduction of a revised SIC coding system (SIC07). The bulletin notes:

These estimates are a snapshot of the Creative Industries using the most recent data available, and should not be compared with previous estimates due to the change of Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes used. Please see the technical note for full details of this change. The new SIC codes used to produce these estimates represent a first attempt at doing so, and are likely to be updated at a later date (DCMS, 2010: 3).

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measured by the income generated by the business, industry or sector less their intermediate consumption of goods and services used up in order to produce their output'.

DCMS' quantification and definition methods should be understood as time-specific as too are the names of sub-sectoral categories. Since the original 'DCMS 13' in 2001, annual bulletins have regularly re-grouped and re-named categories. These changes lead to dramatic year-on-year differences in the figures (DCMS, 2010, 2011) and can be seen in a comparison of economic values estimated for 2010 and 2011 (see Table 3 below for a comparative analysis).

**Table 3: Comparison of economic counts (2010 and 2011) for 'the creative industries'**

Economic Value	Year	
	2010	2011
Contribution of GVA to UK economy (Annual Business Survey 2008 & 2009)	5.6%	2.89%
Employment (Labour Force Survey 2010 & 2011)	2.3 million (including 1.3 million jobs in creative industries plus just under 1 million creative jobs in other industries)	1.5 million (including jobs in creative and other industries)
Number of businesses (Inter-Departmental Business Register 2010 & 2011)	182,100 (8.7% of all UK enterprises)	106,700 (5.13% of all UK enterprises)

Source: DCMS (2010) and DCMS (2011) *Creative Industries Economic Estimates*, DCMS, London.

The lower counts for 2011 are explained in the Technical Report that mentions a radical revision of codes and the exclusion of irrelevant codes in Software and Electronic Publishing. In consultation with sector specialists such as Nesta and the Sector Skills Councils (DCMS, 2011: 7), a more refined definition was introduced but with an acknowledgement of anomalies.

RCDF and DET mapping studies were lauded as the 'first ever' (DCMS, 2001:

2) attempts to define the boundaries of a new policy area and measure a discrete set of cultural activities. From the outset, the methodology and statistical outputs were controversial and much criticised (Pratt, 2006; Roodhouse, 2006; Selwood, 2002). There was widespread antipathy to, and confusion about, the notion of ‘culture’ as an industrial activity that could be categorised and quantified. Unhelpfully, DCMS’ goal of a unified industrial territory was belied by its own idiosyncratic ministerial title of ‘culture, media and sport’. But while RCDF was replaced by DET, the principles of a taxonomic approach to ‘the creative industries’ were widely adopted by state bodies and commentators and, with revisions, are still applied today (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a).

Different chain models have, of course, implications for how ‘the creative industries’ is perceived by politicians and state bodies. Witness for example, The Work Foundation’s report, *Staying ahead: new talents for a new economy* (2007) that was written by Will Hutton (now Lord Hutton) and commissioned by DCMS. In spite of Frontier Economics’ in-depth analytical work for the Creative Economy Programme, Hutton’s ‘creative hub’ model provided the main evidence for *Creative Britain* (and its cover page design). It is not clear why The Work Foundation’s report was commissioned when Frontier Economics had already undertaken extensive analysis for the Creative Economy Programme. A DCMS official observed

*With the ‘Creative Britain’ they brought in Will Hutton to do the knowledge economy kind of stuff and [ ] ... the analysis just kind of goes out the window and it’s all rhetoric, but written more persuasively by Will Hutton than it is by a minister or by a civil servant; because it’s an outside person who’s got a sort of reputation and therefore it’s a promotion kind of thing (M012).*

As trusted policy advisor to DCMS, Hutton seems to have provided Government with the required persuasive cultural-economic agenda.

In the Foreword to *Staying ahead*, Tessa Jowell, then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport commented:

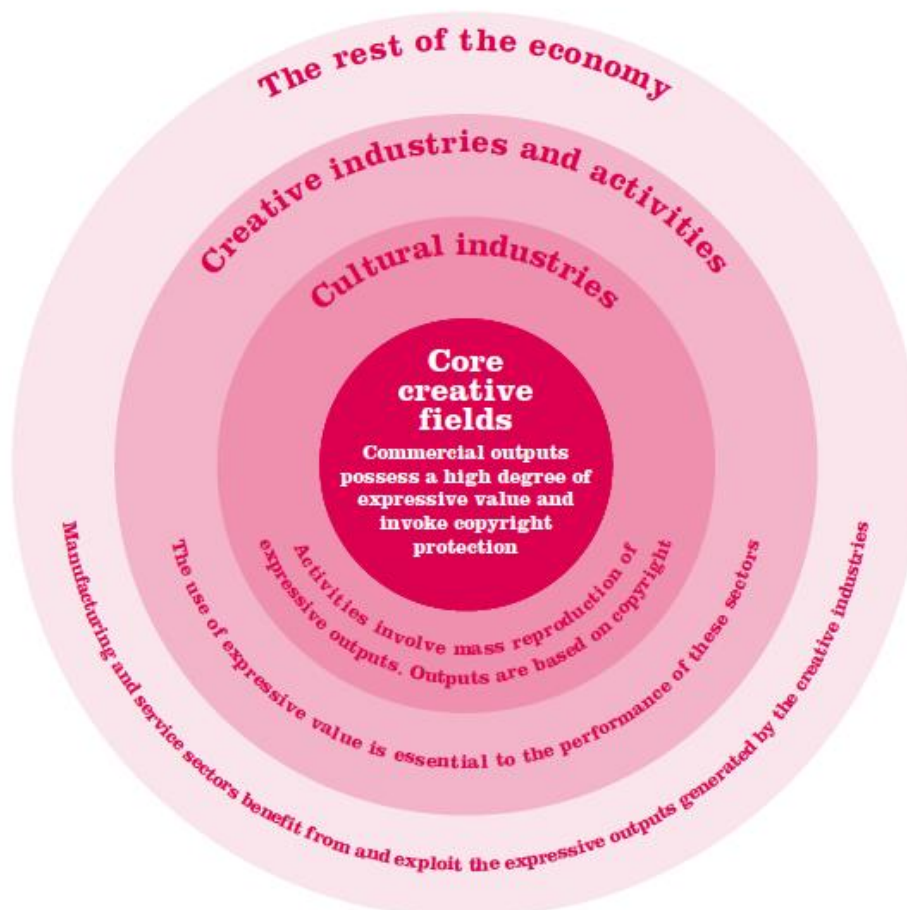
For too long discussion about cultural and artistic activity has been dominated by arguments about how much funding the Government makes available to cultural institutions.

The Work Foundation analysis firmly endorses the value of public investment, but widens the scope to embrace the vital role of education,

skills, diversity, networks, cultural investment and public institutions, access to finance, business skills, the intellectual property framework, access to market, regulation, competition and crucially the collection of evidence and data (The Work Foundation, 2007: 7).

**Figure 12: To show The Work Foundation's concentric circle model**

**The creative industries**  
A stylised typology



Source: The Work Foundation (2007: 4) *Staying ahead*, DCMS, London.

It is also worth noting that The Work Foundation's report also provided higher values than that of Frontier Economics, including a figure of 1.8 million employed in 'the creative industries' (2007). This figure combined a count of 1 million employed in core 'creative industries' plus 800,000 employed in 'other'



creative jobs. By the time *Creative Britain* was published in February 2008, the figure had been rounded up to 2 million (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 6).

At the centre of The Work Foundation's concentric *doughnut* model (see Figure 12) of a 'creative hub' are originators of 'expressive value' or creative content. They are surrounded by those who commercialise the content (traditional and non-traditional) and further away, those who functionalise those products. An example of progression within this model is that of a song: from its origination by composer, through its commercialisation by performers, to distribution and sale as a CD or DVD. As O'Connor notes:

The concentric circles do not construct a hierarchy based on pure and applied art – with the historic baggage of 'value' this carries – but simply range products along a continuum of expressive and functional value (O'Connor, 2007: 49).

The perceived advantage of a concentric modelling approach was its ability to separate creative content production from non-creative activity that did not belong in 'the creative industries'.

O'Connor (2007) argues that The Work Foundation's concentric model, by merging cultural activities and creativity in ever more distant circles from the core, side-steps the whole question of "what do we mean by 'the creative industries'?" in favour of a new way of looking at a creative sector – that is, a 'creative economy'. The significance of this modelling trend in the late 2000s was not lost on *Creative Britain's* inter-departmental authors who chose to use The Work Foundation's 'creative hub' type model and higher employment figure of 'two million' people. Such an imaginary also articulated the connection between cultural value and the all-important economic value dimension.

Another definitional model that warrants a brief mention is the market-based chain model proposed by Potts *et al* (2008) at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Australia. Instead of DET's thirteen distinct sub-sectors, Potts *et al* conceptualise a mesh of social networks and markets in which producers and consumers are inter-connected and inter-dependent. It built on Frontier Economics work and introduced the notion of assemblages and actors. Of all the models examined, it is closest in analytical terms to a Complex

Adaptive System. However, the approach is ultimately quantitative and motivated by a search for a workable taxonomy for policy-makers. Like other chain models, a market-based one merely replaces a DET-type classification methodology with another classification one in order to separate out the high value producers (and products) from the low (and economically unimportant) ones.

Whatever the basis of definition and measurement, chain models have not fundamentally resolve DET's definitional problems. If anything, their methodologies further undermine the empirical validity of 'the creative industries' as a measurable and bounded object. A major weakness of the chain approach (whether based on circles or supply chains or market systems) is the visualising 'the creative industries' as the combination of a core set of SIC-defined categories and values plus never-ending layers/circles of peripheral 'others'. It is arguable that the sheer difficulty of obtaining statistical accuracy has encouraged state bodies to move towards the idea of a 'creative economy'.

A Nesta policy briefing was published to coincide with *Creative Britain* and urged:

the UK should start to think in terms of a "creative economy" rather than a set of 'creative industries' (Nesta, 2008: 1).

Nesta's research, that was so influential to DCMS (BOP Consulting, 2007a; Higgs and Cunningham, 2008; Mahroun, 2007), has moved conceptualisation from the old DET domain-based model and set of SIC categories to unexplored spaces of creative 'intensities' (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013a) and a re-evaluation of DCMS' DET methodology.

For example, Frontier Economics noted in an *Evidence and Analysis Report* to DCMS:

While it is useful to understand the importance in economic terms of these [sub] sectors it is only one piece of information that helps provide Government with a picture of the creative industries (DCMS, 2006b: 8)

Rather than discrete sector blocks, Frontier Economics found:

strong spaces of cultural consumption, connecting spaces of production towards highly networked, high energy creative clusters where processes of

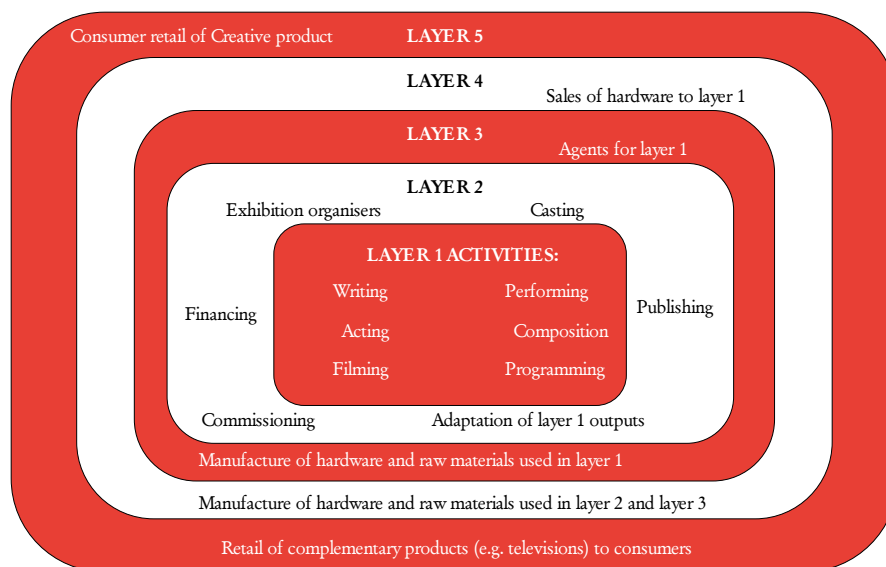
cultural consumption are symbiotic with processes of cultural production (*ibid*, page 8).

Consumption is the key word here and introduces a new dimension to definitional thinking.

On the one hand, the core+ calculations used in chain models helped to generate higher economic counts for ‘the creative industries’ (as mentioned earlier). They also opened up new governance spaces for state bodies to occupy. After a decade of economisation of cultural activities (traditional and non-traditional) and adoption of ‘the creative industries’ as a policy object, chain models extended, by definition, the reach of DCMS’ sponsored NDPBs into semi-cultural industrial areas. Furthermore, the old cultural policy area of audience development was reinterpreted as consumption of cultural/creative content and covered children, adults and those in foreign markets. The strategy set out in *Creative Britain* epitomises this drive for an ever widening and multi-dimensional ‘creative economy’ of cultural production and consumption.

**Figure 13: To show Frontier Economics' supply chain model**

A generic supply chain for the creative industries



30 Frontier Economics | 28 November 2008

Source: Frontier Economics (unpublished 2006), powerpoint presentation to South West Creative Economy Partnership, Exeter.

An influential chain model in the evolution of ‘the creative industries’ was developed by Frontier Economics (2007), whose ‘supply chain’ model (see

Figure 13) was commissioned jointly by DCMS under its Creative Economy Programme. Again, using the same data sources as those used for DET and a 'value chain' model, Frontier Economics visualised 'the creative industries' and production process as layers of supply chain businesses, emanating outwards from a layer of core creative content activities (Layer 1). A more detailed interrogation of SIC codes was undertaken than that of a DET method, in order to place businesses accurately along the supply chain axis from core to peripheral (down to 5-digit SIC codes, unlike DET's less detailed 4-digit code level).

Frontier Economics' conceptualisation, known to government officials as "*the dartboard model*" (M011), promoted a narrower and overtly non-cultural definition of 'the creative industries' – and hence generated lower economic counts.<sup>1</sup>

Frontier Economics was the first to introduce the idea of creative workers in 'non-creative' industries and the 'spill over' effects of creative production into other industries. At the outer Layer 5, for example, consumer retail outlets and hardware manufacturers of creative products are counted on the periphery of a supply chain but are not counted within the core 'creative industries'. Frontier Economics' data were used to construct a map in *Creative Britain* (DCMS *et al*, 2008: 70) to show the location of 'regional creative business clusters' (and reproduced in Figure 3 in Chapter 3). However, DCMS did not choose to use Frontier Economics' employment figure of 728,000 for 'the creative industries'

### GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM IN ENGLAND AND SOUTH WEST

For readers interested in a more detailed view of the political system of England and South West region during Labour administrations 1997-2010, a brief summary is given below.

#### Politics

In terms of scales of government and governance in England, there are different layers of political life. Members of Parliament (MP) and Members of the European Parliament (MEP) are elected by registered voters in defined constituencies to act as their representatives. For example, of 51 UK Parliamentary constituencies in the South West (as of May 2005 General Election), 22 Conservative MPs, 13 Labour MPs and 16 Liberal Democrat MPs were elected.<sup>81</sup> In 1999, seven MEPs represented South West constituencies – four Conservatives and one each from Labour, Liberal Democrat and UK Independent parties. However, boundary changes were constantly made by central Government to constituency areas and by 2010, there were 56 UK Parliamentary constituencies and six European Parliamentary constituencies.<sup>82</sup>

At local government level, a two-tier structure of councils is divided between 'upper' tier (unitary authorities and counties) and lower tier (districts and borough councils that are responsible to a county). According to *State of the South West 2009* (South West Observatory, 2010), as of January 2009 there were 51 local councils in the South West, made up of 10 unitary authorities, and 6 county councils in which there were 35 district and borough councils (see Figure 14 below). However, central Government approval of unitary authority status to Cornwall and Wiltshire soon changed this map and as of 1 April 2009,

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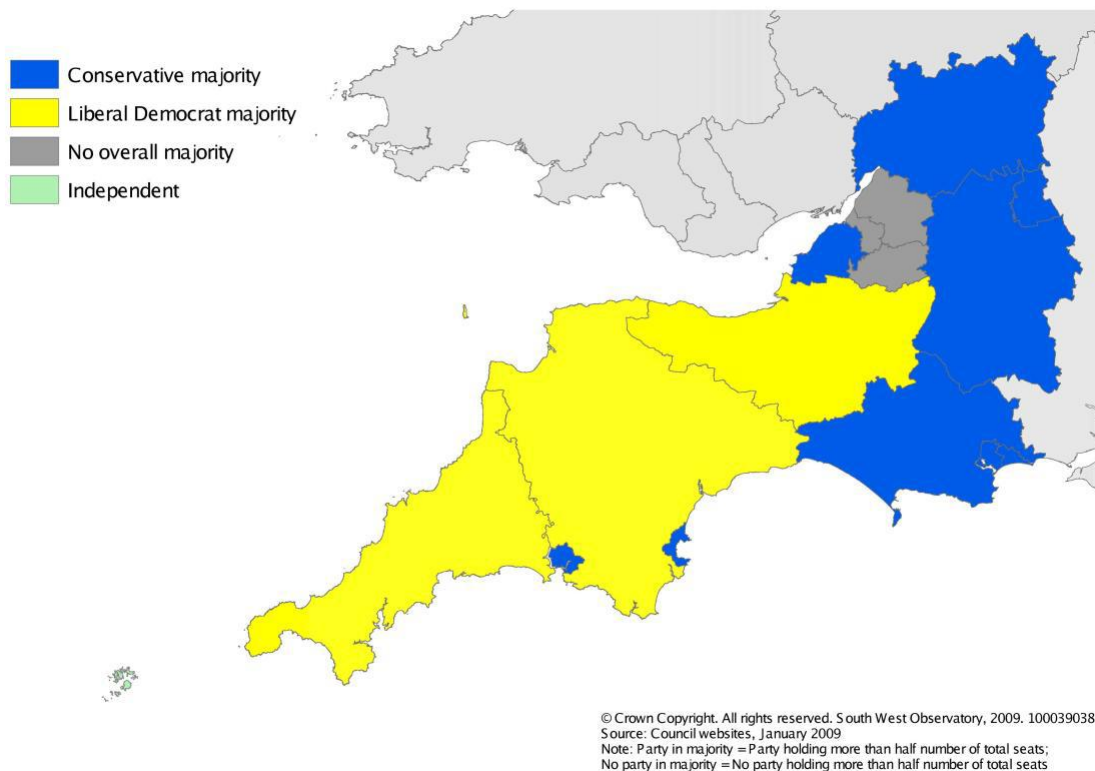
<sup>81</sup> In recent UK General Elections (1997-2010), Liberal Democrat support was stronger in the far south west, and Labour support concentrated in urban areas such as Bristol and Plymouth but rarely in rural seats.

<sup>82</sup> In the General Election of May 2010, voting across the South West returned 35 Conservative MPs (compared to 22 at 2005 General Election), four Labour MPs (13 at 2005) and 15 Liberal Democrat MPs (16 at 2005). Of MEPs returned in June 2009 elections, three Conservative MEPs (compared to two in 2002), two UK Independent MEPs (compared to one in 2002) and one Liberal Democrat MEP (compared to one in 2002).

there were 12 unitary authorities and four county councils in the 'upper' tier and 25 district and borough councils in the lower tier.

Local councils receive funding from DCLG as well as local taxes, and are responsible for implementing certain aspects of national government policy, local public services and some national programmes. Under Labour, performance was assessed against a Public Service Agreement (PSA) with DCLG and each local council was required to have a Local Area Agreement that was scrutinised by a regional Government Office (in this instance, GO-SW). Public services include: education, transport, highways, waste collection and disposal, housing and planning applications, social welfare, leisure and recreational services, public libraries, fire services and local tax collection. Most cultural services are non-statutory with the notable exception of library services. Under Labour, local councils were required to work with statutory agencies to maximise resources and deliver their public service targets but there was little legal obligation to do so.

**Figure 14: To show county councils and unitary authorities in South West England and political majorities (as of January 2009)**



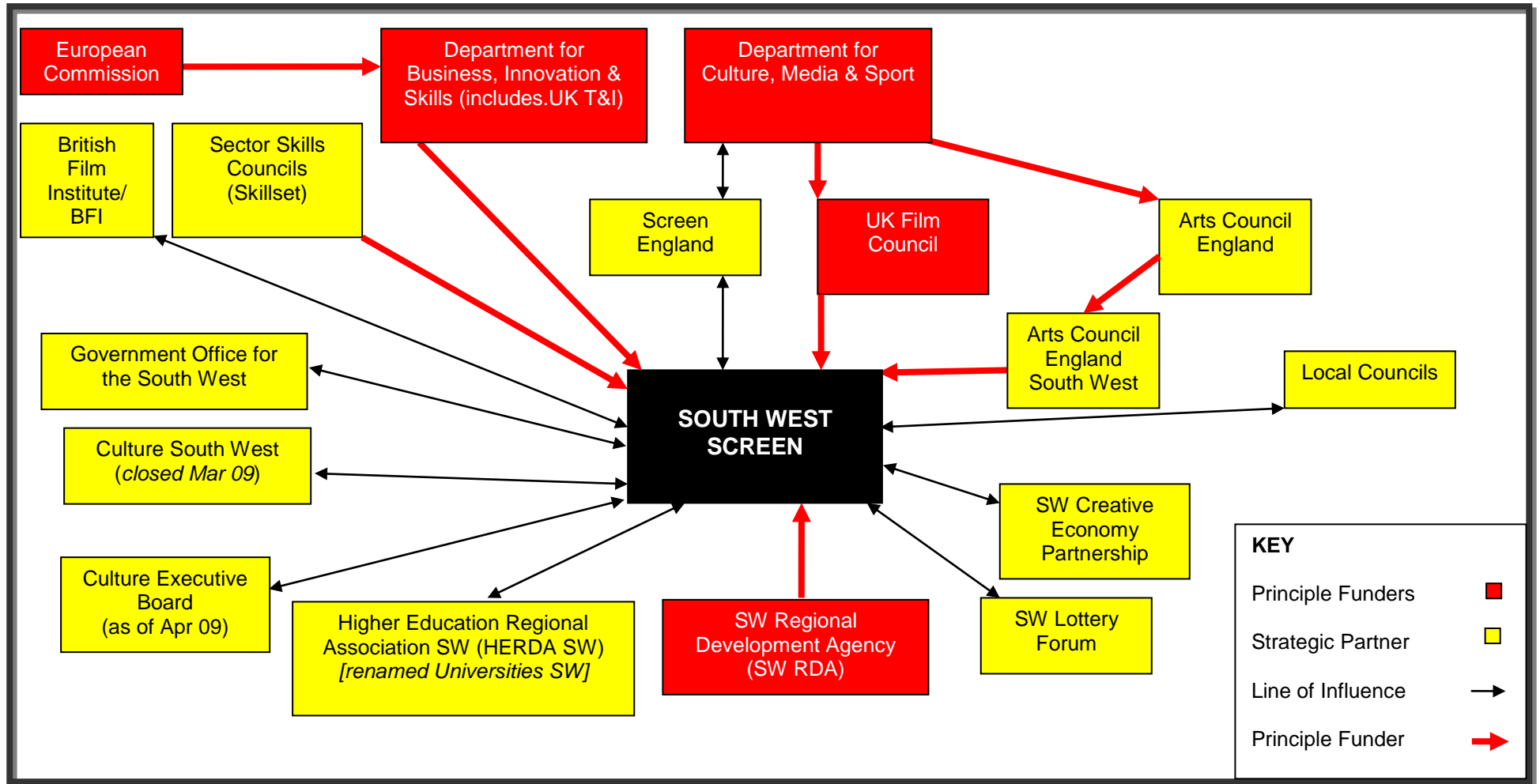
Source: South West Observatory (2011) *State of the South West*, online, accessed 30 April 2011, <<http://www.swo.org.uk>>.

Parish and town councils are the most local form of public-funded governance, elected to represent and serve the needs of their immediate community. With approximately 2,000 located in the South West, these small-scale bodies vary considerably in size but the majority represent populations of less than 2,500. As part of Labour's localisation policy for 'people power' and electoral reforms, the 2006 Local Government White Paper introduced proposals to improve the capacity and increase the number of parish and town councils, and encourage elected mayors.

Towards the end of Labour's rule, a *Governance of Britain* programme introduced new governance structures. Notably, regional ministers were appointed (but not in London), and in November 2008 Parliament voted for Regional Select Committees in eight English regions to mirror those in the House of Commons. For the South West, the first and only regional minister was Ben Bradshaw MP for Exeter. Only a few meetings of the Regional Select Committee were held in the South West to hear public evidence before dissolution in May 2010. Interestingly, its last hearing was on 'the creative Industries' but evidence and report were never published.

APPENDIX THIRTEEN

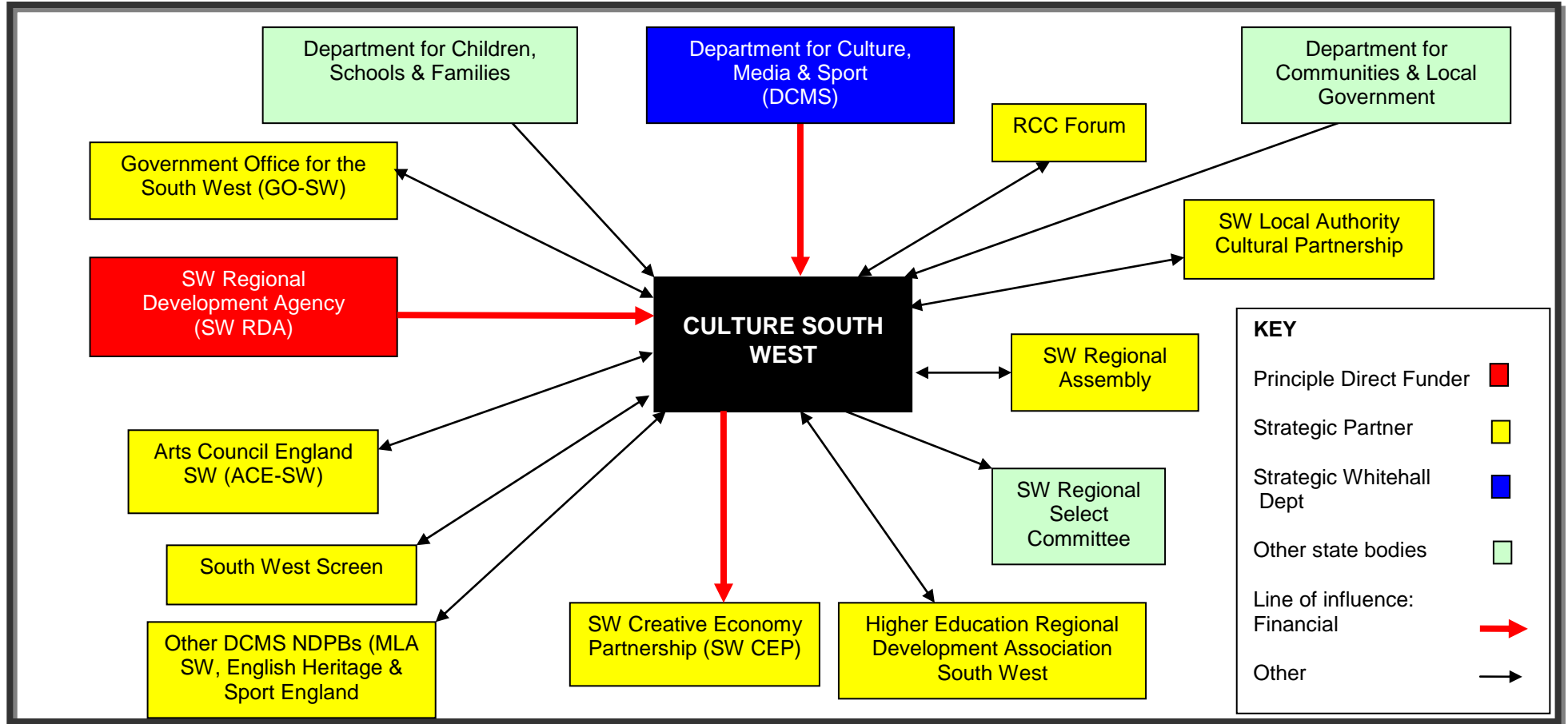
SCHMATIC OF SOUTH WEST SCREEN GOVERNANCE TERRAIN



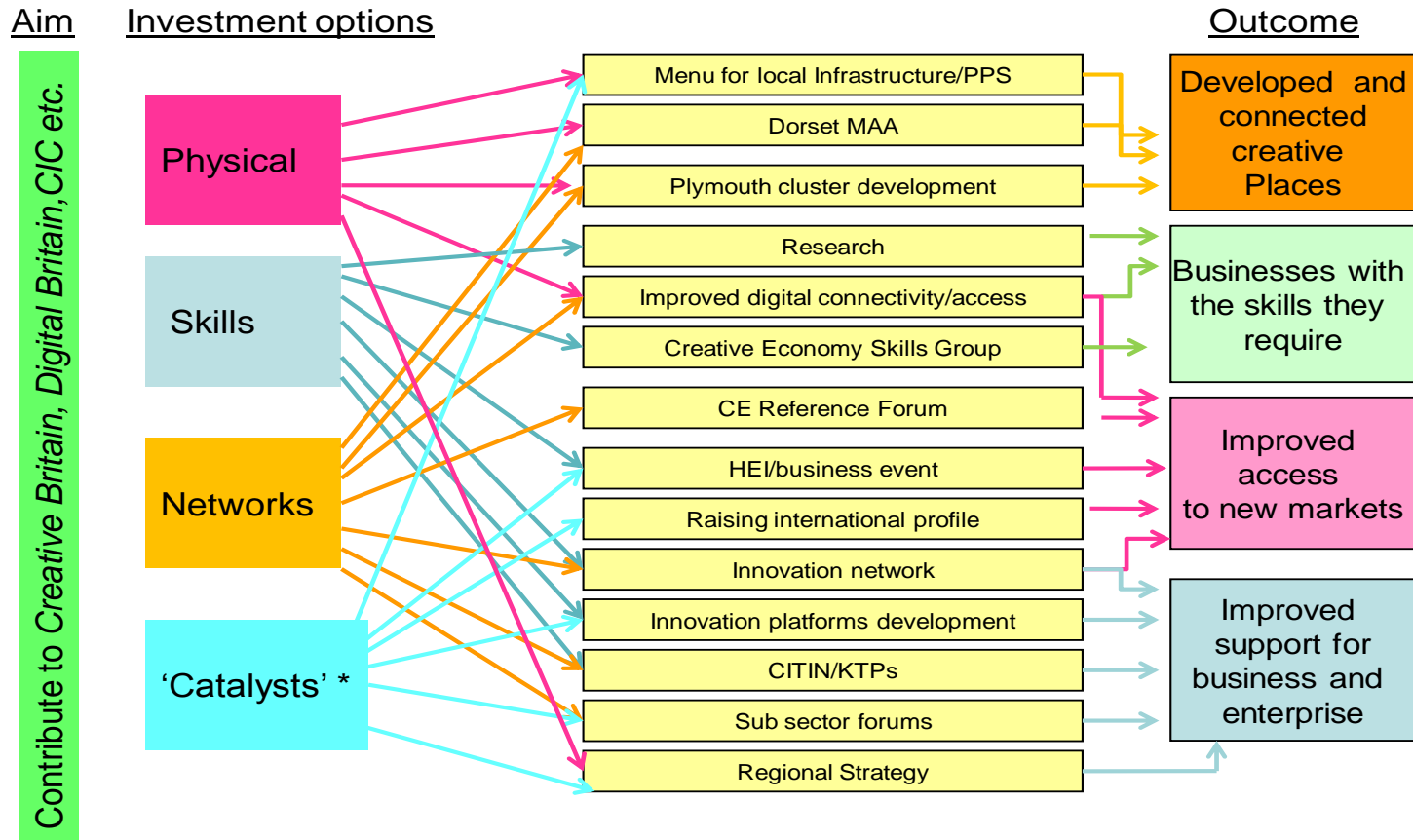


APPENDIX FOURTEEN

SCHMATIC OF CULTURE SOUTH WEST GOVERNANCE TERRAIN



## SW Framework Strategy 2009



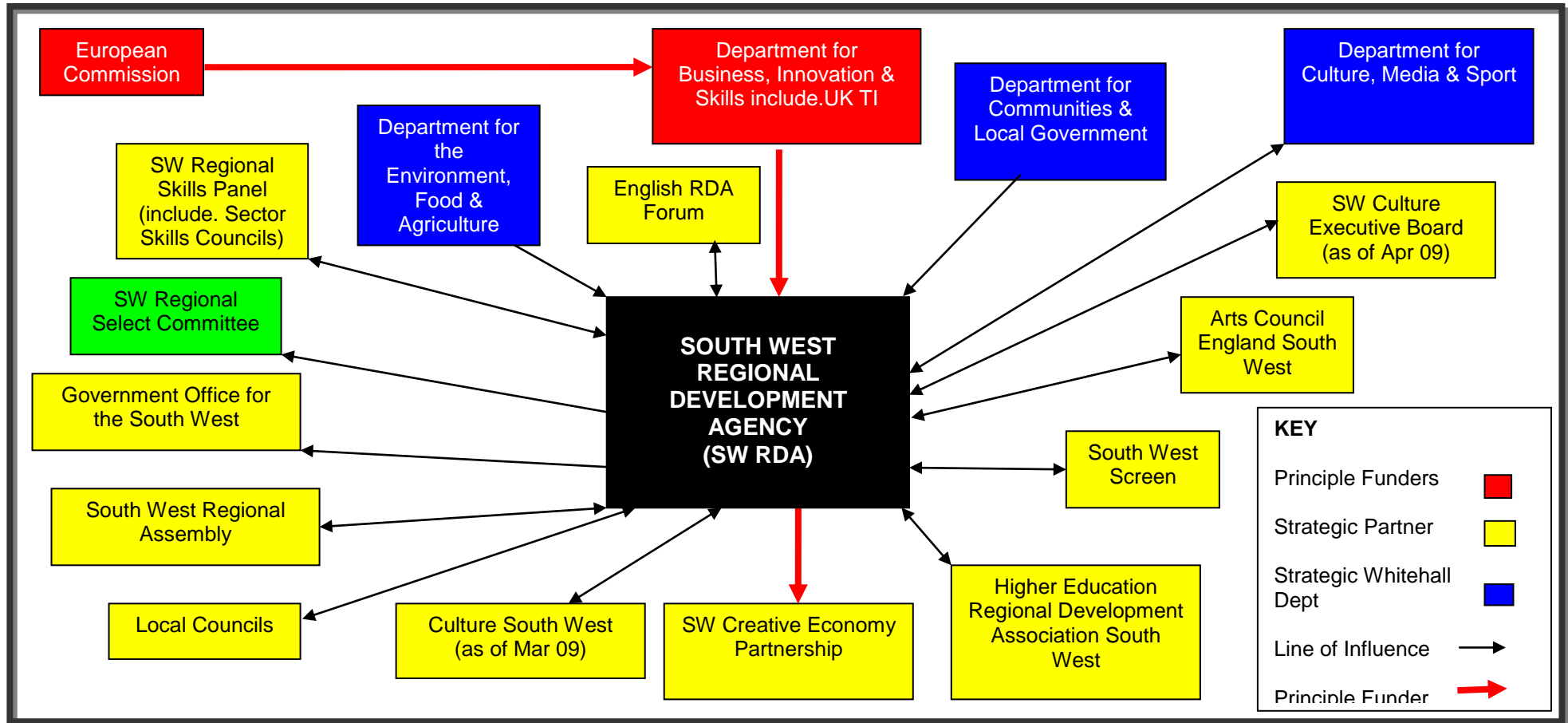
APPENDIX SIXTEEN

SOUTH WEST CREATIVE ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP TIMELINE

2007			2008			2009			2010	
March	April	June	February	May	September	March	April	May	January	February
<i>Creative Industry Collaborations</i> submitted by BOP Consulting with proposal for SW CEP	SW CEP Terms of Reference agreed & commenced meetings	<i>Creative industries strategy for South West England</i> published by SW RDA with proposal for SW CEP	<i>Creative Britain</i> published by DCMS with SW named as pilot site	SW CEP manager appointed & based at Culture SW	SW CEP formally convened	Culture SW closed; SW CEP manager returned to ACE-SW	Culture Executive Board assigned responsibility for 'creative economy' policy delivery to ACE-SW	<i>South West Creative Economy Framework Strategy</i> submitted to DCMS; SW CEP commissioned J3S consultants	SW CEP closed; SW Screen take responsibility for J3S report & set up i-Net	<i>Nubs and Networks</i> report submitted by J3S; SW CEP ex-manager made redundant from ACE-SW

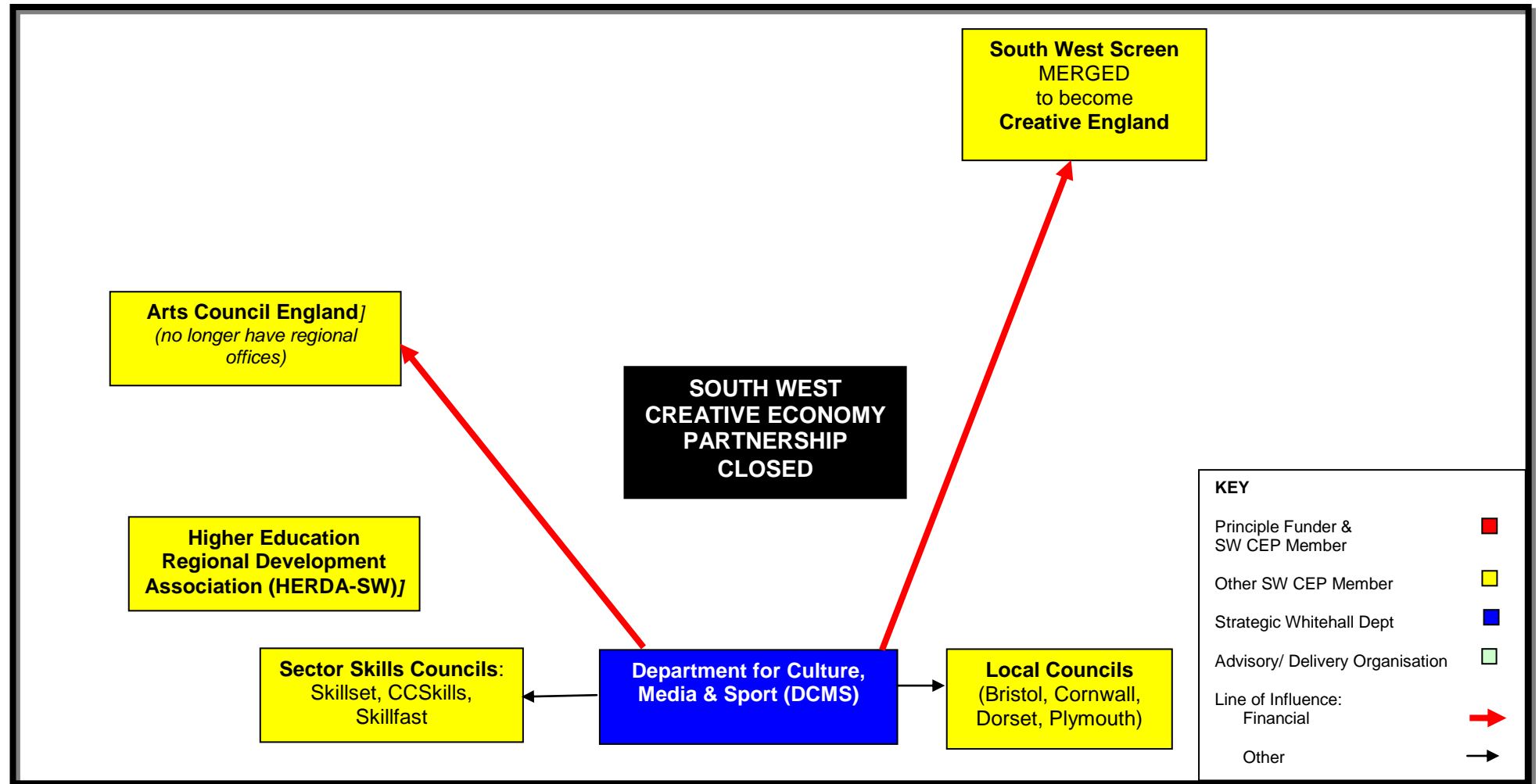
APPENDIX SEVENTEEN

SCHMATIC OF SOUTH WEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY GOVERNANCE TERRAIN FOR 'THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES'



APPENDIX EIGHTEEN

REVISED SCHEMATIC OF SOUTH WEST CREATIVE ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE TERRAIN (AS OF MARCH 2013)



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