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# **Crossing cultural borders?**

**Migrants and ethnic diversity in the  
cultural industries.**

**by Amanda Brandellero**

**Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan and International Development Studies  
University of Amsterdam**



European Cultural Foundation



Riksbankens  
Jubileumsfond

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# Foreword

The Cultural Policy Research Award (CPRA) was created to encourage much needed research in the cultural policy field, support a younger generation of cultural policy interested professionals, and develop a network of scholars to engage in European research cooperation.

Launched as a joint venture of the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) in Amsterdam and the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, a research foundation in Stockholm, the CPRA was conceived to make a meaningful contribution to the discipline of cultural policy research. The two foundations have worked closely to shape this initiative, supported by the expertise of a European jury of researchers and policy experts.

Both foundations felt strongly the need to strengthen the base of qualified persons to carry out research not only in the arts but on cross-cultural matters and with a strong cultural policy dimension. Hence, the CPRA encourages research that has an applied and comparative dimension in order to stimulate debate and inform cultural policymaking within a European perspective.

Based on an annual European-wide competition, the CPRA jury selects a cultural policy research proposal to be carried out by the award-winning candidate within one year. The selection is based on already achieved research accomplishments of the candidate, on the relevance and quality of the submitted research proposal, as well as their curriculum vitae.

The target group is young researchers, scholars, or policy makers (under the age of 35) from all European countries. Candidates must be educated to M.A. level in social sciences, art and humanities, or public policy research. The selected applicant is awarded the prize and a grant of Euro 10.000 at the occasion of an international cultural policy related conference.

In 2007, the CPRA went to Amanda Brandellero, an English-Italian PhD researcher at the Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan and International Development Studies (University of Amsterdam), for her research paper *Crossing cultural borders? Migrants and ethnic diversity in the cultural industries*. Amanda has accomplished an in depth theoretical study applying a specific interdisciplinary approach, and an inspiring empirical study on migrant entrepreneurship in the cultural industries in three European cities - Paris, London and Amsterdam.

By portraying the 'ethnicity' of the creative entrepreneurs in the areas of music, fashion and architecture, the author reveals important intercultural processes that (pre)determine the birth of creative production. This knowledge may result in fine tuning of the respective policy attitudes and instruments.

We express our thanks to the CPRA Jury members and its chair, Prof. Dr. Milena Dragicevic-Sesic (University of Arts - Belgrade), for their full-fledged contribution to the CPRA without which this endeavor would not have been possible. We wish to thank the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond for partnering with ECF on this initiative which invests in the young cultural policy research potential.

Isabelle Schwarz

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# Acknowledgements

This research project would not have been possible without the support of the European Cultural Policy Research Award 2007, to which I am truly indebted. I would like to express my full gratitude to the members of the Jury who believed in my research proposal and I hope this report will justify your faith in me.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Professor Robert Kloosterman, for his comments on an earlier draft, as well as the participants to the Regional Studies Association Creative Regions Research Network workshop Creative industries, scenes, cities, places: idiosyncratic dimensions of the cultural economy, which took place in Cardiff in April 2009 and participants of the IMISCOE workshop 'Matching Context and Capacity: The Economic Integration of Immigrants' in Florence June 2009. Finally, I would like to thank Caroline Rainger for her help with proofreading, and Caroline and Sara for their support during fieldwork.

*I dedicate this report to Marcel.*



# Prologue

*'The creative cities were nearly all cosmopolitan; they drew talent from the four corners of their worlds, and from the very start those worlds were often surprisingly far-flung. Probably, no city has ever been creative without continued renewal of the creative bloodstream'.*

(Hall 1998, p.285)

Culture is a widely used, yet often vaguely defined term. In its ever-changing nature, it weaves together the past, the present and the future, involving a constant negotiation of the world as we know and experience it, both habitually and creatively (Williams and Gable 1989; Karner 2007). Thus, culture is by nature diverse and dynamic, both in its actual 'content' and in the discourses and representations that are developed around it. Reflecting this dynamism, conceptualisations of culture have also evolved, spanning from a perspective paralleling culture and the arts, and reaching a more contemporary reading, particularly in the light of processes of globalisation, where culture has come to encompass the 'distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs' (UNESCO 2007). This element of distinctiveness signals that diversity matters when conceptualising and experiencing culture: yet this diversity can be contested, recognised, legitimised or not, as the case may be.

Diversity in culture may take various forms: it can for instance relate to beliefs or practices in some areas of life (sub-cultural diversity), to societal principles and values sets (perspectival diversity), to different, often community linked, systems of beliefs and practices (communal diversity) (Parekh 2002). Defining culture thus entails an exploration of identity, its representation and recognition, but also an understanding of the systems organising our individual and collective lives. In addition, a more dynamic perspective is needed, understanding culture as a process, and recognising that the boundaries between cultures are porous rather than fixed.

The focus of this work is on how ethnic diversity is experienced in cultural production: more specifically, how ethnic diversity matters in the production and consumption of cultural industry goods. This question becomes extremely pressing and relevant, raising questions about the representations of the world these products put forward, how these representations are shaped and by whom.

# 1.

## Introduction

The concept of the 'stranger', the 'outsider', or the 'marginal man' is one that has fascinated sociologists, economists and geographers alike. Migrants have indeed long been portrayed as key actors of innovation and thriving cultural activities, as a look at the history of cultures and civilizations at the height of their vibrancy has highlighted (see Hall 1998). Migrants are perceived as being 'a cultural hybrid', 'living and sharing intimately in the cultural life and traditions of two different people; never quite willing to break, even if he were permitted to do so, with his past and his traditions, and not quite accepted [...] in the new society in which he now sought to find a place' (Park 1928, p.892). Articulating the concept further, it 'is in the mind of the marginal man - where the changes and fusions of culture are going on - that we can best study the processes of civilization and of progress' (Stonequist 1935, P.12)

The link between the outsider status and cultural diversity is also one often made, highlighting the creative tensions and innovative potential of the 'different' (Schumpeter 1934; Park 1950; Simmel 1950; Hall 1998). More recently, some observers have gone so far as to argue that cultural diversity linked to ethnic diversity is 'a source of potential competitiveness, because of the positive relationships between diversity, creativity and innovation' (Smallbone, Bertotti et al. 2005, p.41). More generally speaking, by being at the intersection between the local and the global, as a result of their multiple spatial and ethnic ties, contemporary migrants are seen as important contributors to strengthening the competitive advantage of advanced urban economies (Henry, McEwan et al. 2002; Saxenian 2002; Saxenian 2007).



*Figure 1 - Maame Baryeh collection, London. PHOTO BY JORDAN MATYKA.*

At the beginning of the nineties, as the study of the 'cultural economy' binary started to gain momentum, concerns were voiced over the participation of disadvantaged ethnic and racial communities in public and cultural life<sup>1</sup> (Bianchini 1994). To date, the extent to which migrants are contributing to cultural activities from an economic perspective, and the dynamics through which they do so, in the context of the widening research on cultural industries as relatively new sectors of activity, remains largely unexplored. Yet diversity, be it in all its forms, is increasingly considered as a living and renewable treasure, stimulating the capacity for expression, creation and innovation (UNESCO 2001).

This research focuses on the extent to which cultural industries provide opportunities to express the diversity of local populations, drawing on the creative sparks and inputs of the variety of cultures which contemporary societies bring together. 'Ethnic' in this context is used 'primarily in contexts of cultural difference, where cultural difference is associated above all with an actual or commonly perceived shared ancestry, with language markers and with national or regional origin' (Fenton 1999, p.4)<sup>2</sup>. By combining three strands of thought, notably literature on cultural industries, ethnicity and culture, and migrant entrepreneurship, we aim to shed light on the dynamic interaction between the cultural industries' typically localised production processes and the global reach of the cultural identities and references on which migrants can draw. We explore this from three perspectives:

1. *The extent to which ethnic diversity is activated as symbolic and aesthetic fuel to drive innovation in processes of commodification of culture.* Here we zoom into the cultural industries creative and production processes, and explore the conditions under which ethnicity can become the object of commodification, as a conscious/unconscious, strategic or spontaneous source of creative inspiration.
2. *The dynamics through which the mediation of tastes and trends within the cultural industries comes to shape the boundaries between ethnic/non-ethnic cultural products.* Previously 'niche' products linked to ethnic communities' production and consumption patterns become part of the mainstream, while others remain within the confines of group boundaries.
3. *An exploration of how ethnic diversity matters in the cultural industries.* Here we explore the conditions under which ethnicity matters in cultural industries, from the perspective of the creative workers and their products, as an advantage or disadvantage. Caution is due: often diversity is offered as an independent variable in explaining why certain things happen, but we should be careful to ensure that this is not an explanation of events post-facto.

**Table 1 - Research questions**

We posit that various actors and institutions (artists, producers, gatekeepers, consumers, loci of production and consumption) interact to produce a complex but also dynamic ecological system within which migrants participate in the cultural industries (Becker 1982). Drawing on material gathered from in-depth interviews with creative workers in three cultural industry sectors, we will zoom into the 'creative field' within which processes of migrant economic incorporation in the cultural industries take place, looking at the interdependencies between space, commodification of culture and the actors that influence this (Bourdieu 1979; Scott 2006).

Firstly, we will gather key insights into the functioning of cultural industries and their evolution into one of the mainstays of contemporary urban economies. Secondly, we will explore the question of ethnic diversity and culture, taking the perspective of creative workers as 'entrepreneurs of culture', drawing on a variety of inputs and inspirations, be they ethnically specific or not. Thirdly, we will combine these insights to develop a dynamic framework of analysis of the participation of creative workers from diverse ethnic backgrounds in the cultural industries, exploring opportunities and barriers to their trajectories.

## Structure of the report

In order to explore these issues, we first set the scene by examining the theoretical notions and debates around cultural industries. This will allow us to highlight the complex ecosystem of actors contributing to the transformation of creative ideas into cultural-industry products. We then introduce a discussion on the cultural industries' opportunity structure. Here we will develop some key elements for understanding the dynamics governing access and trajectories within cultural industries, which individuals (migrant or non-migrant) negotiate. Given our focus on ethnic diversity, we will zoom into the relationship between culture and ethnicity, drawing up conceptual pointers for our analysis of how ethnicity matters in cultural industries' production. Weaving these theoretical elements together, we will develop a framework for exploring the articulation of ethnicity in cultural industries' production. Finally, an empirical part drawing on semi-structured interviews with cultural producers from three sectors (architecture, fashion and music) will be presented, allowing us to respond to the set research questions and draw policy conclusions and recommendations, in addition to directions for further investigation.

## Methodology

This research strives to fill an analytical gap in the understanding of the interaction between ethnic diversity and cultural-product industries. In doing so, it does not seek to be exhaustive in its approach, but rather exploratory, setting

out ideas and a new agenda for research in the field. Given its vocation, the research called for a comparative approach, cutting across cultural industry sectors and socio-economic and spatial settings. Rather than present a case study analysis of a particular sector, it seems interesting to explore the question of ethnic diversity and culture and related dynamics by approaching it from a sectoral viewpoint. At the same time, the experiences of musicians, architects and fashion designers may vary depending on the institutional, social and economic context in which they are living: hence the decision to carry out interviews in three cities, notably Amsterdam, London and Paris.

In line with the exploratory nature of the research and the virtual impossibility of carrying out an exhaustive investigation on the experiences of migrant cultural entrepreneurs<sup>3</sup> in the three sectors, three cities, respondents were selected on the basis of their non-Western backgrounds and trajectories as first-generation migrant cultural entrepreneurs, who have received recognition for their work in the media or through sector-related initiatives and acknowledgements. An overview of the respondents is provided in Annex 1 - Portraits. In order to preserve confidentiality, the interviews were given numbered codes, which are used in the report to cross-reference quotes. Altogether, 30 cultural entrepreneurs were interviewed. The following table shows a break up of respondents by city and sector (see Annex 1 for an overview of respondents).

Sector	Amsterdam	London	Paris	Total
Architecture	3	3	4	10
Fashion	1	6	4	11
Music	2	2	5	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>

*Table 2 - Overview of interview respondents*

The empirical research took the form of semi-structured interviews, lasting between one and three hours, at various locations in the three cities. In some cases, email questionnaires were used, while in one case, the interview was carried out by telephone. The majority of the interviews were recorded and transcribed, allowing for more accurate analysis and quotation.

# 2.

## Cultural industries in perspective

The cultural economy has emerged as a major source of employment and growth in many countries and cities globally, and its potential for supporting the regeneration of deprived and stagnating areas has been widely explored by academics and government agencies alike (Markusen and Schrock 2006; Miles 2007). The culture-generating capabilities of cities are being harnessed to productive purposes, creating new kinds of competitive advantages with major employment and income-enhancing effects (Scott 2000). The spatial manifestations of the cultural economy have attracted significant attention, and cities have emerged as the main playing field of a 'cultural revolution' in the new economy. The characteristics of the local milieus of production and their ability to attract and retain the necessary human and other resources for self-sustaining and enhancing growth have been central to policies aimed at developing creative clusters and supporting the positioning of cities in a competitive global environment. In the policy realm particularly, the debate around the creative city has gained momentum, particularly following the work of Richard Florida on the rise of the creative class and how it is shaping economic and urban development<sup>4</sup> (Landry and Bianchini 1995; Florida 2004).

According to a recently published report on the cultural economy of Europe, the cultural and creative sector in the enlarged European Union (30 members) contributed to 2.6% of the EU GDP in 2003, while the overall growth of the sector's value added was 19.7% in the period 1999-2003. In addition the sector employed 5.8 million people in 2004, equivalent to 3.1% of the total employed population of the EU25 (KEA 2006, p.6). As such, cultural industries can no longer be considered as 'secondary to the 'real' economy where durable, 'useful' goods are manufactured (Hesmondhalgh 2007, p.1). Growth in the cultural industries has benefited from increases in the disposable incomes of the population: subject to Engel's law of income elasticity (formulated by nineteenth century German-born statistician Ernst Engel), accepted as the basic principle of income and consumption, as disposable income increases, the proportion of income spent on food decreases, freeing up income for other forms of consumption, including cultural goods and services (for a discussion, see Scott 2000).

For the purpose of this research, we should note here a focus on cultural industries, as opposed to 'creative industries', a term which has emerged as a definitional challenger to the former. The argument at the heart of this definitional discussion lies in the emergence of creativity as a source of competitive advantage in the knowledge economy<sup>5</sup>. The shortcoming of 'creative industries', in agreement with Pratt, lies with the vagueness of the term 'creativity' as a constructive basis for mapping sectors of activity: arguably in fact, all sectors are 'creative' in their own way (for a discussion of this point, see Pratt 2007, p.6-7).

The collection of data on the cultural industries and the measurement of the growth and impact of the sector have been hampered by definitional disagreements, characterised in particular by the contentious relationship between purely artistic professions and their industrial counterparts, and between core professions and complementary ones. We here give a brief overview of different perspectives adopted.

## Defining the sector

'Cultural industries produce and distribute cultural goods or services which, at the time they are considered as a specific attribute, use or purpose, embody or convey cultural expressions, irrespective of the commercial value they may have', according to the terms of the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions adopted by UNESCO in 2005 (UNESCO 2005). This definition reflects the duality of cultural industries, at the intersection of culture and the economy: cultural products are in fact at the same time bearers of identity, values and meaning and factors of economic and social development (UNESCO 2006).

How these general terms, which mainly refer to the characteristics of cultural industries products, have translated into definitions and measurements of the cultural economy differs widely across the EU. Hence we find approaches respectively emphasizing the 'creative', copyright, experience or cultural aspects. These diverging emphases have also led to statistical compatibility issues and a subsequent difficulty in actually measuring the sector across the board. As a result, the delineation of the cultural industries varies greatly across countries (for an overview and mapping of the economy of culture in Europe, see KEA 2006, p.48).

In exploring the cultural economy in Europe, KEA reached a three-circles definition, which highlights the links between cultural and creative industries. In the proposed model, we find a central 'arts field', characterized primarily by non-industrial, one-of-a-kind products (e.g. visual arts, heritage); a 'cultural industries circle', where products are exclusively cultural, produced and reproduced in larger numbers and based on copyright (e.g. film and music); 'the creative industries and activities circle' where products may not be industrial and can be prototypes (e.g. design, architecture); and finally a circle containing 'related industries', made up of sub-sectors which facilitate the work of the first three circles (KEA 2006, pp.53-54).



For the purpose of this study, we base our research on the definition put forward by the economic geographer Allen Scott. According to his definition, cultural-products industries are concerned with the production and marketing of goods and services that have aesthetic or semiotic content (Scott 2000), reflecting an economic and cultural conjuncture where 'commodity production and in particular our clothing, furniture, buildings and other artefacts are now intimately tied in with styling changes which derive from artistic experimentation' (Jameson 1998, p.19). Scott distinguishes between cultural product-industries, which offer services outputs focusing on entertainment, edification and information and those offering manufactured products, which contribute to shaping the individuality and self-assertion of their consumers (Scott 2004). Scott explores the shift from a first generation of cultural economy (based mainly on place marketing, the commercialization of historical heritage and the production of large-scale investment in artefacts of collective cultural consumption in the interest of urban regeneration) to a second (focused on the development of localised complexes of cultural-products industries). Scott's taxonomy is reproduced in Table 3 below.

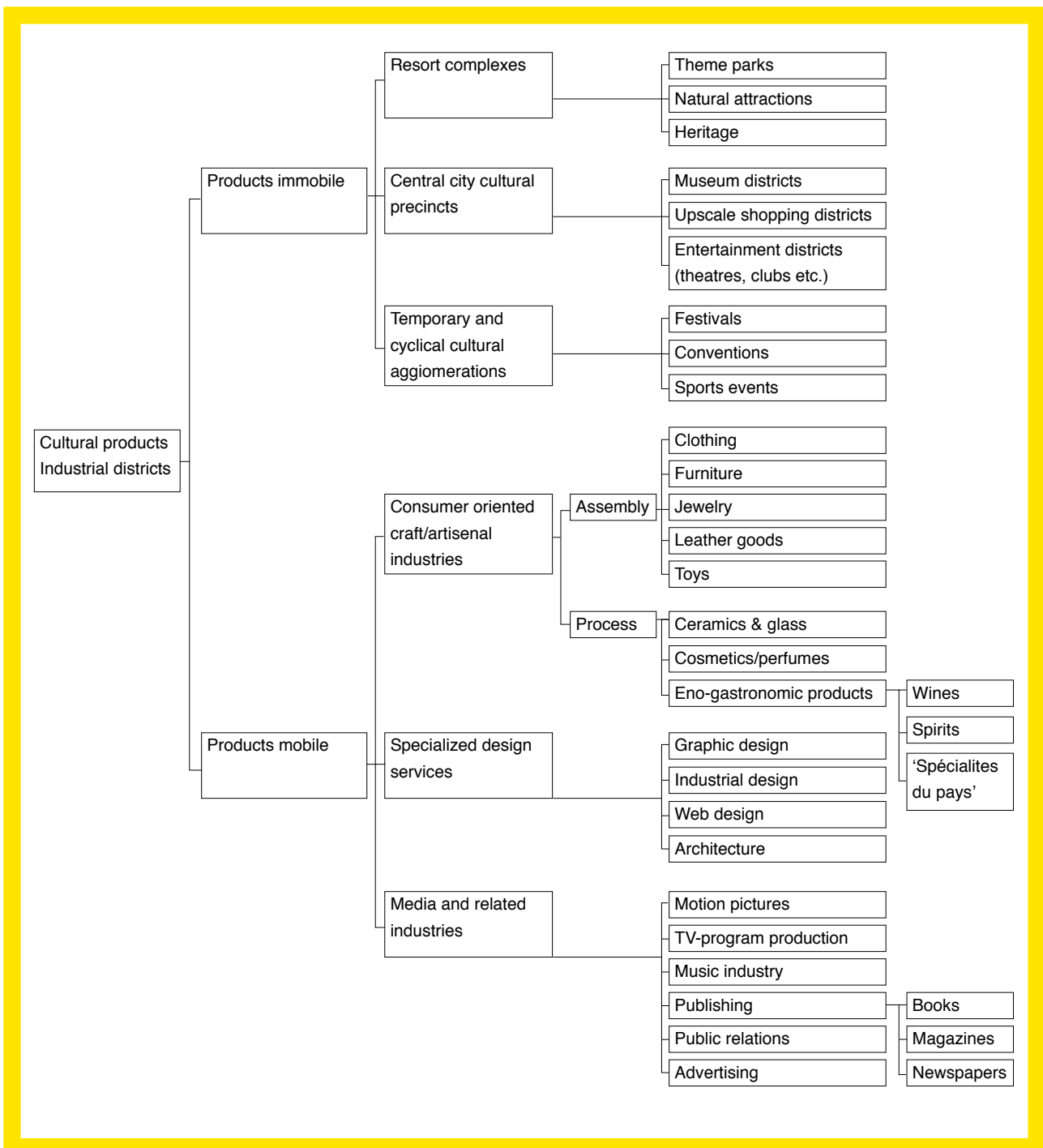


Table 3 - Scott's cultural industries taxonomy (source: Scott 2004, p.471)



Building upon Bourdieu's work on symbolic products, Scott defines the modern cultural economy as cultural-product industries that produce goods and services whose subjective meaning [...] is high in comparison with their utilitarian purpose (Bourdieu 1971; Scott 2004, p.462). This subjective meaning results in a form of production that is design-intensive – hence involving a cognitive and aesthetic reflexive component – linked to differentiated and differentiating consumer tastes and demands (Lash and Urry 1994). In addition, more work is proportionally going into developing models, and less work in producing them, so that the research and development part is the main activity, while the actual manufacturing of the product (for instance, printing copies of a book or a CD) becomes secondary (Hesmondhalgh 2007). Alongside the complex inter-relations of locationally convergent networks of production, there are however global networks of transactions (Amin and Thrift 1992), with intermediaries channelling information and outputs from producers to consumers and vice versa. This decoupling of knowledge and design-intensive inputs has led to a decentralization of the production stages, leading in turn to a concentration of the more 'cultural' and 'artistic' stages in metropolitan areas and a delocalization of the manufacturing elements of production. In addition, structural changes related to enhancements in information and communication technologies have fundamentally changed the ways of production, distribution and consumption in many cultural industries, opening up new interfaces between cultural producers and consumers. New technologies have also impacted the valuation of creativity, particularly in the recognition and remuneration of intellectual property rights. This holds true especially in the audiovisual industry.

## Cultural industries: from art to industry?

Considerable attention has been given to the specificity of cultural industries' production, not always in an optimistic vein. At the beginning of the last century, concerns were voiced that the 'aura' and uniqueness of the object of art would wither as a result of its mechanical reproduction: "Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence" (Benjamin 1936, p.2).

Adorno and Horkheimer, members of the Frankfurt School, referred to the 'culture industry' to highlight the organisational features of a cultural production system geared towards disseminating cultural products for mass consumption. This industry was seen as founded on entertainment and amusement, deleting all distinction between this and culture as tradition and personal experience (Adorno and Horkheimer 2002; Fleury and Singly 2006). The transformation of culture into commodity was thus seen as affecting the definition of culture itself, diluting it to an act of mass production and consumption (Adorno and Bernstein 2001). Bernard Miège introduced a note of optimism by arguing that the introduction of new technologies in cultural production, counter to Adorno's expectations, would lead to innovative and interesting developments in the field (Miège 1989; Scott 2000).

Interest in the cultural industries heightened with a growing realization that changes in contemporary capitalism had resulted in a growing interconnectedness of culture and the economy, and an increasing aesthetisation of the latter. 'What has happened' in the words of Jameson, 'is that aesthetic production today has become integrated into commodity production generally: the frantic economic urgency of producing fresh waves of ever more novel-seeming goods (from clothing to airplanes), at ever greater rates of turnover, now assigns an increasingly essential structural function and position to aesthetic innovation and experimentation" (Jameson 1991, p.56). This emerging 'cognitive-cultural capitalism' has resulted in productive activity today thriving not only on advanced scientific knowledge and continuous innovation, but also on product multiplicity and symbolic elaboration (Scott 2008).

Speaking about the present historical conjuncture, Jameson argues that we can observe a "dedifferentiation of fields, such that economics has come to overlap with culture: that everything, including commodity production and high and speculative finance, has become cultural; and culture has equally become profoundly economic or commodity oriented" (Jameson 1998, p.73). As such, cultural industries are emblematic 'of the hybrid and complex relationships between production and consumption, the symbolic and material' (Pratt 2008, p.3).

We now turn our attention to how these complex relationships between production and consumption impact upon modes of structuring the sector's activities, in particular by exploring the concepts of production chain and networks.

## Exploring the cultural industries' production chain and networks

The organization of production in the cultural industries is characterized by a 'transaction-rich nexus of markets', linking small-sized firms or individual actors in complex interconnected stages of flexible production relations. Given these features, cultural industries were 'post-Fordist avant la lettre', providing a model for our understanding of post-industrial transformations in other industries (Lash and Urry 1994, p.123). The outcome is a networked production ecology, where the finished product is realized through the collaborative effort of different individuals, requiring various more or less specialized inputs and a complex division of labour (Becker 1982; Negus 1996; Scott 2000; Leyshon 2001). We can therefore identify a 'project team', ranging from primary creative personnel, technical workers to creative managers, marketing personnel, owners and executives and unskilled and semi-skilled labour (Hesmondhalgh 2007, pp.64-5, building upon work by Bill Ryan). These inter-connections take the form of contracting, sub-contracting relations, technical and organisational innovation, and labour markets, and may partly explain the co-location of many cultural industries (Pratt 1997). The significance of these inter-linkages can be exemplified in a study on the music economy in Sweden, where the value added and profits to be found in information, services and related activities rather than actual production of music are significant. The development of a post-industrial music economy is based on the development of services and related products around the core music and its survival depends on building innovative products and channels of distribution, crossing music and ICTs (Power and Jansson 2004). The specificities of the sector, such as the risks of production and volatility of demand, which we will explore in later sections, call for an atypical contractual governance in the cultural industries, striking a fine balance between economic and cultural motivations (Caves 2000).

Because of the nature of their products, cultural industries should be examined from production to consumption by exploring their production chain. One way of doing this, is to look at the production chain of cultural industries products, from their creation to their final consumption. Pratt has been a main proponent of this approach, exploring the original production and authoring of cultural industries products (including performance, fine art and literature), their actual production, reproduction and mass distribution (e.g. in the form of books, journal magazines, newspapers, film, radio, television, recording on disc or tape) and their exhibition and exchange. The author also explores activities that link together these art forms, such as advertising (Pratt 1997; Pratt 2007). This approach brings together the inputs used in the making of culture, as well as the activities related to the dissemination of the end product (Department for Culture 2002).

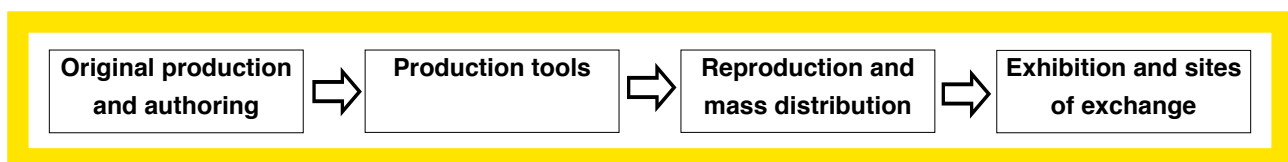


Figure 2 - Cultural industries production chain (Source: Pratt 2007, p.19)

Indeed, the idea of a trajectory from production to consumption is one that is increasingly explored in the cultural industries. The linkages between the two ends of the process highlight the presence of a complex ecology of actors, bringing together a variety of complementary skills and expertise. As way of an example, the analysis of the ecology of the music economy distinguishes four distinctive yet overlapping networks: creativity (or original production, where music is made and performed), reproduction (or manufacturing processes involved in the commodification of culture, as in the case of music, which is placed on media such as CDs), distribution (including the actual distribution of the product, but also marketing and promotion) and consumption (from retail outlets to the consumer). These networks represent stages through which cultural material flows and becomes commodified (Leyshon 2001; Leyshon, Webb et al. 2005). The networks of creativity are shaped in dense, spatially agglomerated interactions between actors and agencies, echoing Scott's analysis of the music economy as rooted in 'communities of workers anchored to particular places' which self-perpetuate themselves by acting as a magnet for other talented individuals (Scott 1999).

The emerging complex ecology of cultural industry production brings together different types of 'creative workers'. We can distinguish between those engaged in producing primary creative output, those engaged in interpretative activity,

i.e. people who help bring the work of original creation to its audiences, and finally those supplying creative services to support arts and cultural production. Here a distinction can be made between 'imaginative' and 'utilitarian' creative occupations, thus allowing for a distinction between artists and creative workers who, while engaged in cultural industries, are non-artists (Throsby 2001). An additional layer of analysis is provided by the distinction between art for art's sake and humdrum inputs in the cultural industries, as described by Caves: the former refers to the utility drawn by artists in performing creative work, whereas the latter refers to ordinary economic incentives. These can be combined in the creative worker or decoupled as the case may be, as in the case of the writer and the publisher, the visual artist and the art gallery (Caves 2000). Given the nature of our investigation, we chose to focus on imaginative rather than utilitarian occupations, as this will give us more of an insight into the dynamics of cultural representation and diversity within the wider sector, as opposed to more technically bound and less openly 'creative' occupations.

The ecology of actors highlights a shift away from the romantic vision of the artist as an 'isolated genius'. Production in the cultural industries takes place within an 'art world', characterised by the presence of gatekeepers and processes of cultural mediation. Art exists in a social context and requires more than individual action to create it (Becker 1982; Hesmondhalgh 2007). According to Scott, the production system can be described as "a filtering device through which some kinds of (exogenously-given) novelties are allowed to pass while others are rejected along the way" (Scott 2000, p.34).

The representation of a production chain raises the question of the (intrinsic) value of the cultural commodity itself and how it develops. Commodities are seen as having only the meaning which is ascribed to them by the individuals, rather than having a meaning of their own. In order to understand the value and meaning of commodities it is therefore necessary to follow their trajectories, their forms and uses (Appadurai 1988). The term commodity for Appadurai refers to 'anything intended for exchange' (Appadurai 1988), a definition which avoids any binary distinction between art and commodity (Madison and Hamera 2006). The contextual life of the commodity is intrinsic in them. 'Let's approach commodities as things in a certain situation, a situation that can characterise many different kinds of thing, at different points in their social lives. This [...] means breaking significantly with the production-dominated Marxian view of the commodity and focusing on its total trajectory from production through exchange/distribution, to consumption' (Appadurai 1988, p.13).

In a study of popular music, some observers have even gone so far as to posit that the "diversity and innovation available to the public [...] has more to do with the market structures and organisational environments of specific industries than with strongly felt demands of either the masses or their masters for certain kinds of cultural materials (DiMaggio 1977, p.448). We argue that the question of diversity in the cultural industries needs to be looked at from the perspective of the interaction between the demand and supply within a wider 'opportunity structure' framework. We define this as the combination of place and time, sector specific factors, which shape the progression of creative workers in the sector. The main elements we would like to delve into in the following section are:

- the role of the metropolis as a locus for cultural activities and their hybridization;
- the question of mediation and gatekeeping in the cultural industries;
- the significance of ethnicity and diversity in the trajectories of migrants in these sectors;
- the wider institutional approaches to ethnicity and diversity.

# 3.

## **Negotiating the cultural industries' opportunity structure**

Much has been discussed about the cultural homogenization or heterogenization impact of globalization. As new forces from across the globe enter our societies, they become 'indigenized' (Appadurai 1990; for an interesting perspective on German-Turkish rap/hip-hop in Berlin, see Caglar 1998). The cultural economy can no longer be understood in terms of separate entities manifested in the diversity of nation-states: we are now looking at an 'overlapping, disjunctive order, which cannot any longer be understood in terms of center-periphery models [...] nor is it susceptible to simple models of push and pull (in terms of migration theory) [...] or of producers and consumers' (Appadurai 1990, p.296). The recognition of the impact of globalisation and growing internationalisation is fundamental to a greater understanding cultural diversity and cultural processes altogether (UNESCO 1998).



*Figure 3 - Rene Sanchez, Cap Verdian music record shop owner, Paris*

The de-territorialisation of people, cultures and commodities and the resulting increasing interconnectivities among space shape the consumer tastes in large metropolitan areas, the arenas where such flows are primarily played out, are transformed (Appadurai 1990). This leads to a shift in the demand side for cultural products, with globalisation effectively broadening consumer demand for culturally exotic and specialised products and services (Collins, Morrissey et al. 1995, p.101), expanding the choices made available for consumers and contributing to a better allocation of resources (Caplan and Cowen 2004). In general terms, 'growing consumer acceptance of, and effective demand for, foreign products, strengthens ethnic minority and immigrant businesses' (Light 2005). On the supply side, open and diverse societies are seen as catalysts for innovation, entrepreneurship and economic development (Florida 2005), or as we have seen earlier, as thriving centres of cultural and artistic production (Hall 1998).

We argue here that several elements are at work in shaping the cultural industries' opportunity structure (considered here as the set of exogenous factors limiting or supporting action) and its openness to diversity. First of all, cultural industries' strong anchor in metropolitan areas is simultaneously the object and the reflection of strong cultural cross-fertilisation, shaping trajectories within the cultural industries. Secondly, we delve into the definition of ethnicity and its relation to culture, to find cognitive constituents for our analysis of the dynamic interaction of ethnicity with processes of commodification of culture within the cultural industries. Finally, we explore the mechanisms of mediation within the cultural industries, and how these might affect trends and tastes of consumers and, in turn, the production (and popularity) of cultural goods. We seek here to find the mechanism at work in shaping the diversity of cultural products and hence the shifting boundaries between ethnic and mainstream markets in which migrant cultural entrepreneurs might operate.



## Cultural industries and the diverse metropolis

Cities have historically been thriving centres of cultural and economic activity, as highlighted in the seminal work by Peter Hall, *Cities in Civilization*. Here, the author explores the evolution of cultural capitals such as Vienna, Paris, Athens, during their golden ages (Hall 1998). More recently, the question of how particular places have done well out of the cultural industries has attracted significant attention, particularly as the sector has become central to regeneration strategies across deprived areas.

***“It was the beginning of the 80s, the big names in Latin music were arriving here [...] there was a core of good musicians based in Paris and the stars were coming from the States or Latin America. They knew that there were Paris-based teams and that they didn’t need to come with a full orchestra. This gave me the opportunity to work with stars such as Patato Valdez, Chocolate Armenteros, Tata Guines, people who meant a lot to me in my youth and all of a sudden, I had the opportunity of working with them.”***

**(Interview n.15, musician).**

Large metropolitan areas ‘represent nodes of location-specific interactions and emergent effects in which the stimulus to cultural experimentation and renewal tends to be high’ (Scott 2000, p.4). Importantly, we are witnessing the emergence of shifting landscapes of global cultural flows, which characterise the disjuncture between economy, culture and politics: the most relevant for our investigation are ‘ethnoscapes’, the ‘landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest-workers, and other moving groups and persons’ (Appadurai 1990, p.297). Here the focus is less on ethnicity, but rather more on the correlation between people across transnational landscapes. Place-based communities in large metropolitan areas such as Paris, London and Amsterdam are not just repositories of cultural and creative labour, they also represent ‘active hubs of social reproduction in which crucial cultural competences are maintained and circulated’ (Scott 2000, p.33).

Arguably more than other sectors of economic activity, cultural industries illustrate the strong interconnectedness of place, and particularly the metropolis, and culture: local activities become imbued with the social and cultural character of the surrounding urban area. At the same time, the existing and emerging economic activities contribute to the dynamism of culture-generating and innovative capacities of specific places (Zukin 1995; Scott 2000). Zukin argues that cities have always had symbolic economies, insofar as their elites have made use of symbolic language to put forward a certain image of the city, as a representation of the dominant powers. She defines the symbolic economy as ‘(T)he look and

feel of cities [which] reflect decisions about what – and who – should be visible and what should not, concepts of order and disorder, and on uses of aesthetic power’. Within this symbolic economy, migrants and ethnic minorities are placing pressures on public institutions and high culture to diversify their offerings to appeal to a wider and more diverse public (Zukin 1995, p.7). The production of symbols and products within this symbolic economy becomes both a ‘currency for commercial exchange and a language of social identity’ (Zukin 1995, pp.23-4).

Cultural economies are indeed inclined to exhibit well-developed individual identities, as a consequence of the play of history, agglomeration and locational specialisation. The power of place therefore plays a key role in determining the competitiveness of products. As a result, products become inextricably linked to specific places and imbued with a time-and-place-specific ‘aura’, adding value to the products themselves. Such connection between place and product ‘yields a kind of monopoly rent that adheres to places, their insignia, and the brand names that may attach to them. Their industries grow as a result, and the local economic base takes shape. Favourable images create entry barriers for products from competing places’ (Molotch 1996, p.229). Many metropolitan areas also exhibit the concomitant development of separate yet interwoven cultural industries sectors, benefiting from proximity and complex project ecologies (Scott 2004). The strong ties between the metropolis and its critical infrastructure are recognised (Zukin 1995).

Not only socially, but also economically, urban diversity is of great importance, according to Jacobs. In an area of the city with different kinds of suppliers and buyers, entrepreneurs can share their facilities, such as office spaces and machines, and profit from a varied supply of knowledge and expertise. The cross-fertilization which results from that diversity works as a magnet for companies that are looking for a new place to establish themselves. Additionally, the mix of old and new buildings in the neighbourhood gives every type of entrepreneur a chance. In this way, it is possible that a modern stockbroker's office and a traditional furniture maker are neighbours. According to Jacobs' motto, "new ideas often need old buildings" so a city neighbourhood can grow into a true breeding ground of entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation (Jacobs 1961; Jacobs 1969). Hall's element of serendipity, "something beyond the economy and the inherited cultural dispositions" partly explains this. Rather than exchange occurring in a systematic way, people "meet, people talk, people listen to each other's music and each other's words, dance each other's dances, take in each other's thoughts" (Hall 1998, p.21). Creativity and innovation are therefore not seen as the prerogative of the individual, indeed, a key role is played by the social conditions of production of the cultural economy. It is not that individual genius is denied, but rather that it is channelled towards cultural production (DiMaggio 1977). Places can thus be seen as 'articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings' (Massey 1994, p.154).<sup>6</sup>

Questioning the origins of creativity and whether a city can have creative industries for very long without being creative, Peter Hall gives a prominent role to exchanges and serendipity of encounters in cities. Reflecting on Gardner's work on highly creative XX century individuals, Hall reflected that creativity was often linked to individuals originating from localities peripheral to the centres of power and influence, yet not completely cut off. These individuals were socially marginal, as a result of their ethnicity, gender, nationality or social class, yet their positioning 'at the edge' allowed them to thrive (Hall 2000, pp.642-5). The metropolitan area therefore becomes the scene for interconnections between a diversity of people and places where creative inspiration can tap into.

There is therefore cross fertilisation occurring between cultural diversity and the metropolis: the vibrant metropolis thrives off diversity, while diversity finds a natural habitat in the metropolis, where being different is part of the 'norm' and peculiarity of denizens. Yet cultural industries are often subject to competitive pressures that encourage agglomeration of production yet globalisation of output circulation (Scott 2004). This has often been linked to discussions about the threat of cultural homogenisation or even 'imperialism', as the circulation of cultural products and symbols mainly originating from the West is perceived to lead to a levelling of cultural consumption across the globe (for a discussion, see Throsby 2001, p.156-7). We would argue that we are witnessing parallel processes of homogenisation and differentiation, as global and local forces interact. This raises an important question about diversity in the cultural economy overall, which we will approach in the following section, where we explore a crucial mechanism at work in the cultural industries: cultural mediation and the emergence of trends and tastes, their legitimisation, and the impact this has on the range of cultural products that come to see the day.

***"There are people who miscalculate their links to African traditions in their fashion designs. I mean, if you want to want to have some Japanese influences in your clothes, it doesn't mean that you have to dress up as a Japanese! You should think about what an Italian (referring to the interview) wears and bring something new, something different to what she wears. I am not going to impose something. I am an African stylist, but it doesn't mean that I can only do something nice by doing something original"***

**(Interview n.31, fashion designer)**

## Mediation in the cultural industries

In this day and era, the diversity of cultural industry products that are available to us as consumers is subject to forces of cultural mediation. Trends and fads are wide ranging in their geographical scope: some are globalized and adopted the world through. Some are very localised, linked to local, regional traditions.

Many creative activities are characterised by a large pool of creative hopefuls and a more or less continuous over-supply of applicants (Becker 1982; Frank and Cook 1995; Eikhof and Haunschild 2007). Consequently, only a fraction of the creative work actually gets commodified, entering the production cycle and giving rise to economic value added. Production and consumption can be thus seen as embedded spatially, historically, and socially. In this sense, consumption can be in seen as an institutional field, centred around the production of commodities for individual demand and structured around 'interconnected economic and cultural institutions', highlighting the strong interconnections of consumption with its social context (Zukin and Maguire 2004, p.175).

The model of production on which cultural industries are based generally gives rise to an over-supply of raw material. This characteristic of cultural production requires an 'over-supply of raw material at the outset and pinpoints a number of strategic checkpoints at which the oversupply is filtered out' (Hirsch 1972, p.649; Brandellero and Kloosterman 2007). There is a risk involved in the volatility with which audiences/consumers use cultural commodities in order to express they are different from other people<sup>7</sup>. This results in a strong emphasis on audience maximization to minimize the risk, putting together a large 'cultural repertoire' (Garnham and Inglis 1990, p.161). Volatility requires an over-supply of outputs to maximise chances of success (Hirsch 1972), and as a result, an over-supply of inputs further upstream, in the creative phase. It also often results in an 'options' type contract, where at different stages between the original idea and its realisation, the option to pull the plug on a project remains open (Caves 2000).



Figure 4 - Posters at La Chapelle show the vibrancy of the Paris music scene



The producer of a cultural good is therefore faced with a merciless state of uncertainty, known as the 'nobody knows' property (Caves 2000). Cultural goods display the property of horizontal differentiation, whereby products are similar but not identical. This property is connected to the infinite variety property, which invokes the plethora of creative possibilities a creative worker can draw upon in his or her work. In this context of variety, making a choice between product A or B becomes complex. Information becomes a crucial element in the decision-making process, yet finding this is often delegated to intermediaries, who rank creative work according to an A list/B list (Becker 1982; Caves 2000). This vertical differentiation between products results from our comparative appreciation of them, yet our appreciation is by no means shaped in a vacuum: hence the importance of exploring how trends come about.

At first glance, trends can seem unfair: the winner receives a prize, whereas the losers walk away empty-handed. The so-called Matthew effect<sup>8</sup>, initially applied to research on how recognition is given in science, has been widely studied and applied to research on mass consumption and trends (Merton 1988). Fashion and trends have been described as following a bell-shaped, Gauss-type curve, representing the strong ascent of trends reaching a peak, only to descend into oblivion straight after (Erner 2008, p.10). Trends are therefore seen as a type of behaviour adopted on a temporary basis by a significant part of a social group, the reason being that this behaviour is perceived as socially appropriate for that time and context (Sproles 1985). This process of adoption requires some form of historical continuity with previous fashions in order to receive collective acceptance, even when the fashion choices are innovative (Blumer 1969). Malcolm Gladwell's Tipping Point conceptualises the critical point at which objects or practices are diffused in the way of an epidemic. This social phenomenon occurs by virtue of three categories of people: mavens, connectors and salesmen. Mavens are knowledgeable individuals and direct others towards objects in a more disinterested way. Connectors on the other hand play a more active, often unfocused, role in linking people and in disseminating trends through word of mouth. Finally, the salesmen have a direct financial or symbolic stake in diffusing trends (Gladwell 2000).

Demand uncertainty in the cultural industries is caused by shifting consumer preferences, but also by the criteria of selection mobilised by gatekeepers. Gatekeepers can be seen as 'surrogate consumers' serving as fashion experts and opinion leaders for their respective fields of activity (Hirsch 1972). These workers who come in between symbolic creators and consumers, creating points of articulation and connection between them. They are key to translating the value of new commodities to audiences, engaged as they are in regulating access and exclusion to industries involved in the production of symbolic goods and services - often through small networks of connections, shared values and common life experiences (Negus 2002, p.503-11). Gatekeepers are pivotal in maintaining the specific identity of the local production system, adopting a role of taste-makers. These individuals shape tastes and trends, 'what sells' and what is destined to be a flop, by power of the 'pen', as is the case of journalists for instance. 'Influencers' are generally speaking ahead of their times and through their tastes and choices influence those of the rest of the population (Patterson, Grenny et al. 2007). This involves developing 'aesthetic principles, arguments, and judgements' that constitute a significant part of the 'conventions' by means of which members of art worlds act together. Artists in general find themselves seeking, or in any case, needing the approval of such institutionalised peer reviewers in order to access market openings something which is questioned in the case of artists with a subversive cult following (Currid 2007).

Producers and promoters of cultural industry products play a key role within the cultural industries, transforming talent and creative ideas into commodifiable<sup>9</sup> and marketable goods and services. We envisage the presence of a 'commodification boundary' (see figure 8 in the following section), as a negotiated passage between creativity and the cultural industry production chain, modulated by trade-offs between cultural and economic considerations over the anticipated outcomes of a product in a market exchange environment (Brandellero and Kloosterman 2007). In this sense, gatekeepers do not just decide on who gets through but also on how. Creating an explicit aesthetic may precede, follow, or be simultaneous with developing the techniques, forms, and works which make up the art world's output. The creation of aesthetic systems can be an 'industry in its own right' though, developed and maintained by specialised professionals such as critics (Becker 1982, p.131-2). The role of mediators is to initiate customers to their understanding and adoption of these new trends and fads. While this role was initially devolved to the press, we subsequently witness the emergence of the branchés (from the French for wired, hip), i.e. social figures who are seen as up to date with trends and what is 'in' and what is not (Erner 2008, p.36)<sup>10</sup>.

As products in the cultural industries tend to be taste-driven and performance-driven (Currid 2007), selection fo-

cuses on the aesthetic qualities of the product. In a discussion with a world music label manager in Paris, it emerged that a journalist from the renowned Le Monde newspaper had stormed out of a concert by an African musician a couple of minutes from the start of the performance, claiming that ‘there are no drums in music from Mali’<sup>11</sup>. The findings of research on career paths of visual artists in the UK are also particularly telling. Many black artists found that it was difficult to get a following for their work, celebrations of diversity appeared to be more rewarded by galleries than by a critical perspective on it (Honey, Heron et al. 1997). Here it would appear that, while on the one hand the institutional framework might be supporting the progression of migrants (or more generally speaking, as in this case, cultural entrepreneurs of ethnic origin), on the other it might be steering them towards specific market niches.

The idea that different social classes distinguish themselves by means of their consumption patterns was forged by Edmond Goblot in his work on consumption as a ‘barrier’ between the bourgeoisie and other classes; at the same time, the signs and objects pertinent to the bourgeoisie’s consumption patterns constitute an objective lower classes strive to reach (Goblot 1925). Building upon this, Bourdieu talked about tastes as ‘social markers’. Tastes develop according to a person’s capital (the set of social or cultural resources an individual benefits from due to his belonging to a specific class) and habitus (the conscious/unconscious forms of behaviour an individual incorporates during his first socialisation experiences, within the family or at school). He highlights in a sense some forms of social determinism, which defines our tastes (Bourdieu 1979).

***“This richness in the diversity of people who create trends plays a very important role in France. As some say, there is no fashion without culture.”***

**(Interview n.14, fashion designer)**

The discussion on fashion and trends raises the question of the relationship between the individual and the collectivity. Following trends has the psychological advantage of freeing the individual from the pressures of individualism, of being a member of a group rather than an isolated being (Simmel 1988). At the same time, trends demarcate groups: they represent the unity within one group and its break with others. The idea that different social classes distinguish themselves by means of their consumption patterns was forged by Edmond Goblot in his work on consumption as a ‘barrier’ between the bourgeoisie and other classes; at the same time, the signs and objects pertinent to the bourgeoisie’s consumption patterns constitute an objective lower classes strive to reach (Goblot 1925). Building upon this, Bourdieu talked about tastes as

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***“Different trends are part of the environment of big cities. Some are rather reticent, they say ‘African prints! They don’t belong to European culture!’. But in large cities, people can be more open, they live side by side with people from different cultures.”***

**(Interview n.30, fashion designer)**

According to Daniel Bell, fashion trends have replaced the distinction between high culture and mass culture: what has emerged is the distinction between what is fashionable and what is outdated. This distinction allows the capitalist system to base itself on a system of competition whereby the industry benefits from the democratisation of trends. The market domination is insured by the innovation of trends and their renewal (Bell 1996). Also pointing towards the influence of the commercial on our tastes, Barthes stated ‘the commercial origin of our collective image-system (always subject to fashion, not merely in the case of clothing), cannot be a mystery to anyone’ (Barthes 1990, p.xii). This can be seen as the ‘total dictatorship of fashion’, whereby producers within a capitalist system have a limitless manipulation capacity over consumers of objects.

In recent years though, a new theory of trends has emerged, attempting to supplant the widely accepted notion of a Pareto distribution of products and markets: this suggested that in a market with a high freedom of choice of products, the buying patterns of the population will result in a certain level of inequality, whereby 20% of the products (i.e. the head) will be favoured against the other 80% (i.e. the long tail). This theory puts forward the idea that exactly this neglected 'long tail' will come to matter increasingly in the future, as would appear from the observation of online buying trends on sites such as Amazon. 'If the 20th century was about hits, the 21st will be equally about misses', claimed the long tail proponent Chris Anderson (Anderson 2004, p.172). Should this be the case, the potential for minority tastes gaining visibility and a niche in the market would prove a significant boost to diversity of cultural industry products and their consumption patterns.

This raises questions concerning the third element in our opportunity structure analysis: the study of diversity, culture and ethnicity. We argue that in the cultural industries, the symbolic understanding of products is more often than not mediated through the prism of cultural diversity and as a result, of ethnicity imposing a certain reading of ethnicity and 'roots' to products, based on either their content or the background of their creator.

## Ethnicity, culture and diversity

Ethnicity is 'widely associated with culture, descent, group memories, histories and language' (Karner 2007, p.17). Ethnicity, and to the same extent, race are not naturally occurring entities, but rather 'rely upon social processes and discourses that construct and subsequently naturalise/reify group differences' (Karner 2007, p.17). 'Ethnie' is defined as a 'named population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more elements of common culture [eg. Religion, customs, language], a [frequent] link with a homeland and a sense of solidarity among at least some of its members' (Hutchinson and Smith 1996, p.6). This draws the attention to the question of names or labels, which members of an ethnic group or 'outsiders' use to define the group itself (Karner 2007). It should here be noted that the history of incorporation of migrants and ethnic groups cannot be separated from the changes in ethnic and racial boundaries, which have been stretched over time (Lee and Bean 2004).

Culture and ethnicity are intertwined in multiple ways. Discussions have often been centred around the question of culture, the individual and his/her relation to a wider group of 'belonging' (Karner 2007). One of the key debates in the sociology of culture has centred around ethnocentrism, highlighting the tension between the idea of one culture and of multiple cultures. This idea combines on the one hand a refusal to accept cultural diversity and the relativity of one's own culture, and on the other hand the rejection of those who do not share one's same culture (Fleury 2008). There is a form of primordialism or cultural determinism here, entailing a more or less non-negotiable power of ethnic ties (Geertz 1997) or a form of essentialism, which points to an essence transcending historical and cultural boundaries (Brah 2001, p.253). A second issue in the study of culture is that of culturalism: here cultures are seen as having specific traits, which are unaltered and transmitted across generations (Fleury 2008, p.11). The Norwegian social anthropologist Frederik Barth made a significant contribution to these discussions by pointing out that 'the critical focus of the investigation [...] becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses' (Barth 1969, p.15). In doing so, Barth made a step forward in the conceptualisation of ethnicity, by introducing a social constructivist perspective whereby ethnicity is a social organisation based on the drawing and reproduction of group boundaries. His criticism of traditional associations of race=language=culture were mainly based on the idea that 'while purporting to give an ideal type model of a recurring empirical form, it implies a preconceived view of what are the significant factors in the genesis, structure, and function of such groups' (Barth 1969, p.11).

*"I had a big fight with the designer teacher there because it was like, I came from Curacao and he was trying to tell me what is beautiful. And it was like, this is dreadful, how come you're in this position to teach people, if you are telling me that it's just, your eyes are telling me, there is something in your eyes, no I don't believe that."*

**(Interview n.25, fashion designer)**



*Figure 5 - François Essindi and Jimi Soto from Abakuya, Paris*

The idea of isolated ethnic groups limits our understanding of cultural diversity, in the sense that it imagines cultural difference as being developed in isolation in each group (see discussion in Barth 1969, p.11). “Ethnic categories provide an organizational vessel that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different socio-cultural systems. They may be of great relevance to behaviour, but they need not be; they may pervade all social life, or they may be relevant only in limited sectors of activity”. The critical element then becomes self-ascription or ascription by others (Barth 1969, p.14). “One is led to identify and distinguish ethnic groups by the morphological characteristics of the cultures of which they are the bearers. This entails a prejudged viewpoint both on (1) the nature of continuity in time of such units, and (2) the locus of the factors which determine the form of the units” (Barth 1969, p.12). Here we touch upon the concept of ‘homology’, one of the basic principles of the sociology of culture, meaning the notion that the boundaries between cultural forms align with the boundaries between groups. Different audiences have preferences for different artistic and musical genres, and conversely those genres often help constitute boundaries between groups’ (Roy 2002, p.461).

The study of ethnic identities is rather problematic in the sense that it runs the risk of being reductionist and limiting the scope of human agency by suggesting that individuals are fully determined by their group belonging or culture (Karner 2007, p.91). Another aspect which is often overlooked is the question of multiple identities and the distinction between discourse and practice. In this context, Baumann has referred to ‘dual discursive competence’ stating that ‘most people practice a double discursive competence when it comes to their discourses about culture, and they develop this dual discursive competence more strongly the more they expose themselves to multicultural practices [...]. We thus cannot advance a multicultural understanding of culture if we treat the essentialist view and the processual view as two opposite theories and call one of them true and the other one false’ (Baumann 1999, pp.93-4).

Ethnicity emerges therefore not as a unitary phenomenon but as a reminder that we should look beyond labels and groups, at the circumstances under which it comes to matter (Fenton 2003). ‘Difference in the sense of social relations may be understood as the historical and contemporary trajectories of material circumstances and cultural practices which produce the conditions for the construction of group identities. The concept refers to the interweaving of shared collec-





*“The influence if I go back in my mind, it’s more like walking on this bridge, or the trees, the grass, the waves when you go swimming. Those things are the main influence I think. And later on when I came to Europe, you see the paintings, architecture, things you have seen on paper or photo and you see them in person, later on those things influenced me I think.”*

*(Interview n.25, fashion designer)*

Figure 6 - Posters from the festival Africolor, Paris

tive narratives within feelings of community, whether or not this ‘community’ is constituted in face-to-face encounters or imagined, in the sense that Benedict Anderson (1991) suggests (Brah 2001). As a result, we should look at ethnicity from the set of structures which constrain and enable simultaneously social action, the cognitive way of interpreting it, and the biographically grounded, emotionally charged way of living (see Karner 2007).

The question of identity is also relevant here: ‘identification is constructed on the back of recognition of common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group’. Identities thus become ‘about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not so much ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. Identities are therefore constituted within not outside representation’. As a result, identities are not about coming to terms with our ‘roots’ but rather our ‘routes’ (Hall 1996, p.2-4). Stuart Hall therefore points out the importance of the socialisation environment and wider context in shaping and negotiating individual identities. The ‘primordia’ associated with ethnic identity is often a case of ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

Jenkins talks about a dual aspect of ethnicity, distinguishing between ‘social classification’ as the external imposition of a classification grid on populations, involving powerful outsiders and the reproduction of boundaries, and ‘group identification’ as people’s experience of solidarity and meaning as self-identifying group members (Jenkins 1997). These phenomena are inextricably linked, constituting two distinct processes of ‘ascription’, that is of ascribing specific characteristics to a group or to oneself (Karner 2007). These two perspectives provide two viewpoints from which biographies are lived and observed.

The question of ascription raises the discussion around assimilation, a term which in its history and use has rather dramatically changed from a description of an inevitable progression to the observation of a more complex two-way dynamic process of incorporation (Alba and Nee 2003). Here it is interesting to note that while acculturation (as a process of adaptation) and cultural accommodation (a process of adjustment) have in the past been given high attention in dynamics of assimilation, more structural elements of incorporation, including social, economic and residential status, have also been identified as critical (for a review of literature, see Alba and Nee 2003). The idea of a straight line assimilation process, which implies a one way integration of migrants into the host society (Gordon 1964), has been supplanted by a more pluralist model, which introduces the idea of a two-way interaction between minorities and the mainstream, reviving the Chicago School approach of the evolution of a composite culture, resulting from the 'interpenetration of cultural practices and beliefs' (Alba and Nee 2003, p.10).

## Institutional approaches to ethnicity and diversity

This research zooms into three metropolises in three different countries: Amsterdam, London and Paris. The background to the research is therefore provided by three different approaches to the question of ethnicity and diversity and their reflection in the policy domain.

In France, the major classification of people is in terms of nationality: you are either a national or a foreigner (étranger), there being no official or institutional categories to define people once they have French nationality (Dubet 1989). In France, republican anti-multiculturalism has always been the dominant, accepted model across the political spectrum, culminating in the banning of headscarves in schools in 2004 (Modood 2007), though in recent months a discussion has been open on the question of recognising ethnic categorisations.

*“Everybody is a small slice of this wonderful jigsaw we call London”*

*(Interview n.31, architect)*

This is clearly different from the British case where 'ethnic origin' is recognised institutionally within the national community (Silverman 1992). Multi-culturalism is the 'recognition of group difference within the public sphere of laws, democratic discourses and the terms of a shared citizenship and national identity' (Modood 2007, p.2). In France, the idea that a person can be both a French citizen and have an ethnic or religious identity is unacceptable, while in Britain community cohesion promotes the combining of race or faith with the idea of being British (for a comparative study of ethnic minorities in France and Britain, see Raymond

and Modood 2007). The Netherlands was in many ways a pioneer of multiculturalism with its Ethnic Minorities Policy (Minderhedennota) of 1983 and ample provisions for state-funded autonomous schools and broadcasting, combined with a social democratic approach to social housing, welfare benefits and an affirmative action in employment. Several events, however, contributed to relegating multiculturalism to the 'dung-hill of history' in the Netherlands by 2005, notably the reaction to the murders of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh (Modood 2007, p.13).

Given the internal and external representation of ethnicity and the relevance of group boundaries, the articulation of ethnicity in cultural production appears to necessitate a multi-layered analysis. Under which conditions is ethnicity mobilised in cultural production? Does it constitute an advantage or a drawback in providing the source of creative inspiration? To what extent is the experience of cultural products shaped by group boundaries and identifications?

# 4.

## **Migrants in the cultural industries**

Since the Second World War, the market orientation and job characteristics of migrants have manifested a tendency to become concentrated at the lower end of the market, in low-value added activities, with low incomes and modest prospects for social mobility (Waldinger, Aldrich et al. 1990; Smallbone, Bertotti et al. 2005). In post-industrial urban economies, migrants from less-developed countries have generally speaking taken up lower wage and skills jobs in the manufacturing and service sector, or, when self-employed, run small shops (e.g. grocery stores) or restaurants at the lower end of the market (Jones, Barrett et al. 2000; Panayiotopoulos 2006. ).

Research on migrant entrepreneurship has mainly focused its attention on the interaction between the resources mobilized by migrants and the opportunity structures which they face. The type of businesses migrants have established and the sectors they have integrated have been seen as the result of the interaction between specific assets they can

***“We are not fake mixes. Being from one tradition does not preclude encountering other traditions”***

**(Interview n.2, musician)**

draw upon and a ‘time and place’ specific set of circumstances (Waldinger, Aldrich et al. 1990; Light and Rosenstein 1995; Light 2005; Kloosterman forthcoming). Starting from a criticism of earlier frameworks (Waldinger, Aldrich et al. 1990), with their overemphasis on cultural causality and neglect of opportunity conditions, Kloosterman and Rath went further with the ‘mixed embeddedness’ approach. This links consumer demand to the opportunity structure in which migrants operate, so that the outcome of the interaction also includes what migrants are permitted to supply, given the institutional, social and economic context in which they operate (Kloosterman and Rath 2001; Kloosterman forthcoming).

Changes in, on the one hand, the opportunity structure of urban economies and, on the other, in the set of resources that migrants from less-developed countries bring with them, have however contributed to a shift in local labour markets (Kloosterman forthcoming), resulting in adjustments to the matching between supply (of labour) and demand (from markets). Increasingly migrants, particularly second generation, are ‘breaking out’ of more traditional industrial sectors and into other occupational branches such as producer services and business to business or trade (Engelen 2001; Rušinovic 2006).

## Perspectives on migrant ‘cultural entrepreneurs’

We would here like to shift the attention towards the creative contribution of migrants to more culture-centred sectors of activity, where we would expect the role played by ethnic resources, taking abstraction of human capital resources, to be significant in terms of the ability to draw upon a diversity of cultural and symbolic content. In doing so, we develop here an analytical framework for analyzing the markets in which migrant cultural entrepreneurs negotiate their career paths in the cultural industries.

First, we would like to zoom into the ‘primary resource’ at hand: that is the diverse cultural repertoire which a migrant might be able to draw from. It has been said that some migrant groups are more able than others to ‘activate’ their cultural repertoire, to the extent that in some cases this might even be ‘constructed’ (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). Invented traditions can develop as a result of a desire to establish a form of continuity with the past through a “set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain

***“My style is to follow fashion and trends, do what is in, but with an African twist, I do it my way with African prints. I mix fashion (je métisse la mode). If you want Europeans to wear the clothes, you have to mix the styles.”***

**(Interview n.30, designer)**

values and norms of behaviour by repetition [...]. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition” (Hobsbawm 1983, p.1f). Invented traditions can therefore fulfil establishing social cohesion or collective identities.

Here, we would like to focus our attention on the notion of ethnicity as a set of resources which convey “any and all features of the whole group” (Light 2002, p.185), insofar as its mobilisation in the context of a cultural endeavour may open up a set of opportunities and competitive advantages in business. ‘Ethnic’ in this context is used ‘primarily in contexts of cultural difference, where cultural difference is associated above all with an actual or commonly perceived shared ancestry, with language markers and with national or regional origin’ (Fenton 1999, p.4). More specifically, ethnic resources are considered as being available to the members



of an ethnic community who share the common origin and culture of the group and “actively participate in shared activities where common origin and culture are important ingredients” (Yoon 1991, p.318). Some observers have gone so far as to argue that ‘immigrant entrepreneurs enjoy an advantage over potential competitors outside the group’ and that ethnicity ‘can carve out economic niches that foster immigrant entrepreneurship’ (Evans 1989, p.951).

The entrepreneur is not so much someone who introduces new ideas, but rather someone who implements new combinations of existing ideas to create innovative products and processes which go beyond satisfying demand, in a periodical cycle of ‘creative destruction’. Schumpeter characterises the entrepreneur as a “revolutionary of the economy”, an outsider to the class from which he originates and to the milieu to which he rises. As such, innovations always entail the rise of “new men” (Schumpeter 1934). As the entrepreneur strives to achieve new combinations of resources and forces within reach, we put forward a typology of ‘migrant cultural entrepreneur’: by drawing on a different cultural repertoire and offering a different perspective on cultural activities, she or he can potentially act as a key stimulus in the renewal and innovation of the local cultural economy.



*Figure 7 - the Sonima record shop in the Château d'Eau neighbourhood, Paris*

As discussed above, models of migrant entrepreneurship that take into account a supply and demand side are useful in the context of this research, insofar as they attempt to explore the matching processes between type of (cultural) products and their consumers. On the demand side, globalisation effectively broadens consumer demand for culturally exotic and specialised products and services (Collins, Morrissey et al. 1995, p.101). Capitalism itself ‘is moving into a phase in which the cultural forms and meanings of its outputs are becoming critical if not dominating elements of productive strategy, and in which the realm of human culture as a whole is increasingly subject to commodification [...] the culture we consume is to an ever greater degree supplied through profit-making institutions in decentralized markets’ (Scott 2000, p.2). In general terms, ‘growing consumer acceptance of, and effective demand for, foreign products, strengthens ethnic minority and immigrant businesses’ (Light 2005). On the other hand, other observers have pointed towards difficulties in ‘gaining acceptance in mainstream markets’ due to a lack of exposure to diversity. A need to break the ‘typecasting/stereotyping’ often associated with products with (perceived) strong ethnic component often appears necessary (Smallbone et al. 2004).

On the supply side, ethnic goods, such as exotic goods related to the homeland, provide migrants with an opportunity to ‘convert both the contents and the symbols of ethnicity into profit-making commodities’ (Waldinger 2000, p.136). Ethnic content of products ‘can also be created in response to conditions and out of cultural materials in the host society’. There can

be a creation of hybrid cultural mix, and expansion of what is 'normative' within the mainstream – as can be seen in music for instance, where 'ethnic' elements become part of the mainstream repertoire (Alba and Nee 1997, p.833), allowing migrants to break out of ethnic market niches into mainstream markets (Ram and Jones 1998).

Different strategies have varying degrees of concentration, which imply a certain role for spatiality in entrepreneurial strategies. Jones et al. introduced a 'geographical market hierarchy' which refers to the fact that strategies should be distinguished not just by target clientele but also by whether they are targeting local markets or not (Jones, Barrett et al. 2000). In this perspective, research has also shown how many migrant businesses have been able to enhance their competitiveness by exploiting their diaspora links and extensive social networks (Menzies, Brenner et al. 2000). Migrants are, arguably, the most literal embodiment of the overarching process of globalisation, whereby a variety of links between spatially disparate places are developed and intensified (Held, McGrew et al. 1999). Globalisation 'moves the interactionist context to a higher level, now asking about the fit between ethnic economies and a global opportunity structure with local nodes [...]. Promoting the interdependence of economies, globalization increases the advantageousness of the biculturalism and bilingualism that immigrant entrepreneurs typically enjoy (Light 2005, p.661)<sup>12</sup>. As a result of globalisation, local ethnic economies are increasingly integrated into

*“If someone is putting you down, they are wasting their time. And I can feel that being African has got me a lot more attention because I am doing stuff that is different from a lot of the other designers.”*

*(Interview n.28, fashion designer)*

global production and distribution chains<sup>13</sup> (Pécoud 2000; Portes, Guarnizo et al. 2002). Some have employed the term glocalisation, to refer to the complex and dynamic interrelationship between local cultural scenes and industries and the international marketplace (Shuker 1998, p.132).

Many businesses set up by migrants initially target their group members with specific “ethnic products” which typically refer to the country of origin. Foodstuffs, but also music and films are very much part of these “ethnic businesses”. Migrant artists may face, in principle, the choice between targeting the mainstream and targeting a much more circumscribed “ethnic” audience. We argue that in the cultural industries, there are parallel value chains, separating so to speak ‘mainstream product cycles’ from ‘ethnic niche’ markets, where migrants might also be operating.<sup>14</sup> This is exemplified in Figure 8 below.

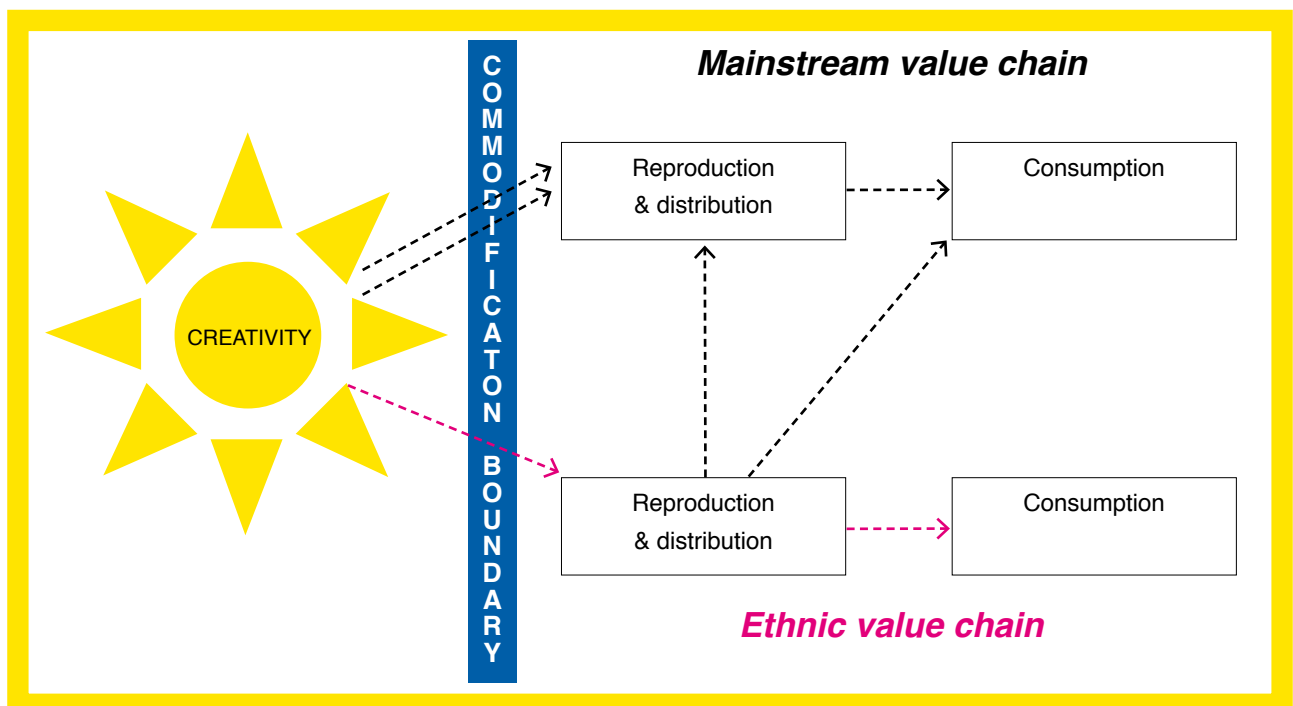


Figure 8 - Mainstream and ethnic value chains in the cultural industries

The boundaries between the two value chains are not watertight as migrants may ‘break out’ of ethnic niche markets at the reproduction and consumption stages (Connell and Gibson 2003). At the same time, ‘mainstream’ markets are shaped by influences from ethnic niche markets, and vice versa. We also see the emergence of hybridisation of cultural forms, as influences from across the world shape local cultural industries products, increasingly de-territorialising place and identity within local cultural production systems \ (for an insight into the world music industry, see Connell and Gibson 2003). Still, migrants seem to be faced with two different thresholds with rather diverse requirements and also with divergent trajectories in terms of audience, style, and potential success in the music business. On the one hand, they might opt for the mainstream – with its potential of large audiences - but then it might prove hard to gain access to the relevant gatekeepers and chances of crossing the commodification boundary would consequently be slim. Migrants could also, on the other hand, choose the relative safety of the “ethnic” market, with a smaller, but ‘captive’, audience and the possibility of becoming “trapped” in an ethnic niche but with a much lower barrier of entry. We would expect therefore to find parallel production chains, with different sets of gatekeepers: the creativity, production, distribution and consumption would here occur in mostly parallel, occasionally cross-fertilising networks of actors and milieus (Brandellero 2008).

## Framework for the analysis of migrant cultural entrepreneurship market typologies

We would here like to focus on the type of markets migrant cultural entrepreneurs might operate in, as entrepreneurs operating in a culturally diverse milieu. The assimilation hypothesis, whereby it was assumed that over time and generations, migrants would move out of ethnic enclaves, discarding their social, cultural background, while experiencing economic mobility, has given way to a view of a pluralistic society, in which diversity persists and assimilation is no longer perceived as an inevitable and necessarily one-way process of integration. Some authors have discussed the extent to which ethnicity plays a role in migrant entrepreneurship, often leading to a deterministic, ethno-centric approach to entrepreneurship strategies (Waldinger, Aldrich et al. 1990). Exploring, on the one hand, the type of products offered and the targeted clientele, we would expect a spectrum of approaches to enterprise, ranging from a more ethnic-based to a non-ethnic based product range, highlighting different market typologies in which migrants cultural entrepreneurs might wish to operate (Engelen 2001; Rušinovic 2006).

		Consumer specification	
		Ethnic	Non-ethnic
Products specification	Ethnic	1) Ethnic market	2) Intermediary market
	Non-ethnic	2) Niche market	3) Mainstream market

Table 4 - Typology of migrant entrepreneurship markets (source Rušinovic 2006)

Where migrants would opt for the mobilization of their ethnic resources targeting a co-ethnic community more directly, we would see the emergence of an ethnic market catering for more specific tastes and needs a community might have in terms of goods and services (eg. specific products, brands). We would argue that we are here in the presence of a form of reproduction of tastes and consumer patterns, rather than the formulation of new aesthetics. However, where the product-base broadens, we find niche markets, offering a range of non-ethnic specific products as well. In the literature, these are often referred to as vacancy chain operations, where migrants come to occupy sectors or businesses which have been left by ‘natives’ due to market saturation or low margins – let us think about the corner shops offering a range of products and

controlled by specific ethnic groups (Kloosterman forthcoming). The third market typology is represented by the confluence of non-ethnic clientele and ethnic products, known as middlemen or intermediary markets. This refers to the middleman minority theory developed by Bonacich (drawing from Weber 1927; Bonacich 1972), relating to those expert 'alien merchants' supported by colonial elites, except at times of customer turmoil, when the support often turned to brutal repression (Light 2005). This typology can be seen as an innovative strategy to tap into new markets through a wider distribution circuit (Engelen 2001), going beyond the ethnic niche and reaching out to a wider consumer base, thus stimulating the emergence of new, 'exotic' tastes and consumption patterns. In the fourth category, economic assimilation highlights conformity to the preferences of the public at large and indicates a shift away from a more ethnic clientele, towards the mainstream (Waldinger, Aldrich et al. 1990). Mainstream here is intended as the sum of the current common trends, which is available to the general public, 'a prevailing current or direction of activity or influence'<sup>14</sup>.

We argue that in the cultural industries, the boundaries between these four market typologies are particularly porous and that creative workers can experience dynamic trajectories crossing 'boxes'. Various caveats can be mentioned here. As

***“The more variety you have, the more people begin to be able to find a space that might accommodate them”***

***(Interview n.17, architect)***

we have seen in our discussion of ethnicity, culture and diversity, the ethnic 'label' is one heavily laden with judgment, expectations and stereotypes. This typology strives to reflect ranges within a spectrum, rather than fixed market categories. In addition, the idea of a mainstream raises several additional questions: what does mainstream actually refer to nowadays? Is the mainstream not subject to constant negotiation as global influences, trends, historical and socio-economic changes add and take from its scope? As for how cultural industries 'work', it is in the very nature of cultural activities to draw inspiration from a variety of sources, making it extremely problematic to pinpoint the exact source.

While the boundaries between groups remain a crucial element of analysis, it is interesting to explore the boundary dynamics at work. Ethnic groups were seen as 'categories of ascription [i.e. by outsiders] and identification by the actors themselves' (Barth 1969, p. 10). While pointing towards the importance of boundaries, Barth raised an important point: that the boundaries are nonetheless semi-permeable, allowing for osmosis of members through them, i.e. belonging to one group is not a permanent state but can lead to transition to another group (Barth 1969, p.9,21). One example of this is given by 'black music' performed by white singers in the United States in the 1950s and early 60s.

We would argue that these boundary dynamics play a role in shaping the production and consumption of cultural industries goods, as well as shaping the market typology in which migrant cultural entrepreneurs operate. We here refer to boundary crossing, blurring, and shifting, as identified by Alba and Nee (Alba and Nee 2003), and boundary sharpening, particularly through ethnicization (Koot and Rath 1987). Boundary crossing occurs when an individual moves from one group to another, without this phenomenon changing the boundary itself. Boundary blurring, on the other hand, reflects a change in the boundary, when the social distinction between groups becomes less clear. Boundary shifting, as the term implies, refers to a relocation of the boundary, which comes to modify the balance between insiders/outsideers (Alba and Nee 2003). Boundaries between groups can however also taper, intensifying the (perception of or actual) social distance between groups (see Koot and Rath 1987).

When exploring the question of ethnic diversity in the cultural industries, our attention should thus focus on the boundary between the two ends of the spectrum presented in Table 4: ethnic markets and the mainstream. We posit that rather than looking at them as 'opposites', in our globalised world, these two typologies are increasingly interwoven and part of each other's realities. There is therefore not just a porous boundary, but a gradual and incremental process of osmosis: on the one hand, the mainstream increasingly comes to incorporate elements from the ethnic niche; on the other, the ethnic niche is shaped by the mainstream, particularly as traditional styles are adapted and reinvented. Research carried out on Asian designers in London highlighted that women from the Asian diaspora 'have used global commodities and consumer products to create new local interpretations of cultural identity [...] patterns [which] emerge from their sophisticated command of the symbolic and political economies in which they are located' (Bachu 1988, p.189).



The idea of a boundary between minority and mainstream echoes the multicultural ideal, a new social order concept mostly associated with immigration in post-war Europe. Multiculturalism though still puts forward a schematic conception of society which identifies a majority and a minority, and has therefore been surpassed in theoretical terms, raising questions on overlapping identities and their common ground, and opening up the field for the more reflexive approach of intercultural dialogue (Europe 2008).

## Cultural industries: the diversity of a sector

Cultural industries are the object of budding research. In its early years, a strong focus of research was on taxonomies and definitions, a track that encountered considerable difficulties due to lack of, or uneven, data, different definitional boundaries and the lingering and unresolved question of the relation between cultural industries and the knowledge economy and 'creative industries' as a whole (for an overview, see Pratt 2008).

While the distinguishing features of cultural industries, both in the features of their products and the way of production, have been highlighted above, it remains to be said that much diversity can be found within the sector. For our exploration, we have chosen to focus on three sectors: architecture, fashion and music. The reasons behind this choice are manifold, as exemplified in table 5 below.

Capital requirements	<i>Human capital</i>	The entry-level requirements in terms of human capital vary greatly across the three sectors. In architecture, rigorous formal training is a must, whereas in music and fashion the trajectories may also be informal and based on learning by doing. In fashion though, the role of specific schools is increasingly becoming a 'quality assurance' element (see for instance the London School of Fashion).
	<i>Financial capital</i>	Investment needed to start and the costs involved in the production of cultural products in these three sectors also vary.
	<i>Social capital and networks</i>	Architects work alongside other (technical) professionals, such as planners, decorators, engineers etc.
Symbolic and functional value of the object requirements	<i>Degree of functionality</i>	In architecture, the degree of functionality is high. Fashion can be considered as hybrid in this respect, combining functionality with symbolic value. In music, the level of functionality is relatively low
	<i>Individual and group use</i>	A work of architecture is generally speaking for multiple users. In fashion, there might be unique, tailor-made pieces or ready-to-wear creations. Music presents on the one side a mechanical reproduction side, and on the other the place and time specific characteristics of live performances.
Space and time implications	<i>Place-based specificities.</i>	Due to its immobile nature, a work of architecture is inextricably linked to the place where it is located. This also translates in its need to comply with the rules, regulations and planning environment in which it is located.
	<i>Mobile and immobile nature</i>	Building on the last point, the three industries vary in their degree of mobility. While architectural products are generally speaking immobile, the products of music and fashion can travel more easily. In some cases, the place of production is important: if we take the case of the Paris fashion designers can aspire to receiving the appellation of haute couture only if their studios and creations are based in the city. The immobile aspect of architecture results in a need to take into account the wider historical, social, economic and cultural field in which a work is located, making the question of 'fitting in' more pressing.
	<i>Degree of permanence</i>	Architecture gives rise to objects with a longer lifespan, as opposed to fashion. In music, the objects can 'fall into oblivion' or simply become obsolete because of changes to the musical formats (the switch from vinyl to CD for instance meant that a lot of previously recorded music became inaccessible).

Table 5 - Cultural industries intra-sectoral diversity

## Architecture

As the activity to design and construct buildings and other physical structures, architecture combines a visionary approach (imagining the building) with its technical application (what is possible and feasible in the given circumstances). Due to its semi-permanent nature, works of architects are a lasting reflection of the symbols and signs of a specific era and place. In this sense, architecture has played a significant role in place-promotion campaigns (lest us think for instance of the much cited Sydney Opera House or the Bilbao Guggenheim museum) and in the identity or brand of the 'strong idea place' (see McNeill 2005). This is also what makes architecture a 'technically and aesthetically rooted' cultural industry, insofar as it has to comply with the rules, regulations and planning environment of the place, but also the history, discourses and symbols pertinent to where the architecture product is located. A striking element of architecture is its high level of globalisation: the irruption in recent years of the so-called Superdutch generation of architects on the international scene and the emergence of the figure of the 'global architect' have been elsewhere noted (McNeill 2005; Kloosterman 2008).



*Figure 9 - The DGT Architectes team : Tsuyoshi Tane, Lina Ghotmeh and Dan Dorrel, Paris*

A study of diversity in architecture in the United States has highlighted the experiences of women and minorities in the sector: some of the main conclusions were pointing towards high levels of discrimination, glass-ceilings, salary inequality. However, the most striking point was the low level of diversity overall: architecture is still predominantly a white, male, middle class profession. In 2004, Zaha Hadid, of British Iraqi origin, became the first woman to win the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize, the profession's highest recognition. In addition, architecture's value system was deemed 'out of touch' with the experiences and needs of increasingly diverse users (Anthony 2001). Research in the UK, carried out by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, also indicated low levels of participation by black and minority ethnic groups in related education and professions, citing 'eroding confidence' as one causal explanation of low levels of progression of minorities within the sector (CABE 2005).

In the UK, several initiatives have been set up to address the issue of lack of diversity and visibility for minority groups. In 2000, the Royal Institute for British Architects (RIBA) set up the forum Architects for Change, to 'challenge and support' the institute in its strive towards equality of opportunities and diversity in the architectural profession. This forum brings together, among others, the networks Society for Black Architects and Women in Architecture. The forum's mission has a dual field of operation, focusing on both architectural education and practice. One of the initiatives taken by the forum has been a world-touring exhibition showcasing the diversity of London architecture (see [Diversecity-architects.com](http://Diversecity-architects.com)), which took place between 2003 and 2008. In the Netherlands, a similar, albeit local, exhibition, was organised by the Amsterdam Centre for Architecture (ARCAM) in 2008, giving an insight into the diversity among architects living and working in Amsterdam.

## Fashion



*Figure 10 - Imtaz Khaliq, bespoke tailor, London.* PHOTO COURTESY OF IMTAZ KHALIQ

Fashion has been widely researched in terms of its connection to identity, culture and representations of self (Davis 1994) and the idea that 'we say things with the clothes we wear' (Barthes 1990). Initially the prerogative of the aristocracy, fashion has over the centuries become linked to an industrial form of production. Fashion is an interesting 'hybrid' cultural industry, insofar as it combines the functionality and utility of its product with its symbolic and signification value (Hesmondhalgh 2007, p.17). The ability of the designer to translate symbolic content into clothing has been seen as his/her key skills, over and above technical capabilities of actually putting the clothing together (Bourdieu 2004).

The influence of the commercial interests on consumers' tastes has been noted in the case of fashion (see Barthes 1990). Others have noted that most trends are born 'on the streets' as spontaneous, individual events or the expression of sub-cultures: the role of the designer would thus re-appropriate what is already out there (notable cases are those of punk and hip hop). Elements of 'ethnic' fashion are also increasingly integrated into more mainstream trends: Dior's autumn 2008 show saw for instance the mixing of an 80s and African look. The level of institutionalization of fashion as a cultural industry can be noted in the wide-ranging scope of sector-specific press and the highly visible and high profile calendar of fashion events. Celebrity endorsement has also been noted

as key in determining trends and the fate of styles and brands. According to some observers, 'the front row' at a catwalk 'is the raison d'être of the modern fashion show.' For the fashion designer 'the front row means phenomenal publicity'. It would even appear that celebrities are paid to appear (see also Currid 2007; Cartner-Mortley 2009).

The lack of diversity in the world of fashion, particularly in the world of modelling, is a well-known, often discussed 'open secret'. In an interview, a Black fashion designer with a modelling past, reported having been taken off the catwalk at the last minute because 'important clients and investors who did not wish to see Black in the show had arrived' (Interview 19). In the UK, the initiative Mahogany models has in recent years sought to raise the profile of these issues and provide a platform for Black and minority ethnic models. Kulture2Couture is another project aimed at showcasing and promoting London's black African and Caribbean fashion designers 'by raising their profile, acknowledging their contribution to the fashion industry and helping them to achieve their potential'<sup>15</sup>. At the time of writing however, the future of this initiative, partly linked to the former Mayor of London, appears unclear.

## Music

The music industry is an interesting cultural industry case, insofar as it has in recent years in particular been the arena of a struggle between musical content and supporting formats (see Leyshon 2001). In this sense, technological advances have brought drastic changes to the 'ways of consumption' of music, while the reward system for the artistic and creative element is at pains to keep up the pace.

Yet music is not only mediated by a series of technological transformations: cultural, historical, geographical and political factors play a significant role here too (Negus 1996, p.65). The diversity of musical genres though reflects the openness of the sector to influences and niche interests. In the traditional framework of music production, involving a relation between a record company and an artist, the struggle between what is creative and what is commercial (and as a result, viable in economic terms) gave way to a 'hierarchy' of musical categories, with apparent priority given to the industry (Negus 1996). A peculiarity in this sense is the question of world music: an umbrella term rather than genre in its own right, this encompasses all types of music of the 'other' (see 1993; 1993; Guilbault 1997; Connell and Gibson 2003). 'Global

flows of music have become more rapid and numerous as movements of people, whether voluntary or not, have become more widespread. Diasporic networks now connect metropolitan communities across continents; migration maps out lines of cultural flow between cities and homelands' (Connell and Gibson 2003, p.144).



*Figure 11 - Musician Abaji, music as memory, Paris*

An interesting initiative run by the BBC called 'World on your Street' aimed at putting the spotlight on the musical diversity present just around the corner, across the UK. In both the Netherlands and France, many initiatives, particularly under the world music banner, have been taken to showcase locally-based (migrant) musicians (see for instance the Dutch Blend World Music Guide and the French Music Export Office 2004 publication on French World Music).



# 5.

## **Across cultural borders: reflections from the fieldwork**

In the previous section, we presented the parameters shaping our understanding of the interaction between cultural industry production and ethnicity. Here we would like to apply these frameworks to our three research questions, in turn.

# 1. The extent to which ethnic diversity is activated as symbolic and aesthetic fuel to drive innovation in processes of commodification of culture.

Earlier, we referred to the quest for the exotic, for distinction, as a significant causal mechanism in cultural industries production. Here we zoom into the cultural industries' creative and production processes, and explore the conditions under which ethnicity can become the object of commodification, as a conscious/unconscious, strategic or spontaneous source of creative inspiration. An important caveat needs to be specified here: our analysis does not seek to equate the ethnicity of a respondent with a specific, 'ethnic' quality of his or her cultural output. We here refer back to the discussion of the concept of homology presented earlier, whereby equating a culture to a people is a highly contested point. In addition, as we have seen in the market typology, the vehicle for diversity can take the form of intermediaries (or middlemen, as earlier referred to), bringing new, diverse products to a wider consumer base.

We would like to take a critical perspective here: looking at ethnicity as, a more or less defining, resource migrant cultural entrepreneurs can activate (or not, as the case may be) when engaging in cultural production. The dynamics of such activation vary greatly, as we shall see from the fieldwork findings. As a result, ethnicity appears to be part of a repertoire of resources – yet often becomes a defining resource for migrant cultural entrepreneurs – be this from a subjective and/or externally perceived perspective. In other words, ethnicity, among a variety of scenarios, can come to be part of an actively pursued artistic journey, a strategic business choice or personal imperative, or, on the other hand a constraining factor in the positioning of a migrant cultural entrepreneur in relation to his or her audience. This raises a key question: to what extent can we understand the dynamics behind the interaction of ethnicity and cultural production, without understanding 'how' ethnicity comes to matter in cultural industries production?

In order to address this, we would argue that it is necessary to make a fundamental distinction between the cultural product and its creator. While our emphasis leads us to focus on 'cultural industry products', the ethnic background of migrant cultural entrepreneurs can also come into play. Theoretically, a migrant cultural entrepreneur should be in a position to make a more or less conscious choice as to the mobilisation of his or her ethnic background in his or her work. What is important here is to understand the trajectories of migrant cultural entrepreneurs, or cultural entrepreneurs in general, in finding their own 'voice', their creative own identity, beyond the boundaries or labels defining their group or ethnic belonging.

*"My label is Afro-Bohemian and basically. I do African shapes, and our fabrics and textures and I figured well, you need to have an identity so when people see it they know it's yours, so I came up with this sort of it helps you keep, so when you see the collection you see."*

**(Interview n. 28)**

Here the links with ethnicity might be more or less implicit or explicitly explored, yet the search for one's own creative voice can take a variety of 'routes', not all necessarily or systematically delving into a person's 'roots'. Various elements are brought into play: childhood experiences, sounds, daily environments, travels, neighbours, other people's cultures and moeurs. Here the link with ethnicity becomes clear: in its association with culture, descent, a people's shared memories or language (Karner 2007), ethnicity becomes a potential source of inspiration, a 'creative well' (interview 32).



Figure 12 - A shop selling a variety of Indian products in Paris

*"It's still a development", states one fashion designer when referring to his search for his creative identity and style. Memories, images of the past combine, as creative inputs. 'Curacao has this bridge, it's called the Pontjesbrug, it's a small, because you have the capital, it's divided by a harbour, they build this bridge... so this bridge it's dancing on the water. As a child I remember when I was walking on this bridge and the wind, and you see the skirt and everything, because it's open sea over water. And the wind is doing everything with the hair, and you see them, and they are very nice African, because a big part is African. The movements, and my mind I think it went a lot of times as a child, the kind of view I have. ...it was just those things around, I was looking outside that gave me those influences as a child and later on. But the influence if I go back in my mind, it's more like walking on this bridge, or the trees, the grass, the waves when you go swimming. Those things are the main influence I think. And later on when I came to Europe, you see the paintings, architecture, things you have seen on paper or photo and you see them in person, later on those things influenced me I think."*

**(Interview n. 25)**

*"I'm inspired by Africa being a colourful continent, and I get to draw first-hand from an imagery of growing up under the bright yellow sun, surrounded by greenery and red soil. [...] I come from a Tribal Royal family that celebrated festivals with pomp and pageantry. We dress up in our customary wear (the woven cloth called the Kente) and adorned in gold jewels for official engagements and sit before a large gathering. This gave me a proud feeling about the richness of my culture and its traditional values. There is a much to draw for that"*

**(Interview n. 32)**

Finding one's creative voice and identity is also about one's vision of the world and understanding that a subjective perspective is just one among a variety of possibilities. 'I've been thinking about this over the last couple of years' states one architect 'finding my own voice. What I mean by that is that you realize that, I realize that the way you understand the world, you kind of try and understand it, you see it through your eyes and your version of the world that you have, you need to try things out and you need to have a kind of belief that what you are doing is worthwhile, you need to have the confidence' (interview 5). Finding one's voice also entails the confidence and determination to carry it forward, defining one's work and other people's perspective on it. 'It takes time to understand that we are unique. [...] You have to understand better who you are' (interview 2). This is a challenging process: one where the different aesthetic systems can collide and clash. This can lead to confrontation, exclusion, but also synergies and artistic innovation.

*"Culture more so than colour/ethnicity can have a positive effect on creative inspiration. But drawing inspiration from external cultures can also invite exclusion or lead to a certain sense of alienation from the wider society or mainstream British fashion industry. Though the creative arts might be presumed to embrace eclecticism and fluid experimentalism, the commercialisation of mass-market tastes often functions via the perpetuation of specific labels centred on homogenised tastes and preferences."*

**(Interview n 18)**



**Figure 13 - Record shop in the Paris Goutte d'Or neighbourhood**

At the same time, the cultural industry product created becomes a vehicle of expression and communication. 'I want architecture to be a tool to discuss and express the richness of different cultures so it becomes a vehicle to, so that architecture is not just a dumb form but it has abilities to show off, to express, to enhance, to promote cultural discourses' (interview 31). The fluidity of expression in cultural industry products would thus provide a further communication channel for cultural encounters, exchanges and synergies. The cultural product becomes a means to express diversity and in some cases, an imperative dialogue with one's origins.

*"I am unique and different, representing the music of my country, with special instruments. [...] The rhythms are different from the West, they are very happy, dancy' and again 'I brought my culture to this country. I never ignore my country in my art."*

**(Interview n. 4)**

For others, connecting to one's background is not an immediate, obvious choice in their work. This journey is more than a direct form of delving into one's roots, rather it takes the form of a deeper understanding and connection. 'For the last few years, I've been looking at how my background could become a source of inspiration in my work, you know, not in a pastiche kind of way [...] in a kind of deep cultural and historical understanding (interview 31).

However, what emerges clearly from the interviews is a discussion on the 'labelling' and stereotyping that often accompanies an ethnic minority background. As a result, ethnicity becomes a structuring force (most) migrant cultural entrepreneurs have to reckon with, insofar as it can modulate expectations by others. Here the literature is helpful in its analysis of the externally and internally perceived boundary dynamics we have explored in the previous sections. The presence of borders between aesthetic systems and tastes, along ethnicity lines, emerges. However, these lines are not just 'inter-group'. In some cases, from 'within a group', relations can also be permeated with expectations and a sense of compliance to a certain style. 'The funny thing is' stated one fashion designer 'that when I am dealing with African people they tell me 'Hey, isn't your fashion a bit too European?' [...] and sometimes some Europeans say 'Hey, this is African'. [...] We have to break this down' referring to this stereotyping (interview 19). Hence, this acts a stark reminder about the ease of falling into the stereotype trap, where a lack of awareness and understanding of the other can lead to broad generalisations and the permanence of boundaries and distance.

*"I started a fashion trend introducing Africa to corsets. Many people (of African descent) criticised me. They said I was denying my roots, I was mistaking myself for a white person. But women loved it, they thought my clothes were beautiful. Before this, African clothes (for special occasions) were the boubou (kaftan). But I didn't want clothes where people think 'the weather is nice, you're in Africa'"*

**(Interview n. 21)**

The internal/external perspective and anticipation related to the ethnicity of the migrant cultural entrepreneur appears sometimes to clash with his or her positioning in relation to the market typologies explored earlier. Often the link to one's origin can be a constraining element. In our exploration, it appears that among the three cultural industry sectors selected, the relation between the migrant cultural entrepreneurs, their ethnic backgrounds and the level of embeddedness of their cultural products in the ethnic background (if any) varies greatly. For some artistes, being an ambassador of a musical culture is both an opportunity and a challenge: some refuse to adopt a 'traditional costume' when playing, to appear more authentic in the eyes of a Western audience (interview n°2). For others, this is a more conscious choice, a question of identity worth fighting for.

*"By the time my parents gave me a choice 'cut my hair or keep the turban', I was already playing my instrument, and I thought about it and I thought, I play an Indian instrument and it's only going to look good, the proper look with the turban, so I decided to keep it. So no, I am not going to cut my hair, I am going to wear my turban. I don't care how many fights I have, I am going to keep it, I am going to fight for it"*

**(Interview n.13)**





Figure 14 - Laurindo, fashion designer, Amsterdam

Others produce different versions of the same album, one for their country of origin, one for Western ears (see for example Youssou n'Dour). In world music, the commodification of culture is thus confronted with questions of representation of ethnicity and authenticity. Looking at what world music currently encompasses, it should be 'inclusive', meaning that its loose classification should allow to host under its banner the most diverse musical influences (Haynes 2004, p.371). In some cases, 'difference is packaged as normative expression of ethnic identity (Haynes 2004 p.381). Here an 'essentialised idea of music is tied to the expression of difference of specific ethnic groups or nations (Haynes 2005, p.372). However, there is no 'essentialised' identity, but rather a continuum (Connell and Gibson 2003) between authenticity and its instrumentalisation in music production (Brandellero, Calenge et al. 2008).

*"There are people who miscalculate their links to African traditions in their fashion designs. I mean, if you want to want to have some Japanese influences in your clothes, it doesn't mean that you have to dress up as a Japanese! You should think about what an Italian (referring to the interview) wears and bring something new, something different to what she wears. I am not going to impose something. I am an African stylist, but it doesn't mean that I can only do something nice by doing something original' (here he meant original in the sense of using African influences). Yes people label me, but it's also our (African people's) fault. We are in Paris, we have to adapt. I don't want to have an African label. When people come to my shop, they expect to find an African shop. But African people can also do other things!"*

**(Interview n. 21)**

On the one hand, this can be based on prejudice in reason of the minority background; on the other, it can be linked to assumptions as to how migrant cultural entrepreneurs might relate to their background in their creations. 'Sometimes I say I am Asian in a press thing, and then I think 'Oh, that's going to limit who takes notice of that, because unless you are doing something that is you know, using it, if it's part of your work, whereas it's not really part of my work, being Asian' (interview 20).



Figure 15 - Sadio Bee, mixing fashion traditions, Paris

Drawing an 'ethnic boundary' around the process of creativity is thus restricting and fails to pick up on a key feature of creativity itself, notably the fluctuating and boundless reach of inspiration. The present, the past, current and recalled contexts and places come to the fore.

*"The beauty of textile art from all across the globe inspires. The natural environment as a rich and varied colour palette provides immense inspiration. [...] Inspiration is always all around. Channelling it often requires the same kind of soul-searching that a person lends to finding their spiritual direction! It's quite an organic process actually!"*

**(Interview n. 18)**

*"I draw my inspiration from Paris, this is where I live. I am not in Africa. I live in a big city, this is the reality, this is where I spend my time. I travelled to China and got some inspiration there, which I integrated in my clothes (pointing to a dress on display)."*

**(Interview n. 21)**

The role of the metropolis as a source of inspiration is also clearly referred to. Traditions and culture come to take place alongside one's surroundings at the inspiration banquet (interview 32). 'Absolutely, yes' states one fashion designer. 'London is one of the biggest fashion inspiring cities in the world, we have some of the most creative designers that inspire me. We also have great dress-sense that is expressive and influential' (interview 32). London is seen as a place where all influences are brought together and mixed (interview 28). Across the channel, there is talk of connecting to the signs of the times, as we have seen, an important element of the definition of aesthetic systems. 'I look around and I adapt, I imbue myself with Paris's air du temps, and that in itself is not self-evident' (interview 19). The 'sign of our times' becomes a representation of our metropolitan cultural crossroads, where synergies come to life and where ethnic and cultural boundaries are in constant shift.

*“The métissage (literally, miscegenation, the mixing of races – but in this context it should be meant as the mixing of African and European styles) is alive in our big cities. People come from the world over. You can witness the mixing of elements. [...] Different trends are part of the environment of big cities. Some are rather reticent. They say ‘African prints! They don’t belong to European culture!’ But in large cities, people can be more open, they live side by side with people from different cultures.”*

**(Interview n. 4)**

Connecting to the place of residence, to the metropolis, is not just a question of inspiration. It is also a more strategic choice in relation to one’s positioning in a context of supply and demand. Here we enter the cultural industries production chain. This is where the ‘commodification boundary’ is crossed. From a logic of artistic creativity we move to a more ‘humdrum logic’ (Caves 2000), where commercial considerations start shaping the choices and strategies of migrant cultural entrepreneurs and their positioning in relation to an audience, a market. To take but one example, Paris in many ways chrysalises all the phases of world music production, from creativity to production, from distribution to consumption. The city presents a thick nebula of world music actors, from all parts of the production chain (Brandellero and Calenge 2008). The city has become a sounding board for hybrid forms, a testing ground, given its receptive producers and audiences, as well assuming a key role as a centre of expertise, of painstaking cataloguing of the human musical heritage, patronaging the preservation of traditions and their dissemination (Winders 2006).



**Figure 16 - Imane Ayissi, fashion designer and writer, Paris**

The metropolis becomes a learning ground where one’s creativity is confronted with a product’s commercial prospects in an ecosystem of commodification of culture. Diversity becomes a source of innovation for the fashion world (interview 32). Yet it sometimes needs to be adapted to a new context, a new aesthetic system. ‘The ability to dilute certain things, to mix styles, to soften certain silhouettes. This is what Paris taught me’ (interview 19). In the metropolis, the ‘academic distinction between heritage/tradition and urban/contemporary music is surpassed: we are witnessing a rep-



representative mosaic of living culture (Lecomte 2005). Cultural products come to be part of defining consumption patterns, shaping the relations between cultures and highlighting the evolution of local/global connections and linkages between communities of belonging and of taste.

*“Nowadays, people travel, the world is on the move, things change and I believe that tomorrow’s world will be about métissage, mixing people and the acceptance of other. I think this process occurs through material things: clothes, the way we talk, hairstyles, not forgetting our identity, where we come from”*

**(Interview n. 19)**

Negotiating a position between being creative and living through one’s creativity is subject to several dynamic forces, which we explore in more detail in the next section.

## **2. The dynamics through which the mediation of tastes and trends within the cultural industries comes to shape the boundaries between ethnic/non-ethnic cultural products.**

The mainstream cultural trends borne by our metropolitan areas are apt to incorporate elements from (ethnic) niches, in a process of cultural osmosis. As we saw earlier, our market typology highlights a spectrum from ethnic niche markets to mainstream assimilation of ‘ethnic’ products. While the boundaries are porous, there is a sense of ‘breaking out’ or making a transition when accessing a wider audience. In a way, as elements of the ethnic niche are incorporated into the mainstream, they acquire a newfound legitimacy. ‘I think what is happening’ stated one interviewee ‘is the ‘Born Again Africans’, suddenly we are realising ‘you know what, I must stop this, it’s pretty cool’ so it’s catching on, but it’s almost as if it’s because the West has endorsed it now, suddenly it’s cool to wear it’ (Interview n.28).

In some cases, music that has been totally forgotten in its place of origin experiences a resurgence once it is known in Europe, with a kind of ‘boomerang effect’, as is the case for some traditional forms of music brought under the gaze of curious and knowledgeable ethnomusicologists. According to the journalist Hettie Judah, ‘the message is clear: when white people adopt Asian fashions, deck their houses out in Asian fabrics and furniture and mix samples of Asian instruments into their music, they embody mainstream fashion. When Asians make music, theatre or film, their work is classified as underground or fringe’<sup>16</sup>. This point was echoed in two Parisian interviews, when the fashion house Givenchy’s adoption of Malian textiles for a 2007 show raised great enthusiasm for African prints, while also highlighting the struggle for recognition for African designers based in Paris working with such materials. In the view of one respondent, ‘had it been an African designer, they would have shouted ‘this is too African, too ethnic’ or maybe people wouldn’t even have talked about it. But since it’s a big (fashion) house, with a lot of resources, with a big name, Givenchy [...], then it was pure genius’ (interview 19).

Previously ‘niche’ products linked to ethnic communities’ production and consumption patterns become part of the mainstream, while others remain within the confines of group boundaries. Recognition from the ‘West’ acts as a sounding board for trends elsewhere and shapes practices ‘back’ in the country of origin, while others decry a form of ‘cultural-plagiarism’ (interview 19). Ethnic influences in fashion continue to progress, particularly African fashion. ‘We’re seeing more and more of it as the seasons come by’ (interview 32).

*“Even when we are back in Nigeria, what we sort of, you always get to see the Western clothes, the Western this, the Western that. You don’t see what we do. A couple of years ago African print came back in and it’s really in now. And it’s almost like ‘oh well, if the West thinks it’s cool then they know”*

**(Interview n. 28)**

Often, the presence of different aesthetics, of different taste systems and ways of seeing the world can be a source of conflict and exclusion. One fashion designer experienced this first hand during his training at art school, where he felt part of the teaching was imposing a different concept of beauty upon him. 'It's what they want to see. What they are expecting even. And sometimes they can just (try to) move you towards that direction, towards what is beautiful [...] when I was at the academy, I had a big fight with the designer teacher there because it was like, I came from Curacao and he was trying to tell me what is beautiful. [...] (H)ow come you're in this position to teach people, if you are telling me that it's right, your eyes are telling me, there is something in your eyes, no I don't believe that' (interview 25). Often the question of aesthetic judgement often startles creative agents: 'Who says that this piece of geometry is better than that piece of geometry? [...] Really, at the end of the day, I am the one who says mine is better, or hopefully I'll get a friend of mine to tell everybody else that it's better or I won't, but that's what it is' (interview 5).



*Figure 17 - A Maame Baryeh fashion design, photo courtesy of Jordan Matyka, London*

One fashion designer stated that coming to Paris, he had to get to know the preferences and tastes of the 'international woman', while respecting the techniques and influences of his own country of origin and of different continents. The learning process also involved getting to know how to 'embed' different elements in different cultures, playing with materials, colours and accessories' [...] 'When one moves from one country to another, fashion also changes' (interview 19). Applying an element of one tradition to a different culture also requires an adaptation in terms of styles and sizes. 'I do. I've got my high-end and I've got my diffusion which I call *Afromania* which is African prints, but I make them fun, they are more for sort of appealing to everyone. I tried to make it young, wearable and different' (interview 28). Reaching a broader consumer base is not just a commercial concern, but reflects the desire to communicate to a wider audience through one's cultural product. 'We always aspire to continue to reach as broad an audience as possible with our work (interview 18) says one fashion designer. Customer bases show that boundaries are very often transcended and viewing products from an 'ethnic niche' perspective can give a narrow view of the appeal of a product. 'We have a large range of countries buying our collections, a mix of cultures and different origins, Spain, Japan, Senegal, Canada, Brazil, South Korea, Italy, Saudi Arabia, France, Lebanon, Taiwan, Indonesia, Egypt, Morocco, USA, Romania etc. This demonstrates the variety of cultures which identity with the same creation' (interview 14). And in the words of another fashion designer: 'Funnily my clients, it's not really Africans. It's funny because the one African shop that I have clothes in, they don't fly, the other shop I have my things in, they just fly out of the door. Their customers are English people, Jamaicans, Blacks, Whites, all sorts of people but so I

don't think my customers are African. Maybe it's because African print, I didn't even like it' (interview 28), again highlighting the problematic nature of labels and their heavy weight of expectations.

*"I still enjoy cultural ties with all 3 countries of origin (Tanzania, Kenya & Ghana) and love to infuse that influence within my design, whilst also embracing a distinctly British style sensibility."*

**(Interview n. 18)**

The struggle for migrant musicians engaging in world music production highlighted the presence of a different aesthetic 'conflict'. Here the struggle is often one of positioning in relation to notions of "authenticity" and the idea of a pure, immutable sound lodged in a traditional musical style. The mediation of 'authenticity' in world music appears to be the key to market entry for migrant musicians based in Paris, imposing a spectrum of readings of ethnic resources and ethnicity, ranging from essentialised to hybrid. As a consequence, while the ethnic repertoires mobilised by migrant musicians may offer a competitive edge, it is nonetheless confronted with varied logics of music production. Here the interpretations vary: what is authentic *au pays* might not be deemed as such by expert ethnomusicologists in quest for pure sounds. The ability of migrants to be bearers of innovation in a musical sense appears to increase as we shift away from a more purist, traditional reading of world music. In a strict sense, migrant musicians appear to be at a disadvantage when attempting to break into a traditional music market, as creativity, production and consumption are ruled by stricter commodification standards. Here expert ethnomusicologists and public institutions act as 'intermediaries' in middlemen markets, offering products high in ethnic content to a widely non-ethnic audience. The geographical distance between migrant musicians and the place of origin of the ethnic repertoire they mobilise is seen here as an insurmountable issue. As a result, the traditions brought by migrants are at best ranked as second rate (Brandellero 2008).

For one musician, a successful trajectory as an 'authentic', traditional musician while in Senegal should have provided sufficient peer recognition for starting a musical career in Paris, yet crossing borders meant that his music was seen as tarnished (interview 3). In some cases however, community music gains an authenticity status in its own right: most notably in cases when the migrant heritage is rediscovered and drawn from by artists who are able to reach a wider audience. It is the case of the album *Diwan* by Rachid Taha, in which he covered a song by migrant musician Mohamed Mazouni, as well as artists who were famous in Algeria during the 50s-60s. This album was inspired by a desire to "sing the songs that influence me and pay homage to my culture" (Denselow 2006).

Around the 'aura' of creativity we find an ecosystem of gatekeepers, shaping the trajectories of cultural entrepreneurs through their reviews, opinions, consumption patterns. 'There's a little bubble of people who have the power, it's either the press or people who are known for dressing in a certain way, or film stars or celebrity endorsement is the most important thing but you can't be seen to be wanting it because that makes you anti-fashion. It's not fashionable to want it desperately' (interview 20). For others, gatekeepers represent a sort of 'mafia' (interview 31), emphasising the importance of professional and social connections and the impact of being linked in or not can have on somebody's career trajectory. This applies in all three sectors, as one architect points out 'everybody's got their elbows out and they all want to be in, so you know of course you get together and make sure that their friends become the editor of the architecture journal or they make sure that they are going drinking with the editor or the publisher of the architectural review' (interview 5).

*"I don't like the media. For me being successful means selling clothes. I don't need to be applauded by the media. Plus it's hard work (to get in the press). There is a wall, them and the others. It's a closed world..."*

**(Interview n. 21)**

Gatekeepers come in tiers, or so it would seem. We would argue that each market typology has its own gatekeepers, reflecting the presence of parallel value chains, from creativity to consumption. A study of world music production in Paris for instance highlighted the presence of parallel market nebula, from community-based, traditional and contemporary styles and outputs. Making it in one sphere does not appear conducive to recognition in another. On the contrary, strong

aesthetic and value systems help maintain boundaries between market niches for these three types of world music. Breaking out or branching out from one niche to the other often requires adapting to a new aesthetic or linking up with a different ecosystem of producers (Brandellero, Calenge et al. 2008). It also appears to be linked to trends, so that opportunities for exposure and reaching out to a wider audience, also through communication media, fluctuate according to what is 'in' or 'out'. Increasingly, social networking sites and events form the basis for exchanges and offer platforms of visibility for cultural entrepreneurs, irrespective of their background. By-passing more traditional media and gatekeeping arenas, these channels offer opportunities to make the 'long tail' of cultural products appear on the radar. 'There are more avenues to take now' states one fashion designer. 'We are having events that are becoming more and more recognised, like runway shows celebrating designers from ethnic backgrounds, such as Catwalk the World, K2C and This Day/Arise Magazine's newly launched catwalk event. There is a continuous growth of Blog sites and on the internet promoting African designers. We have Facebook, You Tube, Twitter and Myspace. All these are brilliant promotional sites that are helpful in getting your name out there and they are also a free tool which helps in pushing forward designers from the African continent into the mainstream arena' (interview 32).

*"Because the African print is in right now, now is the time to get into one of those places (mainstream magazines). Most of the mainstream magazines are very trendy so whatever is in is what they are going to put in their magazines, so if you have something, they might put it in not just because they like the shape. I do think that they are opening up a bit more but it is really once in a while you might see some flashes on African print, unless like now it's in."*

**(Interview n. 28)**

In some cases, crossing the commodification boundary entails making compromises in relation to one's art. This is a critical juncture in which artistic and commercial priorities can collide. One musician reported having received many rejections by record labels, accompanied by pressures to change his music to adapt to more trendy styles. These rejections became a sort of blessing, allowing the artist to get more in touch with his music and find his own musical identity. 'Because I had to go and look elsewhere (given the rejections), I am now able to make music that really represents me' (interview 2). In other cases, trends are embraced as a source of innovation and competitiveness. 'My style is to follow fashion and trends, do what is in, but with an African twist, I do it my way with African prints. I mix fashion (je métisse la mode). If you want Europeans to wear the clothes, you have to mix the styles. [...] Young Africans don't want to wear African print. European clients love originality, new things and colour' (interview 30). Playing for a wider audience for one musician has meant making music in a different rhythm pattern. As his main concern was playing for a non-Algerian audience, his music has led him to mix styles and teach his listeners to follow the vibe of a non-Western rhythm (interview 4).

Sectorial recognition by one's peers or critics can open many doors though, yet 'ethnically targeted' awards seem to raise mixed feelings, raising questions as to parallel institutional fields of production and consumption. One respondent who had received an award for best Black and Minority Ethnic fashion designer stated that there were 'places I had tried (to access) before and they were like 'No' but now I got the award behind me (it has opened many doors) (interview 28). For others though, while the recognition remains a necessity, it does not automatically result in a higher gear career-wise. One tailor reported being featured in a double spread feature on tailors 'that's how I started getting a following, because they included me in this double-page spread and I started getting really high-powered women coming into the studio [...] and then I thought 'Right, this is the way forward, to get the right PR' [...] so I thought I surely must get lots of breaks now I've got this, but it's been a slow route since then' (interview 20).

For migrant cultural entrepreneurs, recognition by press connected to their country of origin or ethnicity occurs more spontaneously. 'I've had some press coverage in African media, but I haven't made it into Vogue or Marie Claire yet! You need networks (of connections) to access the media world. An ad in Vogue is very expensive, maybe around 5,000 Euros. I don't have the means for this. I have tried to approach the media with press dossiers but I never heard back from them. I cannot invest in this at the moment (i.e. chasing the media)' (interview 4). Recognition press or media in relation to the alleged 'ethnic' quality often gives way to concerns about being pigeon-holed or stereotyped. Yet, as one designer states: 'I don't necessarily do ethnic fashion. There are some elements in some collections. So if they want, I can do ethnic fashion, it all depends on the demand. [...] But it's really a label I fight against [...] a designer is a designer. We should just let



people express themselves through their work' (interview 19), indicating that externally placed labels are rather unhelpful and constraining part of the creative process.

*"The ethnic background of a designer can become a lens through which his or her creativity is perceived and valued. The work of any artist often takes on the politics of that artist's individual identity. It's almost inevitable I think. From my experience, this labelling is particularly profound when used by the Anglo-British establishment to evaluate the artistic contributions of non-Anglo British-based creatives. I personally don't take issue with my work being defined as 'ethnic' in inspiration (I myself have applied the modified term 'ethno-couture' to what we do [...]). The only point at which the label 'ethnic' becomes problematic is when its use leans toward the limiting assumption that 'ethnic' creativity is of a narrow or somehow inferior sphere."*

**(Interview n. 18)**

*"A lot of ethnic architecture tends to be very kitsch, they tend to represent what the rest of the world thinks it should be, and I think it's much deeper than that. [...] I think if you break that kind of typology of cliché and pastiche, then it's accepted by a lot of people and it's also understood much clearer, and you also help the culture that you are representing"*

**(Interview n. 31)**

The question of labelling is unhelpful in more than one way. To an external, ill-advised observer, a migrant cultural entrepreneur might maintain strong links with his or her country of origin. Yet the relation between cultural entrepreneurs who have settled abroad and their country of origin is far from linear. For some, achieving recognition abroad is a necessity in order to gain recognition 'back home' (interview 19). For others, being abroad provides an opportunity to practice an art form that would otherwise be frowned upon in the country of origin. This is the case of one artiste revealing that, because of the fact she had not followed a strict education curriculum in learning to play a traditional Japanese instrument, her talent and skills were not considered legitimate in her home country (interview 16).

The transition from cultural creativity to cultural commodification would appear to respond to a combination of dynamics and logics, subject to a fluctuating aesthetic system which accepts new elements on one part, legitimises them, or rejects them on the basis of vaguely defined concepts of authenticity or belonging. In the final part of the analysis we turn to a concluding section aimed at exploring the question of how ethnicity comes to matter in cultural-product industries.

### 3. Exploring how ethnic diversity matters in the cultural industries.

The idea that the mainstream rooted in a form of 'composite culture', reflecting the 'mixed, hybrid character of the ensemble of cultural practices and beliefs' has evolved in contemporary societies (Alba and Nee 2003, p.10). Cultural production moves beyond a fragmented vision of different ethnicities and cultures, embracing the idea of cultural hybridism as that 'it's not about singular cultures, that is really what I am trying to say, because also in the past there hasn't always been just one singular culture. I think my point is more generic, it's about embracing multi-cultures, because England is about multi-cultures. I think that to me is very positive' (interview 31). Perspectives on the relationship between migrants and 'host' societies have moved away from the idea that social-cultural distinctiveness could hamper incorporation (Alba and Nee 2003). To the contrary, on the ground we find the idea that the more diverse inputs, the better, creatively speaking.

*"Fortunately, London can absorb it, I think London is big enough and powerful enough and grand enough to actually thrive off it, and actually think it's genuinely thrives off it because the more input London gets, the more powerful it gets."*

**(Interview n. 5)**

Here we explore the conditions under which ethnicity matters in cultural industries, from the perspective of the creative workers and their products, be it as an advantage or disadvantage. Migrant cultural entrepreneurs' attitude towards the question of ethnicity is often an intricate one: generally speaking, receiving a distinction as a minority cultural entrepreneur is greeted with mixed feelings. While the recognition linked to ethnicity (i.e. Best Black British Designer; Best Asian designer) is highly valued, it is often felt as 'competing in a different category' from the heavyweights. The objective still remains to achieve the top recognition in the field, regardless of ethnicity (interview 20). Gaps in equality of opportunities across gender, ethnicity and race boundaries persist and in some cases, they shape the experiences of migrants' access to and trajectories within the cultural industries. Speaking in 2007 of his three recently commissioned projects in London, all of which with an overt British-African dimension, architect David Adjaye reflected on his position as a British-Ghanaian and the risk of being categorised and stereotyped if seen to be taking on projects linked to his African heritage. Yet he concluded 'if I can't do a project that does have an explicit racial agenda to it, then the whole thing is reversed – so that as a person of 'colour', I cannot do a project that is about 'colour'. I can only do projects that are not about 'colour'. And yet people of 'non-colour' can do projects of 'colour'. This becomes madness! So I decided this was all ridiculous. Not only did I have to do these projects, but also they were an incredible honour' (Rose 2007).

Caution is due: often diversity is offered as an independent variable in explaining why certain things happen, but we should be careful to ensure that this is not an explanation of events post-facto. In fact, many respondents refused to consider ethnicity as an explaining variable for certain more or less successful trajectories.

*"That Black and White thing, it just goes over my head. I don't see it. [...] It's like with everything, there are clothes I won't buy and it's not because it's from one culture and so on, it's just because I don't like it. I know there are some designers who say "Oh it's because I am Black" and in my mind it's just "Oh get over it, it's got nothing to do with that". I always tell people, "if your stuff is good quality, Black, White or orange or whatever you are, it's going to sell". I do sometimes feel it's an excuse but I've never, for me it's never been a problem ever" (interview 28). "*

**(Interview n. 28)**

A more complex analytical layer is added by the question of race. Discrimination is often veiled, subtle, a glass ceiling which is there but cannot be seen, or sometimes betrayed by people's attitudes. 'Sometimes people here, they come up and they are like 'wow' because you are a black man, and they see the shop, the clothes. And they probably don't expect this to be in the hands of a black man. But they don't say it. It's like when I go to a shop to present my collection. People have a lot of expectations' (interview 25). Stumbling blocks persist and reappear, and particular strategies are adopted to counteract prejudice. 'I traded under a different name [...] for quite a few years, because I thought the name might be a barrier, and cause me problems', stated one fashion designer (interview 20). 'I felt I had to build up a profile to get over the prejudice. I had a lot of big things happening, but then every now and then you get people ask 'Oh, do you make Asian clothes' or the City newspaper saying 'Oh, we don't do your sort of thing'. But what do you mean?' In some cases, 'the face value of who I am rather than the track record' seemed to matter more in the assessment and appreciation of her work (interview 20). This quote from an architect also highlights a response to prejudice.

*"Recently, we were shortlisted for a competition for the UK. I am very grateful, it's for a local authority in the North of England. And I didn't go and present the project and I asked one of my staff to go and present because the thing is that I know that to have somebody not Caucasian would go down very badly, because the panel was very conservative. And so I actually sent my staff. They know me, [...] but it's one thing knowing who the director of the office is, the other thing is to put a red flag in front of the bull, it's not so clever"*

**(Interview n. 31)**

The term 'racism' is often spoken. 'Racism here really exists, but we don't talk about it' (interview 19). The question seems particularly present in architecture, in which, as we have seen, significant equality gaps persist, as in gender as along minority lines. 'It's always jobs for the boys, the same boys. Even for a young, Caucasian woman, they also find it



difficult. There is a lot of stigma associated (interview 31). Any kind of ‘outsiders’ to this norm was not seen as usual, but while it’s still seen as a rather conservative profession, ‘post-war architecture, architecture schools, liberalisation, opened it up to a much bigger discourse, but the necessity to increase the discourse in terms of race’ (interview 5).

Yet the question of race and prejudice opens up a complex mix of reactions, mainly highlighting a desire among respondents not to define one’s trajectory on the basis of this. ‘I don’t want (prejudice) to be used as an excuse to say that’s why I didn’t get the job and that’s why I am not as famous as somebody else or whatever, because it’s just not the truth. Do you feel racism? The answer is yes, because there is mistrust for anybody who is brown, Muslim, from Pakistan (interview 5). The only thing I would say we don’t get many jobs in the UK, so the thing. I would not want to use the word race as a problem but I think because our design doesn’t suit a certain type of culture. My architecture doesn’t quite suit certain tastes and I can’t say that’s anything to do with race’ (interview 31).

Current affairs and wider geo-political issues can also come into play in influencing the positioning of migrant cultural entrepreneurs. 9/11 is mentioned as a turning point by some, suggesting issues of mistrust and fear. Talking about being a Pakistani migrant in the UK, one respondent suggested that ‘pre-9/11, the image was either you are a grocer, corner store, or whatever [...] There is mistrust for anybody who is brown, Muslim, from Pakistan, there. It’s not a great combination in 2009, but on the other side I have a lot of people who think it’s absolutely fine’ (interview 5). This is echoed by another respondent ‘After 9/11, there are many doubts about Arab people. People check you twice’ (interview 4).

Beyond prejudice and discrimination, we would here like to focus on two positive aspects which highlight how ethnic diversity matters in cultural production, notably opening a perspective the cultural bridges which migrant cultural entrepreneurs are building in our societies and on the role of the outsider as a mirror.

### *The outsider as a mirror*

The serendipitous or volitional character of our encounters with diversity entails a more or less conscious reflection on identity. The ability to see things differently, to bring a new view of the world and the vibrant exchanges this entails is a source of inspiration and creativity for many (interviews 10, 11, 12). Working together or alongside unleashes powerful challenges to our preconceived ideas. Outsiders, misfits – by definition do not fit in. Yet there is much more than a quest for the exotic at stake here. There is a true opportunity to reflect on oneself. Hence the image of the outsider as a mirror, as a window onto ourselves. After all, how could we be so quick in judging the other, when we would struggle to define ourselves in the first instance?

Suddenly, the interfaces with people from different backgrounds and ethnicities that diversity sparks, becomes an experience of growth and understanding. ‘Having those interfaces and coming across people, being challenged by it, you know you really kind of see things in a very different way. It’s extremely enjoyable but also makes quite a challenge because you think ‘Who the hell am I?’ (interview 5).

Openness to diversity can also be seen as an asset at a time of increasing global exchanges and connections. The diversity migrant cultural entrepreneurs bring enables places and cultural production to become part of a much wider and deeper cultural conversation with the world. On the subject of one’s work reflecting one’s culture, an architect states ‘this will be my trajectory. This will be my mission. I think it doesn’t matter if in my life I wouldn’t get these things accepted or built. But I think if I can start the conversation, maybe the generations behind me would realize that. And I think that is what I feel what I should be doing as an educator and a practitioner’ (interview 31).

### *Creating cultural bridges*

Beyond cultural essentialism, the migrant cultural entrepreneurs involved in this research act as a reminder of the need to look beyond a social constructivist perspective on ethnicity, beyond the labels and groups, but rather at the wider context, be it cultural, social or economic, in which these come to matter. As Barth pointed out, the focus of the investiga-

tion should be on the boundaries defining a group rather than its 'ethnic content' (Barth 1969). This acts as a reminder to the presence of cultural borders which still need to be accounted for; it also points towards the role of cultural production in expressing, reproducing, validating or dissipating these borders. Yet it still appears that at the level of cultural production and markets, certain borders persist, structured along aesthetic lines and volatile trends and commercial considerations.

Beyond supply and demand considerations, cultural migrant entrepreneurs play a role as bridges between cultures, communities of belonging and taste. They bring places closer together. They bring people closer together by mixing styles and traditions. They can support a more open and tolerant environment. 'Mixing styles, leads to openness. (If you are wearing clothes made from African prints), people will come to you and ask what it is. It's a starting point for bringing people together. My mission is to get people to wear African prints. To put forward an African touch, my African touch!' (interview 4).

If as some say 'there is no fashion without culture' (interview 14), then cultural industries provide a channel for the expression of the diversity of cultural creative vibrancy and innovation.

# 6.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The research project considered how ethnic diversity is experienced in cultural production: more specifically, to what extent ethnicity matters in the production and consumption of cultural industry goods. This has led to addressing questions of the representations of the world these products put forward, how these representations are shaped and by whom.

The findings have highlighted the creative tensions and innovative potential that cultural migrant entrepreneurs can engender. Acting as a window on a different cultural paradigm or simply reminding us of the preconceived ideas with which we view and label the 'other', migrant cultural entrepreneurs are increasingly contributing to the cultural vibrancy of our cities, shaping niche and mainstream markets alike. One could argue that crossing, blurring or shifting cultural boundaries is part of the creative experience full stop. While this is, without question, a key ingredient of creativity, our analysis has shown that 'how' ethnicity comes to matter becomes a significant element of understanding the relationship between processes creativity and its commodification for migrant cultural entrepreneurs. Diversity and innovation can be seen as mutually reinforcing: diversity leads to innovation, while innovation is a necessary condition of diversity.

The question of diversity in production and consumption within the cultural industries raises a deeper, underlying debate over cultural heritage, its preservation, but also its renewal and regeneration. In large urban areas where hybridity is at its most vibrant and dynamic, the memories, experiences, expressions of peoples become ever more shared - boundaries are indeed crossed and become blurred and shift. This in turn raises the question about the relevance of geographical boundaries, notably in measuring tangible and intangible heritage, and the pertinence of a transversal approach to measurement which takes into account how practices evolve and are recreated by communities around the world, simultaneously accounting for their uniqueness and plurality. Intangible heritage, understood as 'the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith' (UNESCO 2003, p.2), is deterritorialising and being constantly reproduced, recreated and shaped through the serendipitous and deliberate encounters and exchanges of cultural knowledge, values and representations taking place (mainly) in urban areas. In this sense, force is to recognise that that cultures travel and that a key to keeping them alive might also be supporting them in their new environments and forms of expression. In addition, there is a need to grasp the networked nature of cultural interactions in order to understand the materialisation of cultural voice, realising that in 'such a confluence of territoriality and extra-territoriality in which cultural memories, meanings, and identities are continually renegotiated, the search for global rules to govern cultural policies has entered a new millennium featuring both state and non-state actors' (Singh 2007, p.39). The past connection between geographical place and cultural expressions - has now become more tenuous as a result of globalisation and connection between community and identity. But globalisation can also be a force creating and proliferating identity. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for the sustainable development of present and future generations.

In parallel, it is becoming ever more subject to commodification dynamics, entering the realm of commerce and giving rise to economic opportunities and forms of exploitation. As we have seen, the boundaries between social groups and cultural products, with the appropriation, adoption or simple acceptance of diverse cultural expressions and practices. This is the root of interculturality, notably the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect and the expansion of the normative cultural practice and behaviour.

The theoretical and empirical research carried out leads to a fundamental discussion: one of the relation between groups, between 'minority' and 'mainstream' and calls for a more reflexive position on the diversity question. The terms seem to lag behind in terms of the reflection: while multiculturalism is praised in discourse and every day life, theoretically the concept lags behind by maintaining an emphasis on the separation within diversity and differences to normative cultural practices. The more pertinent approach of intercultural dialogue, which recognises diversity while emphasises the search for a common ground, mutual understanding, and shared aspirations is clearly emerging as a source of creative inspiration for migrant cultural entrepreneurs - yet on the level of mediation of cultural practices, some degree of separation persists.

When exploring the contribution of cultural industries to an enhanced intercultural dialogue, several points of action emerge:

<b>Actors and agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the gatekeepers and mediators that set trends and act as intermediaries within and across cultural practices</li> <li>• Encouraging a reflexive approach, which promotes a greater (mutual) understanding of cultural practices and expressions</li> <li>• Analysing the role of public, private and civil society institutions in shaping intercultural practices and inter-group relations</li> </ul>
<b>Spaces and places</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying, protecting and promoting spaces and places of exchange, recognising these might be actual places (temporary or permanent), institutions (e.g. markets) or virtual spaces</li> <li>• Recognising the transnational dimension of cultural exchanges and practices</li> <li>• Exploring the role of the media in enabling and promoting (actual and potential) inter-cultural dialogue, exchange and communication</li> </ul>
<b>Processes and dynamics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring the participation and consultation of groups to cultural production and consumption</li> <li>• Understanding the dynamics of supply and demand of cultural industry products and their relation to (actual or perceived) boundaries between groups and their social distance</li> <li>• Understanding the dynamics of intercultural dialogue in relation to the cultural industries' production and consumption processes</li> <li>• Analysing the extent to which the adoption of diverse cultural expressions is reflected in a change in cultural practices and inter/intra-group relation</li> <li>• Ensuring the sustainability of cultural practices, in view/light of their potential commodification</li> </ul>
<b>Indicators and measurements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking at production and consumption of cultural goods and services through an inter-cultural lens</li> <li>• Measuring the diversity of producers/products/consumers and exploring the dynamics of adoption of diverse cultural practices by different groups and communities</li> <li>• Analysing trends in relation to cultural practices and their adoption</li> <li>• Exploring public initiatives and cultural practices and their relation to diversity</li> </ul>

**Table 6 - Dimensions of intercultural dialogue in cultural industries production and consumption**

We would here like to present a few recommendation points, building upon the insights of the research and discussions in the field, structured around three main areas of intervention: creativity, production and consumption.

## *Creativity*

The empirical material gathered for this research is but the very tip of an iceberg of vibrant and diverse cultural industries in the three cities. Cultural industries products can be seen as vehicles of identity, value and meaning. Their cultural content brings to bear on symbolic meaning, artistic dimension and cultural values that originate from or express cultural identities. Yet looking when trying to measure the level of creative diversity, we run the risk of measuring the diversity of producers but being blind as to the actual or imagined diversity of cultural goods and vice versa. Here we enter the slippery field of defining authenticity and identity and how this translates in cultural production, and for whom. We also risk entering into the question of uniqueness versus plurality of identities and expressions, towards an essentialist view of what cultural industries products pertaining to creatives with diverse backgrounds 'should' be like. Recognising the legitimacy and value of the cultural métissage taking place in our large urban areas is also necessary. Yet beyond the vibrancy of hy-

bridization, it is important to recognise that creativity should not be bound by superimposed ethnic boundaries. The weight of labels and the myopic view they impose on the activities of migrant cultural entrepreneurs needs to be fully recognized and assessed, thus avoiding a distortion between the complexity of one's identity and voice and one's being reduced to a statistic in an ethnic group classification.

Music and fashion presented more visible creative diversity, unlike architecture, where for reasons explored, lower levels of diversity manifest themselves at once in the participation by minorities to the sector and in the stronger spatial embeddedness of outputs. In all three sectors a strong potential for initiating cultural conversations and exchanges was noted. This revealed the significance of role models and mentoring, opening avenues for diversity to strengthen its voice in the three sectors' creativity arenas. This research evidenced the drive and motivation of migrant cultural entrepreneurs for whom the expression of creativity through entrepreneurship is a means to convey a positive message of openness and tolerance. In this sense, budding migrant cultural entrepreneurs need 'cultural trailblazers', to set an example and at the same time engage in a dialogue promoting recognition of the value of diversity.

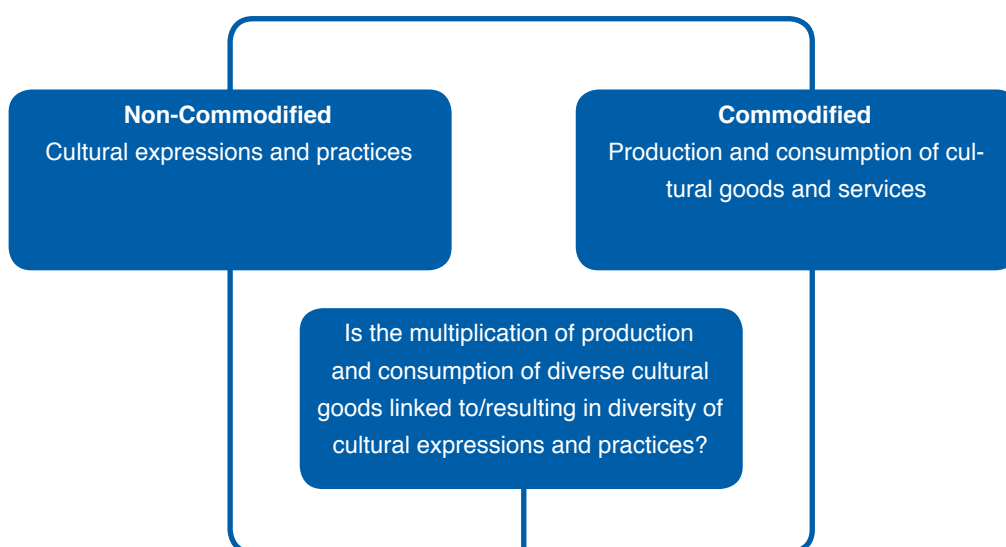


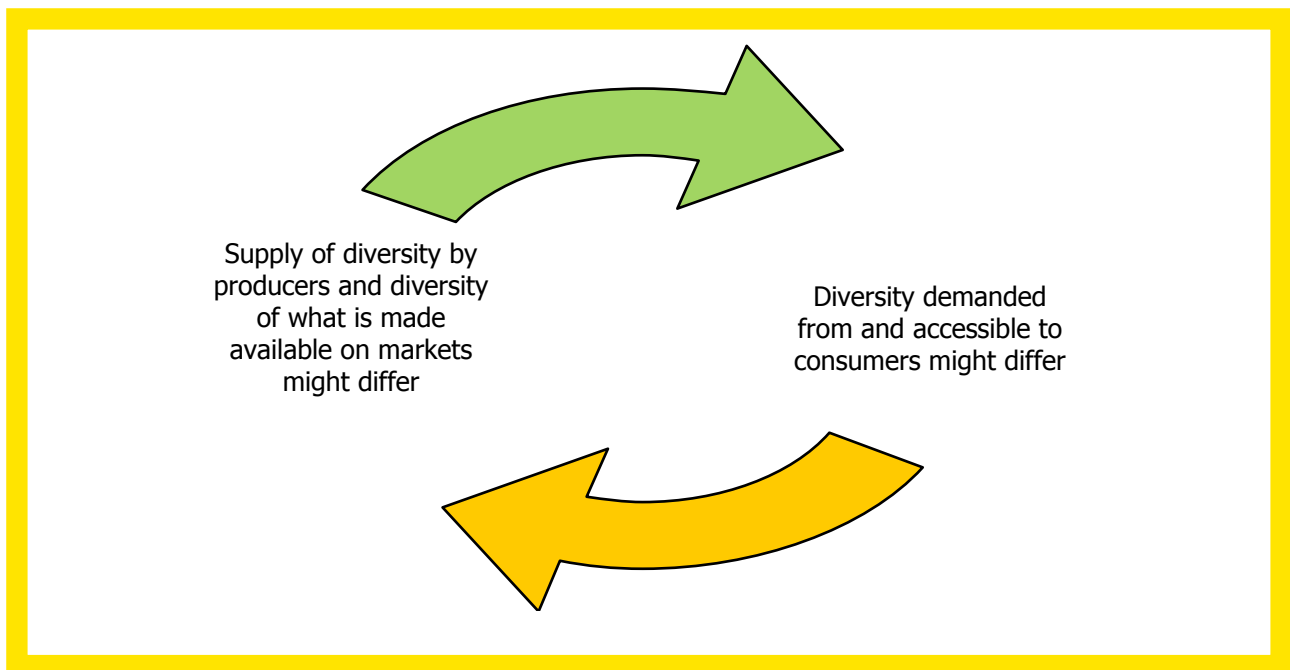
Figure 18 - Non-commodified and commodified cultural goods

The free flow of ideas brought about by tolerant and open places, and particularly the proximity in diversity which characterises large urban areas, provides an enabling and nurturing ground for exchanges and interactions. The recognition of new forms of creativity derived from the intercultural exchanges as vibrant and dynamic forms of the intangible heritage of our cities needs to be granted. In addition, intellectual property rights should reflect the developments in cultural creativity and hybridity in a more flexible way.

## Production

Recognizing the role of gatekeepers and mechanisms of mediation in the cultural industries is essential. Exploring the notion of mediation in the cultural industries is a stark reminder of contrast between the lucky few and the plethora of hopefuls trying to get some recognition.





Understanding cultural industries production involves unveiling the mechanisms through which aesthetic conventions and paradigms come into being and evolve. Attention should be paid to the commodification boundary, as a negotiated passage between creativity and the cultural industry production chain, modulated by trade-offs between cultural and economic considerations over the anticipated outcomes of a product in a market exchange environment (Brandellero and Kloosterman, 2007). Analysing this form of institutionalised filtering and recognition of creativity is crucial to grasping processes of cultural commodification, and the interaction between culture and the economy therein.

## Consumption

In a Simmelian sense, the apparently inconsequential consumption patterns of denizens are in fact the expression of modern city life. Yet there appears to be a gap between the diversity of local populations and the cultural diversity on offer. Large metropolises are a breeding ground for avid cultural consumers, be they driven by curiosity, ideology or transnational links, among other things. Art is often evaluated on the basis of its ability to reach the mainstream and talk to a wider audience. Maybe we should turn the tables and pay more attention to the ability to communicate, represent and be accessible to minorities. This calls for a greater awareness of forms and practices of stereotyping, and a greater advocacy towards towards a mutual respect and equality with the 'other'.

This leads us to restate the fundamental need to explore further the overarching question of the commodification of culture. Many questions are raised by Jameson's analysis of the increasing overlap between the economy and culture. As he noted, culture has become 'profoundly economic or commodity oriented' (Jameson 1998, p.73). This, in turn, raises questions about the value of culture, especially when it is submitted to the merciless fluctuations of tastes and trends.

Yet we should be careful with applying the product life cycle to cultural products or products with a cultural value and symbolic content: we are here looking at trends which as the theory goes, would inevitably decline at the end of their life cycle (Sproule 1981). While African prints or klezmer music might be currently 'in', this should not avert a deeper reflection on the significance and meaning of these forms of cultural expression and more intricate realities to which they refer. While new, previously 'ethnically circumscribed' elements might become mainstream, a more responsible form of cultural production and consumption is called for, whereby the traditions of the other do not simply translate into a quest for the exotic and its commercialisation. Attention should be given in order to avoid commodification resulting into the trivialisation and fetishisation of diversity. A sustainable approach to cultural expressions and practices, their renewal and regeneration, calls for the recognition and incorporation of creativity and its diversity of expressions into local, regional and national strategic plans, and for a mainstreaming of policy options relating to cultural diversity more in general.

Reinforcing partnerships among different actors, ranging from government to civil society, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, fostering and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions and recognising the primordial role played by education, even from a very early age, in encouraging curiosity towards the other and openness, should remain high on the policy agenda.

The question of defining diversity raises the issue of whether there can be one single appropriate policy or strategy in place to support and enable it. One approach could be to mainstream of basic values and methods in different policy areas.

### **Advocacy**

- Focus support on activities that bring different cultural values into contact and act as catalyst for creative exchange.
- Advocate and develop a series of competences and skills set to deal with the question of diversity.

### **Access**

- Enhance cultural diversity awareness and competence among intermediaries, by developing training and involving individuals with intercultural competence skills.
- Mainstream policies that ensure that diversity is protected and promoted in its dimensions of variety, balance, and disparity.

### **Development**

- Supporting hybrid forms of cultural expression – as an expression of the changing times and dynamic cultural heritage rather than as a rootless form of expression
- Commission creative works which bring people together to work on a joint project, in a vibrant exchange of cultural creativity and reflexivity.

*Table 7 - Baseline initiatives for enhancing intercultural dialogue through cultural industries activities*

# Annex 1.

## Portraits

This research would not have been possible without the kind support of the following people, who took the time to meet me and tell me their story. I thank them for their kindness and support.

Name	Profession	Enterprise name	Location
Abaji	Musician	Abaji	Paris
Abdelkader Saadoun	Musician	Abdelkader Saadoun	London
Andrea Laurindo	Fashion designer	Laurindo	Amsterdam
Antonio Cruz	Architect	Ortiz y Cruz	Amsterdam
Azhar	Architect	Azhar Architecture	London
Chebli Msaidie	Musician	Chebli Msaidie	Paris
CJ Lim	Architect	Studio 8; Professor at UCL	London
Dan Dorrel	Architect	DGT Architects	Paris
Diego Pelaez	Musician	Diego Pelaez	Paris
Ece Ege	Fashion designer	Dice Kayek	Paris
Elsie Owusu	Architect	Fielden + Mawson LLP	London
Francois Essindi	Musician	Abakuya	Paris
Imane Ayissi	Fashion designer	Imane Ayissi	Paris
Imtaz Khaliq	Fashion designer	Imtaz Khaliq	London
Jana Sante	Fashion designer	Gisella Creations	London
Johnny Kalsi	Musician	Dhol Foundation	London
José Esam	Fashion designer	Jose Esam	Paris
Laura Alvarez	Architect	Laura Alvarez Architecture	Amsterdam
Lina Ghotmeh	Architect	DGT Architects	Paris
Maame Baryeh	Fashion designer	Maame Baryeh	London
Mahmoud Keldi	Architect	Keldi Architectes	Paris
Nkwo Onwuka	Fashion designer	Nkwo	London
Nobuko Matsumiya	Musician	Ensemble Sakura	Paris
Pape Assane	Musician	Mam mambe	Amsterdam
Sadio Bee	Fashion designer	Sadio Bee	Paris
Tina Atiemo	Fashion designer	Tina Atiemo	London
Tsuyoshi Tane	Architect	DGT Architects	Paris
Yemi Osunkoya	Fashion designer	Kosibah Creations	London
Yushi Uehara	Architect	Zerodegree architecture	Amsterdam



# Annex 2.

## Questionnaire guide

## I. Elements to investigate during interviews

Format: open questions covering the following elements:

- a) Personal history
- b) Professional history
- c) Identity and the creative process
- d) Relation to wider cultural industry
- e) Opportunities and constraints
- f) Influence of context: city, country, policies.

## II. Keywords for me

- Commodification
- Gatekeepers
- Culture
- Economy
- Creativity
- Mediation
- Opportunities
- Ressources (financial, social, cultural, ethnic)
- Barriers
- Networks
- Trends

### 1) Personal profile

#### a) Demographics

Date and place of birth

Nationality

Ethnicity

Arrival in the Netherlands/France/UK

#### Contact details

Website	
Myspace page	
Facebook	
Other (twitter? LinkedIn?)	

#### b) Qualifications:

Formal qualifications (and education trajectory) - specifying:

- qualification obtained
- skills
- geographical location
- other info



### c) Professional experience

Spatial and temporal account of respondents' trajectory highlighting specific key moments in career, including:

- position
- duration
- location
- skills
- other info.

Please explain the reason for spatial mobility during the career trajectory.

Architecture/fashion/music as primary occupation?

Which type of activities related to your business activity do you engage in? (i.e. training, teaching, writing?) How did this come about?

## 2) On the experience of creativity and cultural production

### a) Creating

Sources of inspiration.

Access to sources of inspiration.

Relation to background: country of origin, ethnicity.

Experience of labelling: has your work ever been defined as ethnic? If so please explain this situation and your response to it.

### b) Clients' base

Description of client base.

Relation to ethnic group or mainstream client base? If both, please explain how this differentiation occurs.

Provenance of client base and geographical location.

If niche market, do you aspire to reach a wider audience?

If so, do you have a specific strategy in place to do so?

Does your work change according to the client base?

### c) Relation to fashion production/industry

Were there specific turning points in your career?

- Significant moments in progression
- Specific encounters
- Were these negative or positive?

Would you say there were specific people or moments which "supported/blocked" you in making fashion?

People 'in the business'	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
Media	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
Audiences	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no

What is your relation to the sector's media and press?

How have you promoted your work?

How would you say the sector's media and press relate to and reflect diversity?

### 3) On being in Amsterdam/London/Paris

Has being in Amsterdam/London/Paris had an influence on your career? If yes, in what way?

What is your experience with openness to diversity in Amsterdam/London/Paris? (in general terms, but also client base, colleagues).

### 4) Context (economic, political, social, cultural)

Among the following, are there any elements which have been supportive/hindering for you?

- Public policies (local, regional, national)
- Political climate
- Programmes and initiatives

### 5) Conclusions

How would you define the level of openness to diversity in your sector of activity?

What do you see as opportunities for you in the future?

What do you see as constraints for you in the future?

Would you say this is specific to Amsterdam/London/Paris or wider?

Any other comments?

# Annex 3.

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# Annex 4.

## List of CPRA 2007 jury members

Milena Dragicevic Sestic, President of the Jury (Serbia)

Ritva Mitchell, Jury member (Finland)

Lluis Bonet, Jury member (Spain)

Veronika Ratzenböck, Jury member (Austria)

Michael W. Quine, Jury member (UK)

Mikko Lagerspetz, Jury member (Estonia)

### **Milena Dragicevic Sesic, President of the Jury (Serbia)**

Professor at the Faculty of Drama of the University of Arts in Belgrade (Cultural Policy and Cultural Management, Cultural studies, Media studies); Chair-holder of the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management University of Arts Belgrade; President of the Orientation Board of the European Diploma in Cultural Project Management (Marcel Hicter Foundation, Brussels); Board member of ELIA (European League of Institutes of the Arts, Amsterdam). Former Rector of the University of Arts in Belgrade; Member of the Art & Culture Sub Board, Open Society Institute (Soros fund), Budapest. Lecturer in Moscow School of Social and Economical Sciences, MA-AMEC, Utrecht School of the Arts, CEU Budapest, Lyon II, Jagiellonian University Krakow, etc. Expert, consultant in cultural policy and management for the European Cultural Foundation, Council of Europe, UNESCO, Marcel Hicter Foundation, Pro Helvetia, British Council, etc.

Published 15 books and more than 100 essays. Translated in over 10 languages all over the world.

### **Ritva Mitchell, Jury member (Finland)**

Director of Research CUPORE (Finnish Foundation for Cultural Policy Research), Lecturer at the University of Jyväskylä, Faculty of Social Sciences. former President of the Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe (CIRCLE), the European Research Institute for Comparative Cultural Policy and the Arts (ERICArts) and of the Orientation Board of the European Diploma of Cultural Project Management (Marcel Hicter Foundation, Brussels). Lecturer at the Sibelius Academy of Music (MA Programme in Arts Management) in Helsinki.

She is involved in a number of research projects in Europe. Member of the editorial board of the Nordisk Kulturpolitisk Tidskrift (Nordic Cultural Policy Journal). She has published articles and papers on youth cultures, artists, cultural policies, new technologies and European issues in Finland and in Europe.

### **Lluís Bonet, Jury member (Spain)**

Professor of the University of Barcelona, and former President of the European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centers (ENCATC). Vice-President of the European Association of Cultural Researchers (ECURES), board member of the Association of Cultural Economics International (ACEI), and member of the Board of Trustees of Abacus (the largest Spanish cooperative on education and culture).

External advisor in cultural policies, statistics and economics at the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Inter-American Development Bank, UNESCO, and the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI). Director of a large number of research studies in cultural economics and cultural policies.

Teaching: Director of the Graduate Programmes on Cultural Management of the University of Barcelona. Professor undergraduate courses at the same university (Schools of Law, Economics, Documentation and Librarianship) on Political Economy Cultural Economics, Cultural Industries, Cultural Management and Policy. Research fellow and Assistant Professor on Cultural Policy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1991-1992). Guest Professor in different graduate programmes on arts and heritage management, and lecturer in courses and seminars in more than 20 countries in Europe, Latin America and USA.

### **Veronika Ratzenböck, Jury member (Austria)**

Director of the “Österreichische Kulturdokumentation, Internationales Archiv für Kulturanalysen” a non-university institute for applied cultural research and cultural documentation founded in 1991 ([www.kulturdokumentation.org](http://www.kulturdokumentation.org)).

Research projects on culture, economic and social history of the 20th and 21st century; Visiting professor at the Institute of Philosophy of Law at the University of Salzburg (subject: “the European project”) . Lecturer in cultural studies and cultural policy at the University of Vienna. Since 1998 consultant to the Council of Europe, Programme: Evaluation on national cultural policies (Croatia and Bosnia&Herzegovina).

Research and advisory work in Comparative cultural policy, European cultural and media policy and cultural aspects of European integration, cultural and creative industries, urban cultural policy, culture and employment, EU cultural policy, cultural studies (e.g. the “Exploitation and development of the job potential in the cultural sector” 2001, commissioned by the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, project: “Cultural Competence. New Technologies, Culture % Employment” 1999, study “The potential of Creative Industries in Vienna” commissioned by the City of Vienna ([www.creativeindustries.at](http://www.creativeindustries.at)))

### **Michael W. Quine, Jury member (UK)**

Senior Lecturer in Arts Management at London City University.

Acting Head of Department, Department of Arts Policy & Management, City University London. An extensive career in managing arts organisations, in educating arts managers and in research. Initially from a theatre background, his interests range from the economics of the arts to arts marketing and financing, and into international comparisons. His international teaching experience includes countries as diverse as the US, Greece, Finland, Moldova, Spain and Russia (St Petersburg). Founding member a multi-university exchange programme, funded by the EU SOCRATES programme, encouraging staff and student mobility as well as annual conferences. During the last three years, as a Vice-Chair and Board member of ENCATC (European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centres), he organised the first non-Francophone AIMAC conference, in London in 1995, and also works within the Scientific Committee for successive conferences (e.g. in Australia, Helsinki, San Francisco and Milan) into international comparisons of these and a range of wider policy issues. President of the Thomassen Fund in support of the mobility of educators and trainers in arts management.

### **Mikko Lagerspetz, Jury member (Estonia)**

Professor of Sociology at the Estonian Institute of Humanities. Born and educated in Finland, and since 1989 he resides in Estonia, currently a Professor of Sociology.

Rector, 1998-2001. Docent of Sociology at the University of Turku, since 1997.

President of the Estonian Association of Sociologists, 1998-2003 (re-elected twice).

Member of the Board, Open Estonia Foundation, 2001-2004. Honorary Member, Wind Orchestra of the University of Turku, 1991.

Involved in research and evaluation of Estonian cultural policies. Research on cultural policies, social problems, and civil society.

Publications (among others): Constructing Post-Communism (Turku, 1996); Estonian Cultural Policy and Its Impact, 1988-1995 (with Rein Raud; Strasbourg, 1996); recent article: “How many Nordic countries? Possibilities and limits of geopolitical identity construction”. Cooperation and Conflict, 2003.

# Amanda Brandellero

Amanda Brandellero is an English-Italian PhD researcher at the Amsterdam Institute of Metropolitan and International Development studies, part of the University of Amsterdam. Her research centres on migrant entrepreneurship in the cultural industries. She is particularly interested in the local and global dynamics of production and consumption within the cultural industries, and in exploring the interaction between ethnicity and processes of commodification of culture. She has recently completed two research projects on world music production in Paris, one exploring the local cluster's networks of production (commissioned by the City of Paris) and the other, focusing on migrant musicians and their incorporation trajectories in world music production.

Previously, Amanda headed Greater London Enterprise's office in Brussels, working on European regional and urban affairs and transnational projects on behalf of London's local authorities. Prior to that, she worked as a research manager for ECOTEC, a UK and European public policy consultancy. She holds an MSc in Regional and Urban Planning (with Distinction) and a BA (First Class) in European Studies from the London School of Economics.



## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> 'Many working people belonging to Asian, African, Afro-Caribbean, Turkish and more recently Eastern-European ethnic communities are trapped in unskilled sectors [...] They are frequently discriminated against in housing, education, policing and the provision of other urban services'
- <sup>2</sup> Here a point of clarification is due: in the context of this research, we focus on the experience of a group of non-Western cultural entrepreneurs. It is however understood that parallels between migrants and ethnic diversity should be considered carefully: migrants can belong to the same ethnic group as the receiving country, or ethnic diversity can be present among non-migrants to state just some caveats.
- <sup>3</sup> With respect to this, there are few expectations – please refer to the Annex 1 – Portraits for further details.
- <sup>4</sup> Florida talks about the 3 Ts in attracting creative talent to a region: talent, technology and tolerance.
- <sup>5</sup> The Creative Industries Task Force Mapping Document (CITF (1998) 2001) in the UK mapped into the creative industries sector the following activities: Advertising, Architecture, Arts and Antique Markets, Crafts, Design, Designer Fashion, Film, Interactive Leisure Software, Music, Television and Radio, Performing Arts, Publishing and Software.
- <sup>6</sup> Localisation of sectors benefits from the social effect of proximity to 'people following the same skilled trade', when 'the mysteries of the trade become no mysteries: but are as it were in the air' (Marshall 1916: 271). More recently, Scott has moved towards a critical overview of the reflexive interactions between urbanization and creativity in contemporary society (Scott 2006), leading to a 'resurgence' of cities, which acquire a certain level of economic and political autonomy in relation to the nation-state (see Scott 2009).
- <sup>7</sup> Difficulty in finding audiences means that the industries have tighter grip on circulation than they do on production (Hesmondhalgh 2007).
- <sup>8</sup> For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. Matthew 25:29, King James Version.
- <sup>9</sup> More 'purist' definitions, generally attributed to Marx, define commodities as a product intended principally for exchange, and that such products emerge, by definition, in the institutional, psychological, and economic conditions of capitalism. A less purist definition sees commodities as goods intended for exchange, regardless of the form this exchange might take (see Appadurai 1988, p.6).
- <sup>10</sup> Explaining trends and fads means explaining in what way they correspond to the *air du temps*, spirit of the times. Building on Saussure's work on semiology, the study of signs and symbols and their meaning, Barthes looked at the life of objects, from the perspective of what they tell us about our times (see Barthes, *Les mythologies*, 1957). These objects become myths, revealing the image-system of a particular time (Barthes 1990).
- <sup>11</sup> Interview by Amanda Brandellero, September 2007.
- <sup>12</sup> "Globalization' is on everybody's lips; a fad word fast turning into a shibboleth, a magic incantation, a pass-key meant to unlock the gates to all present and future mysteries. For some, 'globalization' is what we bound to do if we wish to be happy; for others 'globalization' is the cause of our unhappiness. For everybody, though, 'globalization' is the intractable fate of the world, an irreversible process; it is also a process which affects us all in the same measure and in the same way. We are all being 'globalized' and being globalized means much the same to all who 'globalized' are" (Bauman 2002, p.1).
- <sup>13</sup> Others have shown how migrant communities have moved away from the 'packaging' of cultural diversity through festivals, parades and the 'appropriation' of urban neighbourhoods with the expansion of small and medium-sized firms and the strengthening of import-export links with their countries of origin (Henry et al., 2000).
- <sup>14</sup> Definition of mainstream, taken from the Merriam-Webster online English dictionary.
- <sup>15</sup> Taken from Kulture2Couture.com, under the 'Aims' section.
- <sup>16</sup> Hettie Judah, 'British, Asian and hip', article the Independent on Sunday, 1 March 1998, cited in Jackson 2002, p.1



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