The art of being different: exploring diversity in the cultural industries
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CROSSING CULTURAL BORDERS?
MIGRANT CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURS AND DIVERSITY IN THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

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'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)

3.1 PROLOGUE

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, variegated conceptualisations of culture have 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 cultural diversity is experienced in cultural production: more specifically, how cultural 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.
3.2 INTRODUCTION

Migrants have 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 (Hall 1998). Migrants are ‘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). It is in the imaginary of these ‘marginal men’ where diverse cultures meet and blend, providing a unique entry point into processes and dynamics of civilization and progress (Park 1928).

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 community in public and cultural life (Bianchini and Parkinson 1994, p.205). 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). 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; 2007). The ensuing cultural diversity is considered as a living and renewable treasure, stimulating the capacity for expression, creation and innovation (UNESCO 2001). Such diversity is embodied in the plurality of identities, groups, cultural practices and expressions which make up our societies. However, the extent to which migrants are contributing to cultural production 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, still remains largely unexplored.

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. Here a point of clarification is due: in the context of this research, we focus on the cultural diversity represented by migrant cultural entrepreneurs in the cultural industries. It is however understood that parallels between migrants and ethnic diversity should be handled with care: to state just some caveats, migrants can belong to the same ethnic group as the receiving country, and there can be considerable ethnic diversity among non-migrants. ‘Ethnic’ in this research is used ‘primarily in contexts of cultural difference’, where this ‘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).

The potential of this diversity to feed into the production of goods and services in the cultural industries is often considered apparent and goes unquestioned. In his seminal work on culture and cities, Peter Hall (1998, p.285) concluded that ‘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’. While recognising the potential and vibrancy of diversity and its flows, concern has been raised over the homogenisation pressures of globalisation, particularly in the case of the emergence of a global ‘popular’ culture, swamping local traditions and expressions of self-definition (UNESCO 1996).

Some migrant groups have been deemed more able than others to ‘activate’ their cultural repertoire (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). The mobilisation of such repertoire in the context of a cultural endeavour may open up a set of opportunities and competitive advantages in business. Some observers have gone so far as to argue that ‘immigrant entrepreneurs enjoy an advantage over potential competitors outside the group’ given that ethnicity ‘can carve out economic niches that foster immigrant entrepreneurship’ (Evans 1989, p.951), as a form of ‘diversity dividend’: 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).

Taking the perspective of migrant cultural entrepreneurs (potentially) allows us to look at the dynamics of encounter of diverse and plural cultures and their expressions. Potentially, because we should take due care not to fall into a cultural relativism pitfall, equating cultural and artistic outputs with the culture of origin. 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:

» 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, exploring the conditions under which ethnicity can become the object of commodification, as a conscious/unconscious, strategic or spontaneous source of creative inspiration and innovation.

» The dynamics through which the mediation of tastes and trends within the cultural industries come to shape the (perception of) boundaries between ethnic/non-ethnic cultural products. Here we look at the positioning of products linked to ethnic communities’ production and consumption patterns in relation to the mainstream, and the modulating effect of cultural boundaries. Here we will propose a framework for analysis.

» The role of policy in the field of diversity in the cultural industries. To conclude, we offer some policy directions based on our research findings.
Definitional issues

In our exploration of diversity in the cultural industries, from the perspective of migrant cultural entrepreneurs, we first need to zoom into the ‘primary resource’ at hand: that is the cultural repertoire of meanings, values and symbols which an individual’s creativity can draw upon. Here we run into the complex field of defining culture, and relating it to questions of identity and ethnicity and their expression. Definitions become increasingly complex, particularly as globalisation multiplies the contacts, exchanges and multifarious affiliations among communities of belonging, practice and taste. While we will turn to definitional questions more in depth in later sections, we would like to introduce some elements of discussion.

Geertz provides a very poignant account of what culture is: ‘Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning’ (Geertz 1997, p.5). These webs of significance have developed in a diversity of languages, traditions, products, and expressions human creativity. A way of structuring this diversity is ethnicity, as the sharing of culture through ‘descent, group memories, histories and language’ (Karner 2007, p.17). Ethnicity is not a naturally occurring entity, but rather its existence relies ‘upon social processes and discourses that construct and subsequently naturalise/reify group differences’ (Karner 2007, p.17). 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, rather than their content.

This definition of ethnicity acts as a reminder that beyond labels and groups, we should look to the circumstances under which it comes to matter (Fenton 2003). More generally, individual identities should be understood in terms of the socialisation environment and wider context in which they are shaped and negotiated, as an understanding and exploration of individual ‘routes’ rather than ‘roots’ (Hall 1996, p.2-4). The understanding of identity as negotiation, moreover, makes the idea of a straight-line assimilation process (Gordon 1964), which implies a one-way integration of migrants into the host society, redundant. A more pluralist model, which introduces the idea of a two-way interaction between minorities and the mainstream, is needed, highlighting the evolution of a composite culture, resulting from the ‘interpenetration of cultural practices and beliefs’ (Alba and Nee 2003, p.10).

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?
3.3 STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

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.

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 diversity and culture and related dynamics by approaching it from a cross-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, respondents with a migrant background were identified on the basis of their participation and recognition in sectoral awards or showcases. In a number of cases, these initiatives and awards were directly related to the question of diversity in the sector. In a few cases, the respondents were actively involved in the development of these initiatives. Altogether, 29 cultural entrepreneurs were interviewed. Table 3.1 below shows a break up of respondents by country of origin, city, and sector of activity. It also provides an indication of the type of recognition received.

The empirical research took the form of semi-structured face-to-face interviews, lasting between one and three hours, at various locations in the three cities, but mainly at the cultural entrepreneurs’ studios or homes. In two cases, email questionnaires were used, while in one case, the interview was carried out via Voice over the Internet Protocol (VoIP). The interviews were recorded and transcribed, allowing for more accurate analysis and quotation. In order to preserve confidentiality, the interviews were given numbered codes.
Table 3-1: Overview of interview respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Professional name</th>
<th>Profession/ Location2</th>
<th>Recognition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABAJI</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Abaji</td>
<td>M/P</td>
<td>Master classes on world music at the Quai Branly Museum in Paris.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALVAREZ LAURA</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Laura Alvarez</td>
<td>A/Am</td>
<td>Europe 40 under 40 award by the European Centre for Architecture, Art design and urban Studies 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASANTE JAN</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Co-founder of Gisella Creations</td>
<td>F/L</td>
<td>Winner of the UK’s Black Entertainment, Film, Fashion and Television and Arts Award (BEFFTA) Award for Best Female Fashion Designer 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATIEMO TINA</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Tina Atiemo</td>
<td>F/L</td>
<td>Participated in the Kulture2Couture 2007, an event organised by the Mayor of London to promote emergent Black designers. Participated in Arise Africa Fashion week 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AYISSI IMANE</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Imane Ayissi</td>
<td>F/P</td>
<td>Contributes clothes and accessories to the exhibition &quot;Sensorielle Diaspora&quot; (Diaspora of the senses) at the Quai Branly museum in Paris, 2007-2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZHAR</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Azhar</td>
<td>A/L</td>
<td>Member of the Royal Institute of Chartered British Architects. Visiting lecturer at several London Universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARYEH MAAME</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Maame Baryeh</td>
<td>F/L</td>
<td>CEO of Fashion Diversity, an event showcasing cross-cultural fashion during the London Fashion Week. Founding director of Untold, a collective which offers fashion designers from diverse backgrounds a platform for visibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEE SADIO</td>
<td>Guinea/Senegal</td>
<td>Sadio Bee</td>
<td>F/P</td>
<td>Creator of the Mix-tissage concept, mixing textiles from African and European traditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRUZ ANTONIO</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Ortiz y Cruz</td>
<td>A/Am</td>
<td>In charge of the Rijksmuseum extension; previously completed the Java-Eiland residential complex in Amsterdam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DORREL DAN</td>
<td>Italy/Israel</td>
<td>Founding member of DGT Architects</td>
<td>A/P</td>
<td>Laureate of the Nouveaux Albums des Jeunes Architectes et Paysagistes 2008, a Ministry of Culture and Communication yearly award for young architects and landscape designers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3-1: Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Professional name</th>
<th>Profession/Location</th>
<th>Recognition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EGE ECE</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Founder of prêt-a-porter line Dice Kayek</td>
<td>F/P</td>
<td>Winner of the French prize ‘Femme en Or’ 2003, given to outstanding female professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESSINDI FRANCOIS</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Founder of the band Otoulbaka</td>
<td>M/P</td>
<td>Featured in SudPlanete, the French portal on cultural diversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KALSI JOHNNY</td>
<td>UK/India</td>
<td>Founder of the Dhol Foundation.</td>
<td>M/L</td>
<td>Featured in BBC’s World on Your Street project, on diversity and music in the UK. Performances at numerous WOMAD festivals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAURINDO ANDREA</td>
<td>Curaçao</td>
<td>Laurindo</td>
<td>F/Am</td>
<td>Selected for the Dutch Fashion Talent award in 1996.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIM C.J.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Professor at The Bartlett, University College London; Director of architectural firm Studio 8.</td>
<td>A/L</td>
<td>Received four Royal Institute of British Architects International Teaching Awards for contribution to architectural education (the highest number to date for a single architect).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAHMOUD KELDI</td>
<td>Comorian Islands</td>
<td>Founder of Keldi Architects</td>
<td>A/P</td>
<td>Laureate of the Nouveaux Albums des Jeunes Architectes et Paysagistes 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATSUMIYA NOBUKO</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Founder of the Ensemble Sakura</td>
<td>M/P</td>
<td>Recommended by the Auditorium of the Guimet Museum, Paris.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSaidaIE CHEBLI</td>
<td>Comorian Islands</td>
<td>Chebli Msaidie, solo musician.</td>
<td>M/P</td>
<td>A&amp;R manager at Cantos, digital distributor of world music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 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 development3 (Landry and Bianchini 1995; Florida 2004).

Cultural industries: from art to industry?

Considerable attention has been given to the specificity of cultural industries’ production, not always in a positive 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). The 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). As a result, cultural industries have become emblematic ‘of the hybrid and complex relationships between production and consumption, the symbolic and material’ (Pratt 2008, p.3).

According to a recently published report on the cultural economy of Europe, the cultural and creative sector in the enlarged European Union (30 Members States) 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). Accordingly, cultural industries can no longer be considered as ‘secondary to the ‘real’ economy where durable, ‘useful’ goods are manufactured (Hesmondhalgh 2007, p.1).

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.

We note that for the purpose of this research, we 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. 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).

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 lead 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; Power and Nielsén 2010a; b).

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 be non-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).

A more recent analysis by the European Cluster Observatory offers an understanding
of ‘Creative and Cultural Industries’ as an aggregate rather than unified category,
approaching the definitional debate from the perspective that while these industries
share many common features, they also differ significantly in intra-sectoral and
cluster dynamics (Power and Nielson 2010a). By combining the creative and cultural
industries in one definition, the authors focus on ‘those concerned with the creation
and provision of marketable outputs (goods, services and activities) that depend on
creative and cultural inputs for their value’(Power and Nielson 2010b, p.3). This ties
the valuation of products to the creative and cultural inputs, thus highlighting the
interlinkages between the conditions and resources of production and consumption
in these industries.

For the purpose of this study, we base our research on the definition put forward
by the economic geographer Allen Scott, emphasising the cultural dimension of
production. 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 conjunction 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 (2000; 2004). Furthermore,
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).

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 impacted the valuation of creativity, particularly in the recognition and remuneration of intellectual property rights. This holds true especially in the audiovisual industry.

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 (Lash and Urry 1994, p.123). 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 interconnections 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 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). Moreover, as exemplified in the case of the Swedish music industry, 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 picture that emerges is one 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 (Leyshon 2001; Leyshon, Webb et al. 2005): 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 own 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). Among these, 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 (2000): 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).

Cultural industries have been examined not only from the perspective of the inputs used in the making of culture, as well as the activities related to the dissemination of the end product (DCMS 2002). 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 representation of a production chain raises the question of the value of the cultural commodity 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 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).
Cultural industries: the diversity of a sector

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 3.2 below.

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).

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
The cultural industries' inter-sectoral diversity

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Capital Requirements</th>
<th>Human capital</th>
<th>Financial capital</th>
<th>Social capital and networks</th>
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<td></td>
<td>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).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Investment needed to start and the costs involved in the production of cultural products in these three sectors also vary.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Architects work alongside other (technical) professionals, such as planners, decorators, engineers etc.</td>
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<th>Symbolic and Functional Value of the Object</th>
<th>Degree of functionality</th>
<th>Individual and group use</th>
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<td></td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<th>Space and Time Implications</th>
<th>Place-based specificities.</th>
<th>Mobile and immobile nature.</th>
<th>Degree of permanence</th>
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<td></td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<td>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).</td>
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taken by the forum has been a world-touring exhibition showcasing the diversity of London architecture (see 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

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, given the high level of publicity which ensues (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 [a black model] in the show had arrived’ (Interview n°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’. 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).

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.

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).

### 3.5 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).

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). 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 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. 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.

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 per se, 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).

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 (Jacobs 1961; 1969). Peter Hall gives a prominent role to the 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 2000a, pp.642-5). The metropolitan area therefore becomes the scene for interconnections between a diversity of people and places and a potential source of creative inspiration: 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. In the words of one respondent, ‘everybody is a small slice of this wonderful jigsaw we call London’ (interview n° 31, architect). Creativity and innovation are not seen as the prerogative of the individual, indeed, a key role is played by the social conditions of production of the cultural economy. Places can thus be seen as ‘articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings’ (Massey 1994, p.154)5.

Cultural economies are indeed inclined to exhibit well-developed individual identities, as a consequence of the play of history, agglomeration and locational specialisation. 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).

Yet cultural industries are often subject to competitive pressures that encourage agglomeration of production combined with global 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 questions concerning our opportunity structure analysis: understanding what the impact of the socialisation experience might be in approaching diversity and exploring the extent to which the symbolic content of products is mediated through the prism of cultural diversity and ethnicity of their creators and the cultural repertoire they may draw upon. We now turn to the structuring power of ethnicity in the field of cultural production.

Ethnicity, culture and diversity

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). 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 [e.g. 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).

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).

Hence, 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). 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. Following Barth in a less determinist
approach, ethnic categories constitute ‘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” (Barth 1969, p.14). The critical element then becomes self-ascription or ascription by others.

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). Individuals may ascribe strongly to one culture in its ideal form, yet display practices which borrow from a variety of cultures.

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 Benedict Anderson (1991). 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).

Moreover, identification with a group is the result of a highly negotiated process of construction, rather than being natural and predetermined (Hall 2000b). Stuart Hall points out the importance of the socialisation environment and wider context in shaping and negotiating individual identities (Hall 1997; 2000b). In the case of ethnicity, we therefore distinguish two dynamics, one reflecting the external imposition of a classification grid on populations, involving powerful outsiders and the reproduction of boundaries, and the other, reflecting 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

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). 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 categories. This is clearly different from the British case where ‘ethnic origin’ is recognised institutionally within the national community (Silverman 1992). 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).

3.6 MIGRANTS IN THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

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 draw upon and a ‘time and place’ specific set of circumstances (Waldinger, Aldrich et al. 1990; Light and Rosenstein 1995; Light 2005). Starting from a criticism of earlier frameworks (Waldinger, Aldrich et al. 1990; Kloosterman 2010), 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 2010).

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).

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 2010), 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.

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.

First, we would like to zoom into the ‘primary resource’ at hand: that is the diverse ethnic capital 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). 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. ‘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).

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 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). A need to break the ‘typecasting/
stereotyping’ often associated with products with (perceived) strong ethnic component often appears necessary (Smallbone, Bertotti et al. 2005).

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 bilinguism that immigrant entrepreneurs typically enjoy (Light 2005, p.661). As a result of globalisation, local ethnic economies are increasingly integrated into global production and distribution chains’ (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).

Developing a framework of market dynamics

Many businesses set up by migrants initially target their group members with specific “ethnic products” which typically refer to the country of origin. Not only foodstuffs, but also music and films are very much part of these “ethnic businesses”. Migrant cultural entrepreneurs may face, in principle, the choice between targeting the mainstream and targeting a much more circumscribed “ethnic” audience, pertaining to their country of origin. 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. The boundaries between the two value chains are not watertight as migrants may ‘break out’ of ethnic niche markets (Engelen 2001) at the reproduction and consumption stages. 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 industry 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).

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 and offering products with symbolic and aesthetic content. Exploring, on the one hand, the type of products offered and the targeted clientele, we hypothesise 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 migrant cultural entrepreneurs might wish to operate (Engelen 2001; 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 niche market catering for more specific tastes and needs a community might have in terms of goods and services (e.g. 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, though this might be adapted with the use of modern technologies and production systems.

Maintaining an ethnic consumer base, we define the offer of non-ethnic specific products as a case of tapping into mainstream markets. These markets highlight 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’8. 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). Together, ethnic and mainstream markets are defined as homogeneous, reflecting either niche or broader, more popular tastes and preferences, while varying in their consumer bases.

The third market typology is represented by the confluence of non-ethnic clientele and ethnic products, known as 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 in the distribution of exotic products (Light 2005). This typology can be seen as an innovative strategy whereby the entrepreneur taps 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 through cultural diffusion.

Figure 3-1 Typology of migrant cultural entrepreneurship markets
In the fourth category, the development of hybrid/mainstream markets, where ethnic groups and boundaries cease to define products and consumer base. Here innovation lies in the mixing of styles and reaching a broader, non-group specific audience. Mainstream conventions and tastes are shaped and influenced by diversity, and new styles are integrated in repertoires, while others are created as a result of cultural encounters and exchanges. This market typology is a site of innovation in the Schumpeterian sense. Both intermediary and hybrid markets reflect a conjuncture where composite markets emerge, bringing together disparate elements or merging them through aesthetic, symbolic and product innovations.

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 market ‘borders’, both on the supply and demand side. Various caveats can be mentioned here. As 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 any one source.

In the dynamic field of cultural production and consumption, boundaries are confirmed or transcended, as a result of active production strategies, or the shifting consumer preferences and demand patterns for instance. 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/outsiders (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 Figure 3.1: ethnic markets and the hybrid. 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 for instance 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 that an increasingly ‘composite culture’, reflects 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 one entrepreneur put it: ‘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 n° 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).

We posit that the formation of these market clouts and their relative standing is not simply an organic and embedded process. It is highly negotiated in the framework of mechanisms of mediation which are features of the cultural industries. Generally speaking, 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. Understanding these processes helps us to operationalise our framework and render it dynamic.

Mediation in the cultural industries

Many creative activities are characterised by a large pool of creative hopefuls and a more or less continuous oversupply 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. 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).
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, 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 (Spores 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).

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). They 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 (Becker 1982). 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 and
marketable goods and services. 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).12

More generally, the discussion on tastes 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. Tastes, as 'social markers', 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) (Bourdieu 1979).

As products in the cultural industries tend to be taste-driven and performance-driven (Currid 2007), selection focuses 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' (interview n° 13). 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.

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? We now explore these questions taking insights from our fieldwork.
3.7 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 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 no 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 their values, norms, folkways. 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 no 32).

'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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 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).

Laurindo, fashion designer at his studio in Amsterdam

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 n° 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 n° 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 n° 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 no 13).

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 interviewer) 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 no 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 no 20).

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 n° 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 n° 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 no 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, supporting the preservation of traditions and their dissemination (Winders 2006).

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 no 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 no 19). In the metropolis, the ‘academic distinction between heritage/tradition and urban/contemporary music is surpassed: we are witnessing a 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 no 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, fashion designer). The same respondent reflected on experiences of discrimination in the past by stating that ‘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).

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’. 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 n° 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 n° 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 n° 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 no 25). Often the question of aesthetic judgement often startles creative agents, particularly when it reveals the subjective side of mediation: '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).

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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 it, 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 20). For others, gatekeepers represent a sort of ‘mafia’ (interview no 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 n° 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 n° 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 no 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 médisse 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no. 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 no. 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 no 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 no 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.

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 no 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 no 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 no 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.

Yemi Osunkoya at his studio in London
‘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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 31).

The term ‘racism’ is often spoken. ‘Racism here really exists, but we don’t talk about it’ (interview no 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 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 no 5). This is echoed by another respondent ‘After 9/11, there are many doubts about Arab people. People check you twice’ (interview no 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 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 no 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 no 31).

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 investigation 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 no 4).

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

3.1 THE ROLE OF POLICY IN THE FIELD OF DIVERSITY IN THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

This research 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 creativity and its commodification for migrant cultural entrepreneurs. Diversity and innovation can be seen as mutually reinforcing: diversity can lead to innovation, while innovation is a necessary condition of diversity. We divide our conclusions and recommendations in three sections: creativity, production and mediation 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 hybridization, it is important to recognise that creativity should not be bound by superimposed ethnic boundaries. 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.

Production and valorisation

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. 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. 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. 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.

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 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 (Sproles 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 adopted by the 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.

Table 3-4 – Dimensions of diversity in cultural industries production and consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTORS AND AGENCIES</th>
<th>Identifying the gatekeepers and mediators that set trends and act as intermediaries within and across cultural practices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging a reflexive approach, which promotes a greater (mutual) understanding of cultural practices and expressions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analysing the role of public, private and civil society institutions in shaping intercultural practices and inter-group relations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocating and developing a series of competences and skills set to deal with the question of diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPACES AND PLACES</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognising the transnational dimension of cultural exchanges and practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exploring the role of the media in enabling and promoting (actual and potential) intercultural dialogue, exchange and communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROCESSES AND DYNAMICS</td>
<td>Exploring the participation and consultation of groups to cultural production and consumption</td>
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<td></td>
<td>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</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understanding the dynamics of intercultural dialogue in relation to the cultural industries’ production and consumption processes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Analysing the extent to which the adoption of diverse cultural expressions is reflected in a change in cultural practices and inter/intra-group relation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring the sustainability of cultural practices, in view/light of their potential commodification</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing cultural diversity awareness and competence among intermediaries, by developing training and involving competent individuals with intercultural competence skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Focusing support on activities that bring different cultural values into contact and acting as catalyst for creative exchange</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supporting hybrid forms of cultural expression – as an expression of the changing times rather than as a rootless form of expression</td>
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<tr>
<td>INDICATORS AND MEASUREMENTS</td>
<td>Looking at production and consumption of cultural goods and services through an intercultural lens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Measuring the diversity of producers/products/consumers and exploring the dynamics of adoption of diverse cultural practices by different groups and communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Analysing trends in relation to cultural practices and their adoption</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exploring public initiatives and cultural practices and their relation to diversity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The theoretical and empirical research carried out calls for a more reflexive position on the diversity question, particularly as 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, are shifting. Future research could benefit from a focus on the way in which diverse cultural practices and expressions are giving rise to new, hybrid and innovative cultural products and services and the dynamics through which these are shaped.

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.
3.2 ANNEX – TOPIC GUIDE

Format: open questions covering the following elements:

Demographics
» Date and place of birth
» Nationality
» Ethnicity
» Arrival in the Netherlands/France/UK

Qualifications
» Formal qualifications (and education trajectory) – specifying:
  » qualification obtained
  » skills
  » geographical location
  » other info

Professional experience
» Spatial and temporal account of respondents’ trajectory highlighting specific key moments in career, including:
  » Position, duration, location, skills.
  » Architecture/fashion/music currently as primary occupation?
  » Explore other types of activities the respondent is engaged in (and link to architecture/fashion/music)

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.

Client base
» Description of client base.
» Provenance of client base and geographical location.
» Does your work change according to the client base?

Relation to fashion production/industry
» Were there specific turning points in your career?
» Significant moments in progression, specific encounters
» Were these negative or positive?
» How have you promoted your work?
» How would you say the sector’s media and press relate to and reflect diversity?

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 your field of activity in Amsterdam/London/Paris?

Context (economic, political, social, cultural)
» Public policies (local, regional, national)
» Political climate
» Programmes and initiatives
» 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?
REFERENCES


DCMS (2002). Regional cultural data framework: a user's guide for researchers and policy makers. DCMS. London, DCMS.


1 The jury members are: Professor Dragicevic Sesis, University of Arts in Belgrade; Dr Mitchell, Director of Research at CUPORE (Finnish Foundation for Cultural Policy Research); Professor Bonet, University of Barcelona; Dr Ratzenböck, Director of the Austrian centre for Cultural Documentation; Dr Quine, London City University; Professor Lagerspetz, Estonian Institute of Humanities.

2 Professions and locations are coded as follows: M = musician; A = architect; F = fashion designer; Am = Amsterdam; L = London; P = Paris.

3 Florida talks about the 3 Ts in attracting creative talent to a region: talent, technology and tolerance.

4 Taken from Kulture2Couture.com, under the ‘Aims’ section.

5 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).

6 “‘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).

7 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).

8 Definition of mainstream, taken from the Merriam-Webster online English dictionary.

9 Difficulty in finding audiences means that the industries have tighter grip on circulation than they do on production (Hesmondhalgh 2007).

10 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.

11 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).

12 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).