The art of being different: exploring diversity in the cultural industries
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INTRODUCTION
Interest in the cultural industries has flourished in recent years, partly connected to a fresh, polyvalent perspective on the economy, a growing interest in the economy’s embeddedness in the cultural, and attempts to understand better the interaction between the two (Crang 1998). Activities such as fashion, advertising, and the wider arts, have come to be part of the extended field of cultural production (Williams 1981). Cultural industries are defined as activities concerned with the production and marketing of goods and services that have aesthetic or semiotic content (Scott 2000a). Generally speaking, cultural industry products ‘serve an aesthetic or expressive, rather than a clearly utilitarian function’ (Hirsch 1972, p.641). They are considered to reflect 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). Thus, cultural industries are concerned with a specific, historically situated conception and typology of cultural production. Their analysis should concern itself, therefore, with the social relations of its specific means of production and the processes of social and cultural reproduction (Williams 1981, p.30).

The looseness of most definitions of cultural industries have provoked fervent debate, and the decisions as to where the boundaries lie between products reliant on semiotic content and those which are not seem at best arbitrary (Power and Scott 2004; Gibson and Kong 2005). Moreover, the cultural industries have drawn attention to themselves in their supposed special relation with creativity and innovation, leading observers to question whether they may not simply be the new ‘snake oils’ of the knowledge economy (Pratt and Jeffcutt 2009). By combining the creative and cultural industries in one definition, Power and Nielsén focus on ‘the creation and provision of marketable outputs (goods, services and activities) that depend on creative and cultural inputs for their value’ (Power and Nielsén 2010b, p.3). While we will turn to these questions shortly, suffice it to say here that, given their nature, cultural industries offer a unique vantage point from which to look into the relation between culture and other forms of social activity.

This research takes stock of the theories concerning the production of culture, an overview of which is provided below, and applies them to the study of the relationship between cultural diversity and the dynamics of cultural production in the cultural industries. In doing so, this research offers a fresh perspective on the dynamics at work in the diversification of cultural products in the context of cultural globalisation. Rather than equating the diversity of local populations with a potential for diversity of cultural products, as often appears in policy rhetoric, it advocates an analysis which considers the importance of context, organization and institutions in shaping ideas, and the relevance of feedback systems in the development of innovative outcomes (Hodgson 1993). The potential for this ‘feedback and learning is constituted in situ, in places, and in embodied fashion’ (Pratt and Jeffcutt 2009, p.14). In this sense we look at cultural diversity as a negotiated process, which is played out unevenly in places, sectors, firms and markets.

The following chapters explore the relation between cultural diversity and its manifestation in cultural industry products from a multi-level, dialectic perspective.
Culture is read as an ongoing process, combining a set of forms to which meaning is attached, and their interpretation (Hannerz 1992), reproduced and renewed through the interaction of perspectives. Hence, the production and consumption of culture should not be read as diametrically opposed, but as part of a ‘cultural circuit’ where products are understood as reflecting and shaping consumers’ behaviour (Zukin and Maguire 2004, p.178) and embedded in processes of mediation and valorisation. Production chains and markets are not juxtaposed entities where products are shaped and circulated respectively, but rather flux entities that co-constitute the commodification and value of products. Innovation within cultural products should be understood, therefore, from a perspective of ‘co-construction of objects, products and effects’ (Pratt and Jeffcutt 2009, p.12).

In applying the idea of co-construction to diversity in cultural industry products, we approach the cultural production from the perspective of their situatedness in networks of a collaborative nature (Becker 1982), their embeddedness in diverse regimes of value (Appadurai 1986), and their trans-local articulation, from an organizational (firms’ transnational links) and individual perspective (e.g. artists’ spatial trajectories). The span of the research takes heed of Williams’s perspective on the study of culture, notably the ‘exploration from the known or discoverable character of a general social order to the specific forms taken by its cultural manifestations’ (Williams 1981, p.12). We do so by analysing the organizational and situated nature of cultural production, exploring the embeddedness of cultural industries in sectoral practices and wider socio-economic and political contexts, through the use of selected case studies.

The picture that emerges is one of extreme uncertainty, resulting from transient, networked ecologies with fluctuating delineations, and contextually sensitive dynamics of creativity and innovation. Two building blocks are fundamental to our analysis: notably, the understanding of the symbolic and aesthetic content of cultural-industry products and how this is shaped and transferred, and the situatedness of cultural production in particular geographical, historical, economic and social realities. They are particularly relevant to this research since exploring diversity calls into question the symbolic and aesthetic inputs to cultural products and their connection or disconnection to time and place. We now turn to the peculiarities of the production of culture and its contemporary (albeit not exclusive) manifestation in the cultural industries.

2.1 PRODUCING CULTURE

Theories of the production of culture have in recent decades placed the accent on the situatedness of the process of production within networks of agents and wider organizational structures and market dynamics. Doing away with the charismatic notion of ‘creation’ and the focus on the supposed producer of cultural objects (Bourdieu 1992), there has been a shift towards an interactive understanding and appreciation of cultural production. Becker’s (1982) seminal book Art Worlds provides a vivid illustration of the collaborative nature of artistic production, identifying the role played by the artist him/herself and the people engaged in support activities requiring
varied technical and artistic skills. From this perspective, the cultural industries should be understood as a historical development of cultural production, rather than being in juxtaposition to earlier configurations, such as artisanal, craft or arts patronage (Williams 1981; Hesmondhalgh 2006). The result is a contextualised analysis of the object of art in the setting of a wider, denser ‘art world’ populated by people and organizations who, through their more or less active involvement, contribute to bestowing said object with the status of art (Becker 1982). The social organisation of culture, ‘as a realised signifying system’, is embedded in a variety of activities, relations and institutions, of which only some are ostensibly ‘cultural’ (Williams 1981, p.209).

Exploring the social organisation of the art worlds, Becker’s insights refer to the people involved in artistic production and the conventions (ways of doing) and resources which structure the level of competence and participation of individuals, ranging from active co-producers of a work of art to more passive audiences (1982). Cultural production is the process and outcome of interactions within a ‘field’, a structured social space in which the relative standing and interrelations between agents are shaped by various resources or forms of capital (Bourdieu 1992). Moreover, the role of aestheticians in legitimating the recognition of a work of art and in establishing the reputation of artists is elaborated upon (Becker 1982), building up the object’s symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1992).

Becker’s conceptualisation of art in its process of ‘becoming’ within a rich web of actors has been highly influential to this research and to the understanding of cultural industries more widely. Recently, the production of culture perspective in sociology has enriched these insights with a focus on the organisational structure and environment in which cultural goods are produced, performed and disseminated and the resulting impact on what is produced and how (Hirsch 1972; Di Maggio 1977; Peterson 1994; Peterson and Anand 2004). Beyond the collaborative nature of cultural production, this perspective emphasises how ‘the symbolic elements of culture are shaped by the systems within which they are created, distributed, evaluated, taught, and preserved’, introducing six variable dimensions in this dynamic process (technology, law, regulation, industry and organization structure, occupational careers and markets) (Peterson and Anand 2004, p.311). However, this resembles more a list of elements which may or may not have an impact rather than a framework for the understanding of the interconnectedness of the various elements (Hesmondhalgh 2006). What is retained though is the notion of culture as situational and capable of rapid change (Peterson and Anand 2004, p.312).

Zooming into the cultural industries’ production system, research has drawn attention to the temporary nature of collaboration within the framework of ‘project ecologies’ (Grabher 2002b; 2004), partly linked to the restructuring of production, which has shifted away from system houses towards patterns of flexible specialization (Piore and Sabel 1986; Hesmondhalgh 1996a; Caves 2000; Menger 2006). The cultural industries are thus organisationally kaleidoscopic, their components assembling, dispersing and reassembling around specific assignments and forming temporary, creative fields. The elements within bring together a variety of skills and talent, a ‘motley crew’ of individuals and organizations partaking in the production of cultural

The production of culture can be seen as a Bourdieuan field, structuring demands for products and attempts to satisfy them, with key agents directly or indirectly structuring taste through their practices (Bourdieu 1993). When contemplating the reaction of audiences and consumers to a cultural product in fact, the producer is 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 (Caves 2000). 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 assessed value differential (Becker 1982; Caves 2000). This comparative appreciation does by no means occur in a vacuum: hence the importance of the dynamics of valorisation of cultural content, the socio-economic and temporal context of production and consumption and their geographical scope.

2.2 SITUATING THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Two characteristics of the cultural industries contribute to defining their situatedness: the symbolic and aesthetic content of their products and their clustering tendencies, particularly in urban environments. We first turn to these elements separately, before exploring the (potential) inter-relation between them, taken against the backdrop of diversifying metropolitan areas and the wider processes of cultural globalization.

Symbolic and aesthetic content

The symbolic and aesthetic component of cultural products is often taken for granted and summarily described, yet it is arguably one of the more complex and singular features of the cultural industries. Referring to the market for symbolic goods, Bourdieu distinguished between ‘pure art’ and the disavowal of and disinterest in economic considerations on the one hand, and products low on symbolic capital and high on commercial exploitation on the other (Bourdieu 1992). Bourdieu asserts that there is an inherent contradiction between popularity, particularly as measured in sales and commercial success, and the prestige of a particular work (for a critical review, see Hesmondhalgh 2006). While this distinction is not upheld here, it is nonetheless useful in providing a defining paradigm against which to position the spectrum of cultural products in relation to their symbolic capital.

As a first characteristic, we contend that symbolic and aesthetic content do not represent an immanent, static resource within a cultural industry system or sector, but rather an exogenous one, the mobilisation and transfer of which is related to the
elusive processes of creativity and innovation in the wider cultural economy. If we consider creativity as the generation of new ideas, the declination of this process in the cultural industries is based on the authoring, renewal and valorisation of symbolic and aesthetic content.

The uncertainty connected to the aesthetic nature of the product means that dynamics of intermediation and value attribution within particular sectors are highly determinant (Hirsch 1972). One reading of the process of recognition and valorisation is offered by Bourdieu's field of cultural production, which is said to evolve in time as a result of the struggle for positioning, hence contributing to the temporalization of the field itself and shifting the relation between 'avant-garde' and 'consecrated' art and the balance of legitimacy and appreciation (Bourdieu 1992). The difficulty in predicting demand and taste preferences results in over-production, spreading risk across a range of products (Caves 2000; Hirsch 2000). However, the cultural industries have developed increasingly complex ways of constructing a sense of what the demand for products is (Hesmondhalgh 1996b). One aspect of this is the degree of compartmentalisation in the management of meaning and meaningful forms (Hannerz 1992), and as a result, the symbolic and aesthetic content of products.

The dynamic of classification does not adhere to objective qualities of the product itself but is the result of a collective social process, and the separation of products is reproduced by reflexive organizations as a means to claim superiority of their own outputs (Di Maggio 1982). This is evident in the internal reproduction within a cultural genre for instance (Williams 1981), which helps to maintain compartmentalisation and its manifestation in consumption preferences. While value is ascribed to commodities as they move along the pathway of their 'social life', framing and transforming their meaning, “the flow of commodities in any given situation is a shifting compromise between socially regulated paths and competitively inspired diversions” (Appadurai 1986, p.3, 17). It is along this spatial and temporal trajectory, through juxtapositions and displacements, where the value and meaning of objects are developed and advanced (Crang 1996).

The symbols, which are the outcome of cultural production, act as ‘both the currency of commercial exchange and a language of social identity’ (Zukin 1995, p.24), manifestations of the processes of commodification of culture and the consumers’ positioning in relation to these. Production and consumption become processes of construction of difference, linked to the choices of reflexive individuals (Lash and Lury 2007). Innovation in the realm of symbolic and aesthetic content is engendered in a variety of ways. The arrival of newcomers to a cultural field has the effect of shifting the system of tastes, renewing the ‘creative bloodstream’ (Bourdieu 1992; Hall 1998). Attaining a critical mass is important, reaching the point where there is some form of reciprocity between people with similar proclivities (Hannerz 1992). Moreover, innovation in the field of culture may be seen as the personal currency through which individuals may draw attention to themselves (Hannerz 1992, p.199). Lastly, cultural products may also move from one social context to another and in this movement value is added (Lash and Lury 2007).

The study of the global circulation of cultural products has highlighted concurrent processes of homogenisation and diversification. Global cultural productions, aimed at
maximising audience exposure across the globe, can be interpreted as a case of “banal cosmopolitanism”, as an ‘experience of “globality” embedded in everyday life, operating in this sense as a ‘homogenising cultural force’ (Kuipers and de Kloet 2009, p.17). This ‘cosmopolitan gaze’ is propelled by the blurring of boundaries between identities and cultures, and the global transformations of capitalism and communications, which are attenuating the importance of national borders (Beck 2000, p.79). Parallel to this uniformitarian trend, demand for distinctive cultural experiences and products has heightened. Some examples include ‘food tourism’ and the popularity of world music (Cook and Crang 1996; Connell and Gibson 2003), or in the case of the clothing industry, the emergence of ‘fashioned ethnicities’ in the framework of the ‘making, buying, selling of construction of difference’ (Dwyer and Crang 2002, p.426). Previously regionally embedded cultural products can thrive thanks to the demand for exotic products by consumers based globally (see Aoyama 2007 for an interesting case study on flamenco). A suggested determining factor is consumers’ increasing propensity to ‘soft multiculturalism,’ introducing diverse products and practices and generally displaying a higher level of openness in their modes of consumption (Martiniello 2005, p.18). A sign of ‘ethno-cultural and identificational diversity,’ it calls for a post-ethnic of identity, rejecting imposed ascriptions and structured community affiliations (Martiniello 2005, p.22).

While there is evidence in fashion and trends towards a celebratory approach to multicultural forms and cultural syncretism, there is a need for a better understanding of the invocation of hybridity (Dwyer and Crang 2002). A close observation cautiously warns that the greater visibility of diverse cultural products has not come hand in hand with overcoming socially exclusionary or racist practices (Hutnyk 2000). A more useful perspective lies in the invocation of a ‘commercial culture’ which considers ‘the way that various aspects of cultural production […] are inherently concerned with the commodification of various kinds of cultural difference’ and explores how markets are ‘inescapably embedded within a range of cultural processes’ (Jackson 2002, p.5).

On the receiving end, taste is an acquired disposition to differentiate among cultural products and appreciate them differently (Bourdieu 1979). At an individual level, consumption is negotiated within an ‘institutional field,’ at the intersection of social structures and cultural practices, and leads to the ‘production of consumers’ and the development of their consumption practices over time (Zukin and Maguire, 2004, p.192, italics in original). Taste reflects dispositions rooted in the ‘habitus,’ and cultural practices are established in the relationship between said habitus and field (Bourdieu 2000). Bourdieu recognises a homology between the field of production and of consumption and the places (galleries, theatres for example) in which cultural production and consumption occur, whereby places ‘designate’ an audience and producers locate the ‘natural home’ for their work (Bourdieu 1980, p.278).

Understanding the constitution of the symbolic and aesthetic content of cultural industry products and the shifting tastes and preferences thereof is a key element in understanding the dynamics of diversity in the cultural industries. This leads us to two research questions, which we will explore in the following chapters:
1) What are the mechanisms through which cultural diversity is (potentially) activated and valorised as symbolic and aesthetic fuel in processes of commodification of culture?

2) In what ways does the mediation of tastes and trends within the cultural industries come to shape the boundaries between cultural products drawing on diverse cultural and ethnic repertoires?

The place and flows of cultural-industry products

The spatial manifestations of the cultural industries have attracted significant attention, and cities have emerged as the main playing field of a ‘cultural revolution’ in the new economy. With the displacement of manufacturing, it seems cultural production is increasingly what cities are about (Zukin 1995, p.x). Cultural industries have been noted to display a tendency towards agglomeration, particularly in larger metropolitan areas (Scott 2000a). 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 (Bianchini and Parkinson 1994; Landry and Bianchini 1995; Florida 2002b).

In this research, the city is not considered to be a confined spatial entity, but a place of flows of meaning and objects, and, reflexively, as a place which endows meaning by virtue of association to it (Redfield and Singer 1954; Hall 1998). Hall’s element of serendipity, “something beyond the economy and the inherited cultural dispositions” partly explains this (Hall 1998, p.21). 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). More generally, cities are understood as a field of circulations, opportunities, energies and practices, ‘a composite space with compositional capacities’ (Amin and Thrift 2007, p.150). Cultural consumption in cities fuels what Zukin terms its ‘symbolic economy’, intertwining cultural symbols and entrepreneurial capital in the ability to produce symbols and spaces (Zukin 1995).

Cities become ‘test sites’ of theories of global flows and hybridity, ‘borderlands’… where the action is, and hybridity and collage are among our preferred words for characterizing qualities in people and their products’ (Hannerz 1997, p.2). Writing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Simmel spoke about the metropolis as the ‘genuine arena’, by virtue of the division of labour therein, of growth of “objective culture”, intended as all social substance outside the individual (such as works of arts, science, technology) (Simmel 1950). However, the ‘tragedy of culture’ is that objective culture comes to have a life of its own, constraining and shaping the subjective proclivity and ability of individuals to produce, absorb and control objective culture (Simmel 1988). The ensuing disparity between the level of objective cultural production and the cultural level of the individual represents one of the main sources of dissonance in modern life, as manifested in dissatisfaction with technical progress.
As Scott points out, there can be no *a priori* distinction between cultural products on the basis of the social context in which they arise (Scott 2005). Yet the almost innate reputation attached to products coming from particular places as a ‘place in product’ quality (Molotch 1996; Scott 2000a; Molotch 2002; Scott 2005) presents a compelling argument to the contrary. Cities emerge as key players in cultural production, not only for the clustering tendencies of cultural industries, but also because they are sites of meaning formation and valorisation of cultural content and symbols. Cities constitute a setting and a determinant influence on cultural production.

Borrowing from the politics of location perspective, cities capture the spatial situatedness of processes of cultural production, assisting in the understanding of exclusionary and inclusionary practices and the articulation of difference (Kaplan 1994; Trinekens 2004). This perspective opens up a more negotiated approach to cultural production in cities, away from a more normative one concerning the benefits of the metropolis on the availability and access to diverse cultural products. The emphasis is often placed on the diversity and cosmopolitanism in the metropolis as a source of cross-fertilisation of ideas and spill-over effects sustaining the dynamics of cultural production (Scott 2005). Cultural flows are generally directional, and they point towards a reorganisation of culture in space (Hannerz 1992). The causality of this process needs to be questioned though. It is not just a question of receptive audiences, but also of a diversity of markets and cultural syncretism that provide sources of inspiration for cultural producers. While national boundaries have become less relevant in terms of the flows, embeddedness of production and consumption matters in terms of valorisation and mediation of culture. The system of cultural production needs to be analysed from the perspective of uneven cultural production on a transnational scale (Williams 1981, p.231), reconceptualising places as constituted by articulated interconnections on various scales (Massey 1994).

While proximity to diverse and cosmopolitan environments may provide stimulus to cultural production, it does not *per se* imply the participation of diversity to the same ecosystem of production. We explore this aspect by questioning whether there are parallel opportunity structures for migrant cultural entrepreneurs and to what extent the image of diversity is instrumentalised but not actively incorporated.

By exploring the structuring quality of culture and diversity in the production, valorisation and consumption of cultural products, we ask a set of key questions:

1) To what extent does the social and spatial embeddedness of processes of commodification of culture affect the diversity of cultural products available?

2) In what ways does this shape the opportunity structures for migrants in the cultural industries?

### 2.1 EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL TRAJECTORY

This dissertation offers an original contribution to the study of cultural industries, by bringing together literature from fields hitherto disconnected: economic geography,
migration studies and ethnic entrepreneurship, cultural studies and sociology of art. It does so by addressing different, though related, questions regarding the commodification of diversity in the cultural industries. The articles in this dissertation combine a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods, applying various epistemological perspectives.

The dissertation process started from a research proposal sketching possible lines of investigation into the role and positioning of migrants as vectors of innovation in a Schumpeterian sense in the field of cultural production. From this initial point, I explored the dynamics at the heart of migrants’ participation in the cultural industries, questioning the role of ethnicity as an engine of creativity and the possible constraints in the positioning of migrants in the wider, situated (temporally and spatially) fields of cultural production. The result was an exploratory analysis of the processes of commodification of diversity and the broader implications for the opportunity structures open to migrant cultural entrepreneurs. The outcome of this is presented in the analytical framework and field research presented in Chapters 3 and 4.

In the early stages of my PhD trajectory, I participated in two externally funded projects, one for the French Ministry of Culture and Communication and the other for the City of Paris. The former centred on the sectoral, spatial and organizational dynamics of creativity in the Ile-de-France region; the latter was a feasibility study for a Local Production System initiative on world music, to be based in one of Paris’s more ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. Through this latter project, I gained unprecedented access to key actors in the world music industry in Paris. As I worked on this project, I initially struggled with a dilemma: how could I integrate research on world music in a dissertation about migrants in the cultural industries? Was I not selecting an extreme case, where access for migrants would necessarily be facilitated by virtue of their background? As I proceeded in my research and my survey of references, I came to the conclusion that world music actually provides a highly pertinent case of the bringing together of relational cultural and spatial dynamics, thus offering a unique vantage point in processes of production, valorization and consumption of diversity in the framework of cultural globalization. Two papers (Chapters 4 and 5) make use of extensive in-depth interviews and secondary data collection on the development of the Paris world music cluster, complemented by an online survey with musicians connected professionally to the cluster. Adding to the analysis of world music in situ, the research presented in Chapter 6 opens up a new perspective in analysing spatially interconnected nature of the commodification of world music, revealing a hierarchy of places engaged in its valorization and promotion. Chapter 7 offers a reflection on the dynamics of innovation in the cultural industries and puts forward a framework for analysis that is multi-layered (borrowing elements of political economy, cultural economics and economic geography) and contextually informed.

Structure of the dissertation

The thesis is structured around five articles, offering a variety of vantage points into cultural production, the dynamics of production and valorisation of diverse cultural content, and the embeddedness of these processes in place. Cultural production within the cultural industries is examined from the perspective of the market-structuring
power of symbolic and aesthetic content, as in the exploratory research of migrant cultural entrepreneurs and the definition of the opportunity structures in the cultural industries. The analysis of the world music cluster in Paris and the development of product niches with parallel production, valorisation and consumption chains also shed light on the shifting boundary between mainstream and niche products.

Chapter 3 explores the extent to which cultural industries can be considered vectors of diversity, taking the perspective of the participation and contribution of migrant cultural entrepreneurs to the production of commodified cultural goods and services. By combining three strands of thought, notably literature on cultural industries, ethnicity and culture, and migrant entrepreneurship, the chapter sheds 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. The result is a framework for analysis of: 1) the dynamics and opportunity structures through which ethnic diversity is potentially activated as symbolic and aesthetic fuel to drive innovation in processes of commodification of culture; 2) the extent to which the mediation of tastes and trends within the cultural industries come to shape the (perception of) boundaries between ethnic/non-ethnic cultural products.

Chapter 4 applies the framework developed in the previous chapter to the case of world music production and the commodification of cultural diversity therein. The cultural or “ethnic” capital of migrants from less-developed countries may bestow a competitive edge in creating cultural products such as textiles, dance, and music. Converting these unique resources into commodities is, however, a complex process. To analyse this process, we introduce a new concept, namely that of the commodification gradient, as a socially embedded negotiated passage, albeit not an irreversible one, between creativity in posse and its commodity status. After unpacking this concept, we explore an interactionist approach to the world music opportunity structure and the dynamics of commodification of culture therein based on interviews and fieldwork in the Paris world music scene. We show the importance of parallel value chains, exemplified in the presence of three market ‘clouts’: notably community, traditional, and contemporary world music markets and we emphasise the role of intermediaries and tastemakers in these distinct processes of commodification.

Chapter 5 further explores the dynamics of world music production, valorisation and consumption within the Parisian world music cluster, and highlights the spatially multi-scalar and historically, socially and economically-embedded dimensions of its creative field. Taking a long-term and multi-level perspective, our study reveals that the world music scene in Paris cannot simply be explained by its dense network of producers. The cluster’s competitiveness is tied to trans-local trajectories of knowledge diffusion, its transmission and mediation through individual and collective actions, and the mobilization of public and private actors towards a unitary response to the critical music industry conjuncture. The scene’s historical roots and the role of key individual and collective actors, combining entrepreneurship with an understanding of the societal significance of world music in a diversifying society, are evident, creating a strong, shared social context. Moreover, world music should be understood in the
framework of wider processes of cultural globalization, drawing upon multiple spatial
dynamics of production and scales of cultural valorisation. In conclusion, our study
calls for further analysis in the (formal and informal) collective actions within cultural
industry clusters, beyond the temporary project-based pooling of resources.

Chapter 6 looks more globally at the production of world music, offering an in-depth
analysis into the clustered and transnational dynamics therein. Taking the European
world music charts since 1991 as a surrogate measure of the salience of global economic
and geographical linkages in world music production, we substantiate the claim that
the valorisation of commodified musical content has traditionally been removed from
its place of origin and centred on metropolitan areas in Western Europe and the USA.
However, the paper suggests a growing diversification in the geography of production,
with the emergence of secondary centres with an international and national orientation.
It also offers promising avenues for further research into the positionality of cultural
mediation and the increasing prominence of hybrid musical output.

Chapter 7 focuses on the dynamics of creativity and innovation in the cultural
industries more generally. The emergence of cultural industries as engines of economic
growth reflects an economic and cultural conjuncture where commodity production has
become tied in with artistic experimentation. Research on cultural industries, however,
has revealed a latent tension between artistic/l’art pour l’art and commercial or so-called
humdrum considerations (Caves 2000; Cowen and Tabarrok 2000; Kloosterman
2010a) As many cultural industries can only survive in the long run through constant
product differentiation and innovation, ways have to be found to shield off creative
workers – at least temporarily – from direct market pressures to be able to come up
with new ideas and innovations. We theorise that sector-specific capital requirements,
the nature of the production process and markets, and the aesthetic and functional
value of the object impact on how experimentation can be organised. Notwithstanding
the basic similarities in the organisational and spatial format of cultural industries,
we anticipate that there are various institutional configurations which can shield off
market pressures and allow creative workers to pursue new roads. To illustrate our
point, we briefly present findings from the Amsterdam case.

Chapter 8 brings together the key contributions made in this thesis, and offers
elements of conclusion and fruitful avenues for further research.

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1 ‘The freedom of the border zone is more creatively exploited by situational shifts and innovative
combinations, putting its resources together in new ways, experimenting. In the borderlands,
there is scope for agency in the handling of culture’ (Hannerz 1997, p.11).
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CHAPTER 2
INTRODUCTION