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Special Issue:
'Cultural Economies and Cultural Activism'

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The theme of this Special Issue was the research theme for the Warwick Global Research Priority in International Development [GRP-ID] for 2015. Its purpose is to explore critical issues in the study of the global creative economy, the influence of creative economy on policies for development, and the critical tensions identified by emerging forms of activism. The research theme lasted a whole year, and during that time evolved and provoked some unexpected debates, exchanges and presentations.

The contributions that make up this Special Issue thus reflect the intellectual diversity that characterised the year. This issue is divided into two parts, where the first part features three people -- two scholars and one activist playwright -- who played a formative role in our itinerary. The second part comprise papers from a range of disciplinary perspectives, mostly from younger scholars who either participated in the year's GRP-ID events or who explored our theme elsewhere. For example, the two contributions from the Centre for British Studies at the Shanghai International Studies University (Qi Chen and Xiaozhou Zhou) emerged from two successive research seminars on cultural economy we organised together in Shanghai in July 2014 and July 2015.

Among the events of 2015 were some high profile seminars, a symposia, the GRP-ID International Development Annual Public Lecture, the the GRP-ID International Development Annual Photography Competition and the subsequent Photography Exhibition. The most intensive period of activities was during May 2015, on the occasion of a GRP-ID partnership with Warwick's Institute of Advanced Study, hosting as Visiting Fellow the celebrated South African playwright and UNESCO technical advisor, Mike van Graan. A highlight was the Global Cultural Economy Roundtable, which featured UNESCO Chair

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Wolfgang Schneider, as one of a number of distinguished guests debating current research, policy and strategy for culture at national, EU and UN levels. Professor Schneider remains the first external examiner of the MA in Arts, Development and Enterprise in the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies at Warwick, where many of the research themes in this special issue are routinely taught.

A similar event took place the following September, called 'The 2005 UNESCO Convention and the Cultural Economy: Ten Years On'. This time, the Warwick Institute of Advanced Study Visiting Fellow was Justin O'Connor (Monash University, Australia, and who initiated this event). 2015 ended with a symposium entitled 'A Sustainable Future through Development Policies for the Creative Industries'? The focus was on the city of Coventry, although special guests from the Shandong Academy of Social Sciences (China) offered some valuable comparative perspectives.

I would like to thank all speakers and participants for the intellectual stimulation of 2015 -- there were far too many to mention here. However, I must indeed thank the three people who invited me to lead the 2015 theme -- the GRP-ID academic directors, Professor Shirin Rai and Professor Ann Stewart, and Dr Rajnaara C. Akhtar, who until April 2016 was GRP-ID Coordindator.

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This Special Issue features a diversity of approaches to the subject of 'cultural economies and cultural activism', most of which focus on the role of culture and cultural policies in development contexts -- social and economic development. The use of arts and culture as components in development initially evolved in the West through four decades of attempted re-industrialisation, where the service and communications sectors gradually replaced heavy industry within the priorities of national economic development policy (Bell, 1974, etc.). Since the 1970s, design, fashion and entertainment-based retail have played an inceasing role in national economic reproduction. This has been followed by the strategic deployment of arts and culture (particlarly festivals and large art museums) within urban economic development, fuelled in part by the rapid rise of global tourism. More recently, digital media and the internet have introduced some unexpected cultural dimensions to almost all economic activity. Unsurprisingly, sociologists and economists have attempted to define these changes in terms of both historical periodisations and structural mutations in capitalism and its labour markets, using neologisms like 'knowledge economy', 'creative age', 'disorganised capitalism', and so on. (Drucker, 1969; Offe, 1985; Florida, 2002)

A full history of the arts and culture as strategic components of international development aid, however, is yet to be written (for a contemporary overview, see Clammer 2014). It is only with the rise of the term 'creative economy' (promoted globally by UNCTAD: the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) that the strategic deployment of arts and culture as a means of development has been widely acknowledged (UNCTAD, 2008). It has indeed been possible to talk of a 'global cultural policy' since the UNESCO Constitution of 1945 (and UNESCO's seven subsequent UN conventions on culture), and moreover, with the UN discourse on 'culture and development' that emerged in 1982 at the World Conference on Cultural Policies (Mondiacult) organised by UNESCO in Mexico City. However, arguably, it was only with the rise of the 'creative industries' during and after the late 1990s that an affirmative global consensus on the functional role of culture in development emerged. It is now difficult to locate a major city in the world that does not favourably include the arts and culture in its strategic development policies, and do so in tandem (and often stimuated by) the creative industries.

While the arts and culture had been used in development for years, the 'creative industries' offered an entirely new cognitive framework within which to understand the potential interrelation of culture to social and economic life. The arts and culture, while deeply historical, became subject to new demands on playing a role in the strategic production of capital, followed by an obsessive scrutiny on their performance and sucess in doing so (in the form of official evaluation of value or benefits to society). The term 'creative industries' is a hybrid concept, and not entirely coherent. It includes crafts, design, media, communications, architecture, antiques, film, music, publishing and software, and in reality there is little that tie these industries together other than the market, economic or supply chain forces that also tie other industries together; and most of these activities are endemic to other

industries. 'Creativity' itself is obviously said to be the common denominator, though it is never easily identifiable as an activity, capability, strategy or process. A power once considered peculiar to the arts, creativity has nonetheless been found to harbour a profound potential for industrial development, a finding seemingly confirmed by the proliferation of the 'industries' listed above. These industries (most of which, of course, were born out of positively ancient cultural practices) do indeed share some common features: they are often (not always, but often) small, flexible and low cost firms. They work under high levels of competitive pressure, with higher than average levels of young employees, whose creative productivity is intimately related to their experience of, and involvement in, the social and cultural life around them.

A significant feature of the creative industries is the way they mediate (in part as they are largely service providers, but are also particularly vulnerable to) the economic forces of capital and its perpetual need for consumable, novel, content. They effectively 'industrialise' what was historically endemic to culture (stylistic expression, vision, imagination, the production of new ideas, and so on) and do this by inventing and developing the means to instrumentalise fundamental cultural competencies (design skills, aesthetic knowledge and experience). They re-form culture for the purposes of enterprise, business and economy.

Culture is therefore a principle resource for the creative industries, but culture itself is neither a clearly delineated sphere of life, neither static nor pure. It is ideology as much as lived practice. It emerges out of lifestyle, values and beliefs, traditions and sensibilities, and is also a means of expression, identity and representation. These are historical and formed through material conditions of labour and capital, and so they are bound up in broader political discourses of self-determination, equalities and rights (Forbes, 2010). And public policies for culture -- as attested by the papers in this special issue -- are invariably responding to the political as well as economic function of 'creative industries' as they have been re-framed within the new economy of creativity. The construction of a public policy concept of 'creative economy' is significant for two reasons: firstly, the creative industries are no longer understood as just a generic range of connected if discrete industrial sectors, all of whom offer goods and services to the 'real' economy outside; rather, they are part of this broader economy. Secondly, as an 'economy', creativity is no longer understood as just a peculiar species of production -- it is trade and markets, Intellectual Property, employment, capitalisation and financial flows, and so on (cf. De Beukelaer, Pyykkönen, and Singh, 2015).

However, the use of the term 'economy' is also problematic. It can be assumed that creative production is subject to all the same conditions of any other kind of industrial production (and thus can be shaped with the same policy instruments, or conversely, can act in the 'free market' without special policy support, subsidy or protections). A strong concept of 'economy' can also blind government and other state actors (or even the creative industries themselves) to the cultural basis of creative production, and the extent to which culture is dissipated through exposure to markets constructed for other, very different, types of goods and services. The priorities of advanced capitalist economics can be deeply corrosive of culture.

As Justin O'Connor maintains through the opening keynote to this special issue: 'the economy' has gained a hegemonic power over social and cultural policy fields, but this has not happened because of the superior explanatory power of 'economics' alone. We need to understand how the political imaginary of states and state coalitions have become invested in global capital accumulation, and how this process of investment devalues aspects of life once constitutive of social realm -- community participation, union or civic association. Less obvious is the equaly important ways that the operational advantage of a 'public' realm has been devalued. As a realm of governance and vital protection for culture, the 'public' realm is now so fatally compromised that an appeal for a return to a total state subsidy of all culture, for example, is not the panacea that it seems. In our own time, an emphatic concept of 'public' ownership is difficult to weild in arguments about development, as functional efficiency and operational cost cutting is the *sine qua non* of any significant actor or role in the economy of contemporary society.

And few would argue for the return of the parochial days of the 'organic' culture of closed communities and the shared values provided by state dominated national monoculture. Nor can one argue that markets are intrinsically reductive -- some

cultural production cannot function without markets (pop music, for example) and indeed markets existed before corporate capitalism. The recent rise in new local markets, the so-called 'sharing economy' and 'collaborative consumption', are surely symptomatic of both the need for vibrant markets and the current restrictions wrought by corporate domination within the so-called market economy.

Our primary concern in this special issue is more to do with the way that culture itself – its facility for unique expression, meaning-creation, sensory enjoyment, identity-construction, and place-based allegiances – has been divested of its productive capability. It is used as a powerful resource for industry and economy, but in ways that divest its ability to generate new local, regional and national economies of value through the empowerment of individuals, the political agency of cultural organisations, and the social interconnection of sub-cultural groups.

The GRP-ID research theme for 2015, and so this Special Issue, was in part inspired by the groundbreaking UNDP/UNESCO *Creative Economy Report 2013 Special Edition: widening local development pathways.* This report (the previous two, managed by UNCTAD, focused on international trade and Intellectual Property) is indicative of a trend within international development discourse to empower the creative potential of local actors, and find creative ways for development agencies to engage with 'the local'. The report raised some crucial questions: how does the 'creative economy' concept make the very concept of 'economy' problematic? What social forces, regulatory frameworks, financial investment, enterprise management or public goods are required for 'culture' to become an 'economy' -- and how can they be configured? More specifically, "What is being made and consumed? By whom and for whom? What kind of culture is being produced today and for what kind of citizenry?' (UNDP/ UNESCO: 30). This raises questions for cultural policies that provide strategies for development. For in the emergence of a creative economy, the 'economy' seems always to detach itself and prevail over the cultural in perverse ways, and culture can radically change as a result. These changes, of course, can be productive and liberating; they can also divest the subjects or citizens of that cultural space any real or future ownership or participatory role in the evolution of their own culture, particularly the culture of everyday life and social community (Duxbury, Hosagrahar, and Pascual, 2016).

The *Creative Economy Report 2013* positions sustainable development as a critical alternative to the hegemonic concept of 'economic growth'. It argues for a priority on production and the contexts of production, and in so doing, it assumes that the overwhelming demands and power of international market capitalism and its patterns of consumption can be re-balanced by a re-investment in the creative agency of public institutions, local people and their immediate urban, social or community life. This is the approach of this special issue.

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Think Piece: "Seismographs", "Watch Dogs" or "Change Agents"? Artistic Interventions and Cultural Policy in Processes of Social Transformation

Wolfgang Schneider

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ABSTRACT

This article opens with two questions: What are the roles of art and artists in the transformation of society? What impact can cultural policy have on the structures of cultural governance or artistic production? These questions are central to global cultural policy (the UN), regional cultural policy (the EU) and local cultural policy (our cities, cultural institutions, projects, and education establishments). This article is phrased as a polemic and a provocation for public officials, cultural policy makers and cultural managers. It asserts that cultural policies should be used explicitly for socially transformative activities, particularly utilising the potential of arts education. In the cause of good governance for culture, it begins by setting out some critical definitional clarifications on culture and its social significance, and then explains how artists can play the role of activists within the social realm through an 'interventionist' approach to culture. With reference to the full range of professional competencies that cultural policy can offer a developing civil society, the article concludes with substantial remarks on the potential of cultural policy for international cooperations as well as constructive responses to migration.

AUTHORS

Professor Dr Wolfgang Schneider is Professor and Head of the Department of Cultural Policy at the University of Hildesheim (Germany) and UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy for the Arts in Development. Since 2012 he has been a member of the Expert Committee on culture of the German Commission for UNESCO.

What are the roles of art and artists in the transformation of society? What impact can cultural policy have on the structures of cultural governance or artistic production? I will not here be referring primarily to funding systems, markets, finance or economics, but to culture’s *social* relevance and its potential for social transformation. This is not a question about representation either, but of *intervention*. And the concerns of contemporary cultural policy are no longer just about local arts organisations, regional support of structures for culture, or national programmes for arts education. They concern the international relationships between artists; culture as a factor in development; and concern knowledge that has been generated by a comparative analysis of cultural management. Culture is now rightly understood as a source of knowledge, creativity and strategy for the development of society. A principal task for cultural policy is therefore to create and support structures that promote the mobilisation of artistic creativity – and of the people who operationalise creativity, the artists and others, and thus ensure welfare, innovation and pluralism.

A dimension of our research enterprise at the Department of Cultural Policy, University of Hildesheim (Germany), focuses on *good governance for culture*, which involved examining the range of aspirations, objectives, control mechanisms and the functioning of institutions, their principles and structures. The concepts of "good governance" for Cultural Policy has hitherto been given all too little attention by researchers (and policy makers). We are thus investigating what transparency and participation, efficiency, accountability, market economy, the rule of law and justice, all mean within and for cultural political action – and crucially, what they mean within the processes of social, particularly democratic, transformation.

Within this complex bundle of subjects resides the question of the role of the arts and of individual artists in the development of society, (and also, of course, in the role of business enterprises within the framework of corporate social and cultural responsibility - though this is not my subject here). Our research enterprise is also demanding further clarification on what freedom, and what regulatory contexts, the arts and artists need within social development and what form or role arts education should take, given that these contexts can be diverse and changing. Moreover, we need to be able to discuss the connection of the role of the arts in the development of society with *the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions* (cf. The 2005 UNESCO Convention), which itself will entail the question on the nature of the interconnection of the arts with the broader "creative industries". How can the creative industries promote (or inhibit?) the role of the arts in social development?

It is the subject of policy debate, what cultural policy structures are required in the granting of a social role and function to the arts, and the extent to which cultural policies need to be reviewed in the light of this. In this context we need further clarification on which forms of cooperation and exchange will be needed (and between whom), and what demand currently exists for the training of artists and cultural managers in developing countries.

When we think of "good governance" as providing a new basis for society, what is required to facilitate good *cultural* governance? Let us use the term governance as a bridge that serves to advance interdisciplinary dialogue, interconnecting the debates and discourses of different disciplines, and bring together political science and cultural research. Governance requires the coordination and oversight of complex social systems and their semi-autonomous agents and actors; *cultural* governance would require this in the cause of the organization of cultural diversity and cultural participation. Cultural policy therefore needs goals that could provide a basis for governance competency. The implementation of these goals requires strategies that cross the concerns and competencies of state and society. The concept of good governance has an important role to play: how does "society" (civil society; citizens; other public sector agencies) view or comprehend cultural policy? Who should be the principal actors of good cultural governance, what infrastructure is required, and how could it be created?

The goals of cultural policy tend to be based on *content* (kinds of desired or valued arts and culture) rather than pure economics or values of exchange.

Content, structure and processes are some of the dimensions of cultural policy, and where governance is concerned we would need to pay particular attention to structures and processes. Per se, governance is neither a goal of cultural policy, nor a sphere of activity within cultural policy, but serves to question what systems of management and control are actively involved in the attainment of cultural policy goals. Governance goes beyond the goals and competencies of cultural management itself, as it focuses strongly on how such goals are devised in the first instance, and can be constructed, deliberated upon and agreed by all actors and agencies involved. As an administrative concept, and embedded in the idea of the "activating" or empowering State, governance aims to involve civil society and its refined problem-solving skills in order to overcome broader social or public challenges. It is not a question of competition between the various competencies and activities of civil society actors, but rather of a fundamental cooperation between the governmental and non-governmental. Existing efforts and practical successes can be built upon and strengthened using the conceptual and strategic potential of governance.

The concept of governance is grounded in the need for shared responsibility and responsible partnership. The state, the market and civil society are not set against each other, but interconnected. The concept helps us focus on the cultural wellbeing of every citizen, especially in the way the arts can offer every person powers of self-reflection. Arts allows us to recognize values and make decisions in our search for meaning; arts are how people express themselves, gain self-awareness and create works that allow them to expand their limits. So the aim is to use cultural policy to achieve a fundamental cultural competence and good governance.

Artists as Activists

For if we want to talk about individual freedom and dignity, demand them, portray them in all their contradictions, and display them in symbolic forms so as to enable other people to think about them more deeply and (and above all, experience them directly), we do so mainly through the arts. The arts enable people to become involved in the realities of their individuality, self-determination and the need for social interconnections. In this way the arts have an effect on society far beyond the sphere of artistic communication per se (or the 'art world') because they help to give people a meaning in life and determine human intents and purposes. This is why we need a cultural policy that sees itself as primarily a *social policy,* and thus enables, defends and plays its part in shaping art and culture *within society*.

The function of art and the experience of the representation or expression of things that have previously been unseen, or of which we have never dared to think, is particularly helpful in enabling us to come closer to the world and look for answers to things that move our emotions or weigh us down. Art generates different possible scenarios of the future, and so involves a search for a way to shape our reality in light of the possible futures. Art should maintain a role on questioning pre-existing reality and sparking off new impulses – particularly for development frameworks and situations. Many intellectuals have hitherto viewed art as the most sensitive seismograph of future human crises, opening up themes and leading us to new ways of seeing and perhaps also to alternative ways of dealing with the world.

Art, if it takes the form of an 'intervention', can make inroads into the space of public life, and influence social and political decision-making. Art as intervention can demand an exchange of opinions, and further reflection. It can demand change in the 'real world' about us and our everyday behaviour, by reviving public spaces in urban contexts, or attending to dimensions of the everyday that have previously been regarded as 'normal'. Through art the 'normal' can be subject to surprising stimulating associations, irritations or provocations, and generate new ways of making the future more habitable. Furthermore the rich variety of facets inherent in art offers us opportunities to evaluate individual questions and needs. Critical contemporary art, in particular, throws up fundamental questions. Avant-garde art and transgressive practices in art, in particular, have long been associated with breaking taboos, and reactions to such deliberate provocations today are invariably constructive in that they prise

open realms of thought and life previously concealed or repressed. Art can make us more sensitive to deeper aspects of reality and sharpen our judgement on the truly important things in life, as well as identifying and pinpointing correlations. Artists could also be “watch dogs”, in the sense of being agents of change through identifying and perceiving the inhibitors change. In fact, in development contexts, it is more and more common to expect the artist to play something of a 'political' role – critically, we must recognize that artists could also be subject to instrumentalization by politics itself.

An artist not only discusses and makes claims on the nature of 'freedom and dignity' for every individual, but can present these concepts in all their political contradiction through offering symbolic or other material forms through which they can be thought or even lived. The conditions of individuality can be specified through the arts in all its interconnectedness with social bondage. The arts can effect change far above the sphere of communication through fiction or aesthetic artifice, and play a role in the symbolic order of society, out of which social material can, in turn, form art's human determination (and its aims). Art's social embededdness can, therefore, only demonstrate the need for a cultural policy that comprehends social policy – that defends and organises art and culture as social practices. For the development of a society can be articulated as one fundamental question: How are people immersed in living culture? I would argue that the prime way of investigating this is to identify and comprehend how people are taking part in the arts. My observations have told me that *participation* is the central term by which we understand this, and so understand the necessary aims of cultural policy!

And from what I have said above, the conditions of cultural policy action are clear: an activation of the relevance of the arts; freedom of the arts to practice, express meaning and to intervene in social or public spaces; access to the systems of the arts, whether markets, institutions or events; and the broad functions of arts management, particularly in audience development or the gathering of a public for the arts.

Arts Education needs Cultural Policies needs Arts Education

For me, a critical focus for cultural policy is arts education. The sphere of arts education can contribute to securing cultural participation as a human right. It is a sphere of cultural competency, which is developing a sensitive approach to researching the matrixes of social life so as to make possible new registers of culture, new audiences and publics, new concepts of art, culture and society. Arts Education is a public undertaking and major political task for local authority institutions. It is the basis of cultural diversity (as articulated in the 2005 UNESCO Convention). But arts education requires educational policies!

Culture Resource, a civil society agency in Cairo (in Arabic, “Al Mawred Al Thaqafy”), is prominent as a network for the Arabic Countries. It has initiated the first Masters degree of Cultural Policy and Cultural Management (in the Arabic language), planned for 2016 at Hassan II, University of Casablanca. It is an example of the necessity of a credible qualification to accompany governmental efforts to establish cultural policy. Academic discourse is a necessary condition of the intellectual capacity-building required for cultural policy actions and policies to be articulated and deliberated. For the initial academic feasibilty study required to estasblish the degree, a research team was able to identify the specific attributes and benefits of the arts to Arab societies generally. Cultural and artistic practitioners of many kinds were consulted, and they all emphasised strong connections between the ability to plan, regulate and implement cultural activities, and the processes of social and political change that are acutely needed in the region.

Interviewees consulted by the research team in four Arab countries articulated the following benefits, for 'independent' (civil society), private (enterprise) and public (governmental or government funded) sectors respectively:

Independent sector

- Improve the ability to market cultural activities and services, and to access new audiences.
- Strengthen independent cultural organizations and enhance their sustainability.
- Improve the skill levels of cultural managers.

- Help independent researchers get access to information and improve their research skills.
- Develop public cultural policies that would lead to more access to public funding and enhance freedom of expression.
- Improve the quality of cultural products and services.
- Enhance the international exposure of independent artists.
- Develop the capacity for collaboration with artists and cultural organizations inside and outside the Arab region.
- Provide new career avenues for independent cultural operators as researchers and academics.

Private sector

- Provide knowledge of best practices and standards outside the region, thus leading to improving the standards of cultural products in the Arab region.
- Create research that would lead to opening new markets for cultural industries inside and outside the region.
- Improve cultural tourism, a vital economic resource for all countries in the region, through providing a stronger research and information base for projects in this field.
- Enable the introduction of new cultural policies that would nurture and support cultural industries.
- Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of cultural enterprises through improving the skill levels of professional working in this sector.
- Improve the marketing of cultural products, which would contribute to economic growth as well as to the creation of more producers and more jobs
- Create strong connections between commercial enterprises and both the independent non-profit sector and the public sector and encourage public/private partnerships.

Public sector

- Improve the management of public cultural institutions through offering this programme to public cultural administrators.
- A more advanced approach to the management of cultural heritage, preservation, documentation and awareness in this field.
- Enhance the reach of public cultural institutions and enable them to diversify their audiences.
- Provide public policy makers with research and information that would better advise public policy.
- Provide technical tools to improve the accountability and transparency of public institutions thus contributing to their credibility.
- Enable better cross-sector collaboration and coordination among the public sector institutions, for example with public educational institutions, through providing supporting research and technical tools.
- Enhance international engagement and implementation of international conventions.

Cultural Policy for Fair Cooperation

'Artistic cooperation' needs to be defined in terms of a partnership, with the aim of creating something new on the basis of a common working process. Cultural capital, according to Pierre Bourdieu, can and should be used as a resource for social inclusion, and not (as is still the case in cultural political practice) for the consolidatation of the means of social distinction. Futhermore, in order to mitigate against the overhwhelming focus on major cities in cultural policy globally, we need to consider democratisation and access to the arts in terms of decentralisation and rural areas.

The question on how we extend artistic cooperation must go far beyond cultural propagation and exports to the relationships between rich and poor. We need to reflect on how cooperations can often deepen the differences between 'town and country', especially regarding cultural promotion, professionalism and the cultural infrastructure. The question is centrally about what cultural policies can and must be implemented and shaped by whom (in a theoretical or conceptional way and then in a real or practical way). Taking into account the huge challenges present in each and every country – like population growth, environmental destruction and violence, particularly against children and young people –

different national priorities and needs must be articulated.

It is generally agreed in cultral policy research circles that cultural cooperation of all kinds should fundamentally enable mutual understanding, and contribute to deepening our knowledge of one another. But we must also acknowledge that there is an imbalance between aspirations and reality in this regard. For this reason we need a catalogue of criteria. This criteria should embody substantive information on, for example, how to create partnerships, the basic conditions for cooperation, contextual knowledge, intercultural competence, a common language that can be developed, the kinds of people to accompany the cooperation, context orientated transfers, mutual locations, process orientation, the failure of past experiments, continuities in cooperation, the means of exchange of ideas and opinions. And further, in the last analysis, it may all depend on particular ways of devising a “fair cooperation”, which resists constructing a hierarchical system of power between the cooperation partners, but so pleads for a consistent and continuing debate on the matters of equality, particularly with regard to funding and aims. Meeting in equal terms is an ideal seldom achieved. We should rid ourselves of wishful thinking, for “ambivalent relationships” in the cooperation between the global North and the global South will remain. Yet the notion of fairness needs to be emphasised. Here I would suggest that the concept of "respect" is made a category in such cooperative exchanges.

The Challenge of Migration

Countless academic studies have researched, analysed and reflected on the role of theatre as part of a society's capacity for self-reflection. Many scholars have focussed on theatrical aesthetics as a means of doing this. But cultural policy has also been the subject of research and developments in policy thinking and making have also been mapped, along with its conditions of production and processes of implementation. Numerous research consultations have underscored areas of funding requirement. The following example, serves to make may argument for cultural policy.

One of the greatest social and political challenges in our increasingly globalised world is *integration*. This is the need to ensure that people of all ethnic backgrounds, religious orientations and cultural traditions, are able to participate equally in any given society. The nurturing of respect for cultural diversity in subsequent multiethnic and multicultural populaces should be a critical instrumental element for this challenge. Cultural policy can play a central role here, in part by contributing to the recognition and understanding of cultural difference. "Interculturality" is a key concept in contemporary cultural policy discourse for the identification of appropriate policy and practice to facilitate such integration.

In societies characterised by cultural diversity and fast-paced socio-demographic change, efforts towards equal participation will only flourish if ideas surrounding cultural identity are understood as *process-driven*, and if serious, critical questioning of our conceptions of borders and thresholds is recognised as an impetus for social change (not an inhibitor of such). In the context of cultural multiplicity, discourses around societal forms and the understanding and treatment of difference should be inderstood to transcend multiculturalism and become "transculturalism". An equalities-based framework is important, and is also of self-evident practical value in the implementation of intercultural actions in conceptual and policy arenas, in agenda-setting (especially for collaborative decision-making), in the fair redistribution of cultural funds and in the internal restructure of arts organisations. Infrastructure, network-building and access criteria, are mandatory for successful intercultural practice. Opportunities must be created for broad participation to allow for the forging of relationships based on empathy for the new, rather than a fear of the "strange" or alien.

Three major aspects must be lent credence, if the cultural landscape is to be reorganised along intercultural lines. Unless society can provide a broader cultural training within the compulsory education system – a "school for life" – large segments of the population will continue to remain excluded from cultural offerings and, in the best case scenario, new forms of cultural expression will merely eke out a meagre existence beyond the pale

of mainstream cultural policy. We must demand a commitment from policy-makers to honour their rhetoric (say, of annual government education reports or regional plans) and recognise that cultural training can be a significant forms of social responsibility. This could be achieved, for example, through the inclusion of cultural training in the national, regional or local educational curricula, as a subject taught from kindergarten to adult education level. Training policy could emphasise culture as a core aspect of "lifelong learning".

In this, one of the most important areas is that of *audience development*, understood as an integrated component of the discipline of Cultural Management. This is a cross-cutting issue for all institutions that aspire to a holistic form of practice: it can inform their creative and organisational methodology, and allow them to grow alongside their changing public, as well as to nurture that public. Only a self-imposed commitment to cultural diversity by the entire cultural sector will generate the possibility of a culturally diverse public. Traditional marketing methods, focussed on the maximisation of profits and the selling of an existing product to an existing customer, are not equal to this task. In order to plan, position, communicate, disseminate and sell cultural offerings to diverse target groups, audience development must work in tandem with arts marketing, PR, research, education and training.

The concept of audience development emerged in the Anglo-Saxon world in the 1990s. It is embedded in an understanding of cultural management that uses its public as the central reference point for cultural organisation. This is a departure from the supply-based model traditional in other European countries. It is important to understand that a demand-based model does not necessarily lead to a reduction in artistic quality (as per Bourdieu's claim).

Equality of participation, the democratisation of culture, and the dismantling of elitist structures, are amongst the most important aims of audience development. Yet other considerations exist alongside such socio-cultural perspectives. Cultural policy-makers have the right to demand to see a wide social cross-section of the public in state-funded institutions, based on the belief that art can have a sustained and enriching effect on people's lives, and can strengthen communication, identity and sense of community. The benefits reaped for even one participant can justify the public money invested.

The belief that the arts are intimidating, boring or difficult to understand, can only be combated through increased accessibility and education. The public should be engaged in a lively debate on the topic of culture. For this to become a reality, it must be provided with the knowledge and tools to decipher cultural codes. In the short term, this can be achieved through direct education within cultural institutions themselves, through media-based interpretation tools such as audio guides, dialogue-based tours or creative discussions in workshops. The quality of the intermediary is of paramount importance in this regard.

A structured, long-term cultural training strategy orientated towards the entire population is essential. Increased collaboration between cultural organisations and associations, facilities used for out of school activities and the schools themselves, will help to this end. Only such an approach can guarantee that early engagement with art and culture is available to all, and, in particular, is not dependent on a child's social background. Short and long-term engagement activity should understand cultural training as intercultural training. The content of training should be developed with a focus on strengthening intercultural perspectives.

Another area intrinsically related to this, is the nurturing of the community-focussed and mandated cultural *hubs* that have emerged throughout Europe, but which remain fragile in terms of their financial sustainability and capacity for long-term planning. These hubs contribute to an overall shift towards participation in the arts by a wider spectrum of society: the include people of different ages, ethnic backgrounds or social classes living in the vicinity of cultural institutions and who are beginning to involve culture in their day-to-day lives without being explicitly targeted. Cultural institutions are tried and true locales for intercultural communication and participation, and are increasingly also sites for the performing arts, including visiting independent productions and participative arts work.

Substance, brilliance and relevance as categories for Cultural Policy

The arts constitute much more than cultural institutions, however. Cultural policy should not lose sight of the broader societal meaning, capacity for intervention and stimulation of social change I have briefly discussed above. We need to cultivate the ability to question and interrogate perceived norms.

This is why we could learn from other disciplines of inquiry, not least philosophy. Philosophy may have begun as follows: perhaps the first philosopher stubbed their toe on a stone. This accident led them to ponder on why the stone was there, why there was anything there rather than nothing, why the stone was so hard, what comprised the essence of the stone. Why did they trip on the stone, and what should they do about it? Was there something wrong with their eyes, and what is seeing in the first place? No one is certain how these questions were answered long ago, though we have the certainty that not everyone who looks also sees. Seeing is also 'overseeing', 'seeing to' and 'foreseeing.' 'Looking' is perhaps our attempt to make the obscure transparent, to see what customarily goes unseen. How should we go about looking in order to be able to actually see? In an age in which we are subject to visual over-stimulation and continually assaulted by the mediation of symbolic language, it makes sense to *teach the act of seeing*. An effective method is to awaken interest in *what* is being seen. As I argued above, the arts offer a distinctive way of undertaking this general developmental task. The arts present the opportunity not simply to learn "seeing", but to integrate seeing with communication, to learn to code as well as decode our world through a dialogue between those playing on the stage and those playing in the audience; the arts teach us how seeing is a social practice. To be sure, the arts must be sufficiently captivating, must stimulate curiosity, must have something meaningful to offer. Good art, will always demand a sense of purpose in order to engage our attention beyond the superficial, and move us, preoccupy us, urge us to action, initiate a relationship with us based on what psychologists call mutual dependency. It demands substance, brilliance and relevance in order to care about itself and to express itself. Once we put our minds to reforming the Cultural Politics of our arts landscape, artists will become both motivated and equipped to attain to these aims.

In contribution to current scholarly questions that animate so many reports on the arts and international development, and the arts in society, and the value of the cultural economy, I will conclude with the following statements: the markets for art needs explicit regulations for artists; creative economy needs cultural policy; the UN Development Goals need to cite cultural participation as a human Right. And all this means that it is time for a revised international concept of cultural policy, with respect to the role of arts and artists as social change agents, to fully acknowledge the power of artistic interventions for the processes of transformation that are necessary to generate a genuinely sustainable society and cooperative global order.

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After the Creative Industries: Cultural Policy in Crisis

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ABSTRACT

This paper unifies and articulates a series of debates that brought together the Global Cultural Economy Network (GCEN), an informal group of policy experts currently attempting to re-frame international policies on culture and economy. Directed by the author, the Network is critical of the rhetoric on the creative industry/ economy agenda as routinely used by policy makers and public officials, at local, national and international levels (by UNCTAD, WIPO and UNESCO, among others). Subjecting key terms in this rhetoric to scrutiny, this article considers the historical evolution of the 'culture-economy' nexus, and observes that even where the arts and culture have evidently benefitted from their cooption into mainstream public policy agendas, the current dominant and now popular discourse of 'creative economy' is problematic. The article sets out the dilemma by considering the various policy trends involved in this cooption -- from creative industries to creative cities -- and how advocates for the arts and culture have all too easily accommodated the re-orientation of culture for the production of economic value. The article argues that dominant policy trends have marginalised the social character of culture and so its unique forms of productivity, and have generated an obfuscation of the broader political imaginary that has divested cultural policies of their facility for inspiration and alternative futures.

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Introduction

This paper, more polemic or manifesto than scholarly exegesis, was written for a meeting of the Global Cultural Economy Network (GCEN), an informal group of policy experts concerned to help re-frame current debates around culture and economy. In the last decade or so that relationship has been predominantly configured under the agenda of 'creative industries' and later 'creative economy'. The GCEN coalesced in the belief that whatever new insights, dynamics and policy constituencies were generated by the creative industry/ economy agenda, it seems now to have become dysfunctional for, even destructive of, a progressive future for cultural policy. This is not just a Northern hemisphere but a global crisis.

Though this paper, in a rudimentary form, was initially addressed to a specific meeting, the 'we' that it uses nonetheless needs some explaining. The GCEN is an informal – potentially 'activist' – group with no 'official line'. Indeed this paper was precisely an attempt to create a GCEN 'we' by using this statement of position as a central text around which the meeting was to be organised. Could we, as a group, accept this as a broad statement of where we stood? As it transpired, the meeting – at Tilburg University, The Netherlands – did not take place (at least in the form in which it was intended) and this text awaits a future meeting – face-to-face or virtual – in which this 'we' can be more formally brought into existence. Nonetheless, this paper has benefited enormously from the two meetings that preceded it (in Shanghai, and Prato, Italy), and the emailed comments that a prior draft had received. And of course, knowing the immediate audience had shaped its arguments and rhetoric as it would any attempt to actively persuade and enlist a specific group of people.

Which brings me to the second aspect of the 'we'. For though intending to bring a small informal 'we' into existence, the possibility of that act of persuasion was crucially dependent on establishing the existence (real and potential) of a larger 'we' to which, and hopefully for which, we could (eventually) speak. This 'we' is an imagined community, or more accurately perhaps, a rather ramshackle 'epistemic community', around culture and economy that emerged along multiple tributaries in the 1980s and 1990s. An epistemic community can be defined as 'a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area' with one of its features being 'a common policy enterprise, or a set of common practices associated with a set of problems to which their professional competence is directed, presumably out of the conviction that human welfare will be enhanced as a consequence.[1]

This aptly describes the emergent, transnational policy community of cultural (and later creative) industries and cultural (and later creative) cities experts in the 1990s – primarily in Europe, North America and Australia, and increasingly in Latin America, South Africa and East Asia. It emerged from older cultural policy formations – most significantly perhaps the UN 'culture and development' discourse – as well as from the academic traditions of political economy of the media, economic geography, cultural studies and critical cultural policy studies. These in turn were responding to the complex set of contested transitions from a 'Fordist' welfare state system to something else – a 'knowledge' or 'creative' or 'information' or 'post-industrial' or 'post-scarcity' or even 'post-modern' society. However interpreted, this moment of transition was seized as an opportunity for change encapsulated by an 'imaginary' in which culture and economy were to come together in new and positive ways.

Its members were consultants and consultant–practitioners, local and regional government officers, cultural space managers, directors of large cultural institutions, academics and representatives of national (British Council, Goethe Institute, etc.) and transnational cultural agencies (UNESCO, Ford Foundation, European Commission, etc.). Their emergent community was extended and consolidated across a series of conferences, networks, research contracts and practical projects. It constituted, in its formative years at least, a kind of mobile trans-local scene, temporarily convening and reconvening in various 'creative clusters', art spaces and conferences centers. This loose epistemic community can be described as an 'activist' one. It was not just a group of policy-oriented professionals seeking to push 'a common policy enterprise'. Its relatively marginal status, its claims to present the voice of an emergent constituency, its need to

[1] Haas, P.M. (1992) 'Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination', *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 1: 1–35: 3

challenge existing settings in order to clear a space for itself – all these brought it close to the kinds of 'cultural social movements' that had marked (especially) urban activism since the protests of the 1960s.

Its not-quite-recognized field of expertise benefited enormously from the UK government's 'creative industries' brand and, in turn, this transnational epistemic community was partly responsible for the unexpected (by the UK government at least) success of this policy across the globe. Since that time, the community has extended its reach and recruited new members globally as national governments have sought to promote this agenda, as have agencies such as UNCTAD, WIPO and of course, UNESCO. The latter, gradually building momentum around its work to ratify and promote the 2005 *Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, has taken a lead in the linking of culture to development, but using the cultural/ creative economy notion to give a new inflection to this agenda. One of the questions this paper raises concerns the costs incurred by this mainstreaming of an activist practice. This is not about 'selling out', rather it is about interrogating the conditions within which this mainstreaming took place.

The 'we' then is exploratory, a work-in-progress, a gamble. I called this epistemic community 'ramshackle' as it was made up of a disparate group of people operating on the margins of an already pretty marginal cultural policy constituency. Its concern to combine culture and economy gave it a certain cohesion and self-consciousness, and also provided the rhetorical strategy by which it sought increased centrality in policy. Does such an epistemic community still exist and can it be interpellated along the lines of our appeal here? What residual meaning does the word 'culture' retain after its systemic replacement by 'creative' as an all encompassing good? Perhaps the failure – after years of lobbying by the most powerful international agencies in the field of cultural policy – to get 'culture' anywhere near the list of re-iterated Sustainable Development Goals (now the Millennium Development Goals came to an end in 2015) might be the jolt necessary to create a 'we', for a moment at least. This failure attests to the further diminution of the 'culture and development' agenda as it does to the hubris of the 'creative economy' that was to transport us all to the heart of the policy-making process. Beyond that – and this is the subject of this paper – the failure speaks to a serious, perhaps terminal, crisis of the cultural policy settings that emerged in the twenty or so years after 1945.

This paper then is not an attempt to give a detailed account – 'the way it really was' – of this ramshackle epistemic community, nor of the period in which it saw itself as ascendant. 'To articulate the past historically…means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger'; seizing such a memory-in-danger, Walter Benjamin continues, helps us to 'deliver tradition anew from the conformism which is on the point of overwhelming it' and to set 'alight the sparks of hope from the past'.[2] This is one attempt to signal a moment of danger, and to suggest some hope without which, *pace* Deleuze, we will never forge new weapons.[3]

Culture and Economy: Elective Affinities or Reconciliation under Duress?

We should be mindful of the changed circumstances of today, compared to eighteen years ago when the UK government launched its *Creative Industries Mapping Document*. That policy moment built on twenty years of work around the cultural industries (and culture-led urban regeneration) and was welcomed by many (including many of us) as culture's arrival at a more powerful negotiating table. One widely quoted description of this is from John Hartley:

> The creative industries idea brought creativity from the back door of government, where it had sat for decades holding out the tin cup for arts subsidy – miserable, self-loathing and critical (especially of the hand that fed it), but unwilling to change – around to the front door, where it was introduced to the wealth-creating portfolios, the emergent industry departments, and the enterprise support programmes. Win, Win.[4]

We suggest that few would nowadays share the cloudless optimism of this highly revealing statement. After a decade at the front door many are concerned with what they jettisoned from the good

[2] Walter Benjamin (1938) *Twelve Theses on the Philosophy of History*. Thesis VI.
[3] "There is no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons". Gilles Deleuze (1992) "Postscript on the Societies of Control," *October* 59 (Winter): 4.
[4] John Hartley (2005) 'Introduction' in Hartley, J. ed. *The Creative Industries*, London: Sage:

old days at the back door. One thing stands out loud and clear: a condition of creativity's grand entrance seems to have been that it dropped its embarrassing links to art and culture. Creativity became tongue-tied as it was forced to speak the language of growth, innovation and economic metrics. Despite this, since 2008 it has been increasingly deemed a luxury superfluous to requirements. Ushered out of the grand entrance its supporters are now dismayed to find that the back door has now shrunk to a porthole. Lose, lose.

This situation could be a path to cynicism or a return to pure art and 'intrinsic' value. The GCEN wishes to take neither.

We acknowledge the embrace of popular, everyday and commercial cultures outside the narrow field of the subsidised 'arts', giving dynamism and radical energy to the cultural policy debates of the 1980s and 1990s. So too we recognise the inevitable intersection of economic and cultural value consequent on the rapid expansion of education, leisure and spending power; aspirations to 'non-material values' amongst large sections of the population; the proliferation of new and globalising information and telecommunications infrastructures; the increased importance of the service sector in generating profit, taxes and wages; the opening up of spaces for self-employment and micro-businesses; and the growing emphasis on knowledge and information as central to productivity growth in post-industrial economies.

However, we differ from the 'win, win' approach by also recognising that the great expansion of cultural participation, consumption and aspiration has not resulted in the kinds of economic transformation heralded by the prophets of creative economy. Alongside the millennial promise of the creative economy have come higher levels of inequality and exclusion; cuts to art and culture budgets; cuts to arts education; persistent un-and under-employment, increased precarity and (self-) exploitation; greater global conglomeration coupled with an ability to cherry-pick local winners early; integrated material and logistic production chains and a new international division of cultural labour: all of this written under the aegis of an economic rational that increasingly excludes any values other than those set by 'growth' and 'efficiency'.

We do not want to paint an excessively gloomy picture, simply to correct the breathless optimism against which critics are positioned as elitist, backward looking Luddites. We want to identify what is at stake in the creative economy agenda and how we might make good on some of its promises. For example, one crucial development in the last decade has been the proliferation of the creative economy agenda outside those post-industrial heartlands that it was initially intended to benefit. East Asia was an early adopter, as its governments sought a way up the value-chain. Africa has rapidly followed as various international programmes have proselytised for the benefits of the creative economy in leap-frogging (as with mobile phones and landlines) straight to the post-industrial. Other Middle Eastern, South Asian and Latin American countries are gearing up for the same.

This proliferation has re-introduced much dynamism into the agenda, as well as exposing the kinds of preconceptions and hidden agendas of a western-centric creative economy in the manner of previous modernisation and development programmes. Is the creative economy an escalator taking us all to the Western model, or might there be another route, to a different place?

Policy-wise, a number of creative economy models have emerged. First, and most visible, was what can be viewed as a 'industry policy lite' of the UK and Australia, adopted in different ways by much of Northern and parts of Southern Europe. If the creative economy is about bottom-up, creative innovation amongst networks of entrepreneurs and SMEs, then the best policy approach is simply to get out of their way. This could effectively mean more training, enterprise support, workspace and building cultural (usually arts-based) facilities. Second, might be the East Asian model, where governments applied their successful state-led growth strategy to the creative sector, providing high levels of investment to selected domestic companies charged with learning from the established players and promised protected access to the new domestic markets they create. Levels of investment in these latter dwarf those of the former. Third, and mostly invisible, has been that found in the US and to some degree in Japan and even India. Long established industries with access to large markets (in the US case global markets) rely on intensified IP legislation and the power of locked in distribution networks to do the work of policy for them. Fourth, we have a range of small-scale initiatives aimed at developing basic skills amongst local cultural producers, assembling basic infrastructures and markets to allow craft, communal

and proto-professional activities to become self-sufficient and income earning. Finally, and often parallel to these models (sometimes initiating them), there is a broad field of area-based development strategies, using infrastructures of culture and creativity to try and reposition locations (quarters/cities/regions) more strongly on emerging creative and/or tourism markets.

In reality, the policy landscape – if we view it across its local, national and regional scales – is often a complex weave of many or all of these approaches. This landscape in turn is marked by the active, preserved or crumbling remains of existing cultural policy strategies, often desperately trying to adjust to a diversifying and/or market oriented cultural reality. Equally there have been some great successes and inspiring initiatives. We are not aiming to level the policy landscape to some all-encompassing logic of globalisation or neo-liberalism. Nor do we claim to have all the answers to the open question of the future. The field is neither uniform nor unilinear.

What we do claim is that the conceptual framework and narrative provided by the creative economy is no longer a viable guide.

Instead we suggest the adoption of the term 'cultural economy' and seek below to outline what kind of agenda that might announce. In short, cultural economy does not refer, as does *cultural economics* to *the economy of culture,* as a distinct system underpinning the production of cultural value(s). It refers to the intersection of cultural and economic values across the full range of practices and institutions involved in cultural production. It suggests first, that culture articulates – in its production and consumption – values that cannot be reduced to economic value, even though it is *productive* of economic value.

Second, that the values of culture should be brought to bear on how its own economy of production, distribution and consumption is (and might be) organised, because this deeply affects the kind of culture we get.

Third, somewhat more radically, that cultural value, rather than having to constantly translate itself into economic value, has an important voice in how the economy itself might be re-framed, and thus provide a major contribution to re-thinking the challenges facing a global society of the 21st Century. As Chris Gibson put it, cultural economy 'resonates well with the imminent requirement that we question current, unsustainable economic practices – requiring, I would argue, a bolder sense of the rightness/ wrongness of forms of production and commoditisation'.[5]

Why the Creative Economy has become an Obstacle to Change

Creative Economy is not some neo-liberal conspiracy, nor is it simply about governments looking for a quick buck. As we said above, the 'imaginary' of the creative economy has complex roots in the developments of the last four decades. There is no denying the energies it generated and corralled as it made its way rapidly around the globe in the early 21st century. The value of the term 'creative economy' has been presented in terms of:

- moving away from an emphasis on art and heritage to more contemporary cultural activities;
- focusing more on SMEs and start-ups rather than big corporations and institutions;
- linking culture to new digital technologies of production and communication;
- encouraging us to see audiences as active participants rather than passive recipients;
- opening a bridge between culture, art and science;
- re-orienting policy to the economic dimensions of culture;
- positioning culture as an essential part of a wider creativity in society;
- positioning culture therefore as crucial to the 'next stage' in economic evolution to a knowledge-intensive, creative economy and society.

Taken individually and collectively these are important values not to be dismissed or trivialised. They are combined and emphasised in different ways such that the specific meaning and rhetorical weight of 'creative economy' will be different, and have different uses, in different local contexts. For some in this network it is still seen to provide useful policy traction, and many people still hold onto the sense of a new kind of culture and a new kind of economy that it promises.

However, we would suggest that the dominant tendency has not been the 'culturalisation of the

[5] Gibson, C. (2011) 'Cultural Economy: achievements, divergences, future prospects', *Geographical Research*, 50:3:1-10, p.6.

economy'[6] nor a marriage of equals but the ever-increasing reduction of cultural values to those provided by 'the economic'.

Creative economy discourse uses the powerful charge of cultural and artistic practice – affect, innovation, aesthetic imagination, situated iterative creation, the protean dynamics of the lifeworld – but fastens them directly to economic growth. Though it claims to be rethinking that economy in the light of culture and creativity, it instead strip-mines creativity out from the lifeworld in which it was embedded. In this sense rather than re-embedding economic activity in social and cultural life, the creative economy disembeds and commodifies a whole new range of practices previously thought to be distinct from, even opposed to, the economy.

This entails more than 'just' an instrumentalisation of culture. It implies fundamental shifts in the ways in which 'the cultural' is imagined, valued, positioned and legitimated, together with the time-spatial frames concerned. For example, where culture and the arts were approached from the perspective of the *longue durée* , as a source of utopia, inspiration and alternative futures, now they are forced to focus on the next 'product-market cycle'. Similarly, the promotion of creativity and innovation as the central function of culture has systemically marginalized other core benefits of culture – individual and collective expression and identity building, celebration, tradition, aesthetic pleasure and entertainment, social cohesion, democratic citizenship, self-development and education in common.

The endless definitional problems of the creative industries (what is included; what marks them off from other sectors; what makes them the same as or different from 'cultural'; whether they are co-terminus with 'the digital', and so on) that has dogged this agenda across the globe and continues to prevent any clear agreement derives from precisely this process of disembedding. In order to be made amenable to standard forms of economic analysis and policy cultural or symbolic meaning needed to be objectified as an 'input' – creativity – and an 'output' – the production of jobs and products – fitting existing administrative-sectoral policy and accounting routines and procedures. This dis-/reembedding not only resulted in definitional terms so broad as to defeat statistical precision (what, prey, is *not* creative?) it accelerated a further shift from 'the cultural' towards more general notions of 'the creative' as a central organising concept.

'Creativity', when used loosely, disconnected from the artistic and cultural practices to which most versions of it have traditionally referred, can be applied to any professional activity that requires situated skills and intelligent judgement. As a consequence the lines drawn between a 'creative sector' and other high skilled sectors can only be arbitrary – as the list of sectors frequently included by East Asian countries indicates (R&D, Bio-tech; business consulting, automobile design and so on). This is often glossed as the 'opening up' of creativity – mobilising bio-political resources for a knowledge economy and democratising a capacity previously locked up in art for art's sake. In fact it makes the identification and characterisation of a specific 'creative' sector very difficult without surreptitiously using – and at the same time disavowing – the notion of 'culture'.

Creative economy has not only reduced much of cultural value to a useful input into growth and innovation but has produced systematic confusion as to what the cultural/ creative 'sector' actually does and how it does so. A recent announcement by Park Geun-hye, the President of South Korea, that automobiles were a creative industry – linking it to the marketing capacity of local galleries, theatres and folk performances – represents the *reductio ad absurdum* of this agenda.[7]

Why do we continue to promote the Creative Economy?

> He has found the Archimedean point but has used it against himself. Evidently this is the condition necessary to finding it. (Kafka).[8]

There were always good tactical reasons for those in the arts and cultural sector to join in with the creative economy discourse. In the face of real or perceived cuts to the public funding of arts and culture since the 1980s, a central tactic of many cultural agencies and advocacy groups was to argue

[6] Lash, S. and Urry, J. (1994) *Economies of Signs and Space*, Sage, London: 123.

[7] http://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/Policies/view?articleId=125217 (accessed 7 October, 2015)

[8] Franz Kafka (Trans. Joyce Crick) 'Aphorisms', in *A Hunger Artist and Other Stories*, Oxford World Classics: 201.

for the economic importance of culture in various registers. Get to the negotiating table by any means necessary and then you can make the more nuanced points. In the time-honoured fashion of artists and arts organisations, one must talk the talk, tick the boxes, get the money. Because the essential goal is to get finance for culture – which can only be a good thing!

çThe creative economy appeared to many as only the latest in the long line of economic justifications for public funding, and needed to be used as such. However, many have found that once at that negotiating table the language used to get there becomes a trap. There is no longer any space to talk about the other values of culture – or at least only as an optional add-ons. Instead there were growing demands for impact metrics and other forms of measureable outcome for culture. And even if these were found they provided little guarantee against being de-funded once the crunch came.

What this indicates is not just a tactical failure – a belated recognition of the price paid for hitching a ride on the train of creative economy – but a wider crisis in cultural value. The public (policy) space in which art and culture could articulate a distinct set of values has been radically attenuated.

This has implications, even for many governments who retain a sense of culture as part of 'civilisation' or national identity, and whose milieu and personal preferences are for the elite arts. Though they want to promote the arts they lack any overarching justification for this funding other than 'excellence', city branding or national 'soft power'. It has been even more difficult for those who hold to a more progressive view of cultural democracy, where cultural policy extends beyond the arts and takes into account popular culture, the media, urban planning, or community development. The cultural ambitions associated with these have been sidelined in favour of their economic impact. The trajectory from the culture-led re-invention of the post-Fordist city in the 1980s to the consumption-led promotion of the lifestyle of the creative class is a case in point.

In pointing out the collapse of the creative economy agenda into a relentless economic reductionism we cannot ignore the promise of a new kind of culture and a new kind of economy which persisted in the economic and cultural 'imaginary' of the creative economy. Therefore, we do not choose a retreat into the 'pure' value of art and culture as if the cultural industries and creative economy had never existed.

A second kind of tactical approach then tries not simply to pay lip service to the language of creative economy in order to get money for an 'art and culture' whose value is taken for granted. This approach attempts to fully engage with the economy of culture and follow the logic of their mutual intersection. In short it suggests that any effective policy for the creative economy, one that is adequate to the way the creative economy actually works – with its range of non-economic values and motivations, its social and cultural embeddedness etc. – would *inevitably* have to be a cultural as well as economic policy. We might say it is a *Trojan horse*, cultural policy hidden inside the exterior frame of an economic policy. This has been, perhaps, one of our main ways of getting to the negotiating table.

In this approach, the creative sector is the benign future face of a new creative economy in which the values of quality, experience, aesthetics, meaningful work, anti-hierarchical networks, relations of respect and trust (not domination and exploitation) might be realised. In responding to these, governments at all scales would need a new relation to the sector, one that would transform the parameters of that governance. Here the economic argument does not just set out to get funding for culture by any means necessary, but tries to re-think what an economic policy for culture might be. Get that policy right for the creative economy and we get a bottom-up transformation of economy, culture and polity. The economic importance of the creative economy is a lever for wider social and political transformation.

One of the problems of this approach is that these progressive cultural/ creative economy arguments have studiously ignored the overarching 'economic imaginary' in which they have been set. Governments have sought primarily economic *results* from the creative economy. Using this as leverage many have tried to give it progressive cultural content as part of any effective operationalization. There have been successes. However, we are all aware of how these well-constructed creative economy policies have been constantly limited, or truncated, or high-jacked, or left high and dry. This is not (just) local cases of stupidity or sabotage, or the necessarily compromised nature of the world: fundamentally, we have failed to challenge the overall economic imaginary in which cultural and creative economy policies have been caught. In going along with the economic argument at the expense of

cultural value – with whatever good intentions – the dominant ground has been ceded. The bottom line remains.

A third approach has been to annex the creative economy's evolutionary narrative for the purposes of culture. This is part of that millennial narrative of the 'new' economy that has been associated with Silicon Valley and what has been called the 'Californian ideology'.[9] It has been combined with Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs' and various post-materialist, post-scarcity theories in which the next stage of historical evolution will complete the climb from agriculture, through industry, services, to 'creativity' and (sometimes) culture. It runs through a lot of policy on sustainable development, in which culture is a necessary accompaniment to an otherwise inevitable and uncontroversial programme of economic growth.

Funding for culture then can only help the transition to the next stage, which itself will usher in a new world of culture and creativity. 'Win, win'. This creative millenarianism, not only runs disturbingly close to that of the libertarian, techno-utopian, innovation-fetish of the 'Californian Ideology', but in its fixation on the new ignores the real historical novelty of a society which can only satisfy its cultural needs as a form of consumption *after* the economic hard labour has been done. And it is never done. It seeks to embed 'culture' into everyday life in ways that are anathema to cultures – such as indigenous Australians – that still remember what this is really like. It is, in fact, a call to dissolve the final unoccupied remnants of the lifeworld into the circuits of consumer capitalism.

The questions we ask as a network, therefore, include the following:

- Have we reached the end of a certain kind of tactical approach to squeezing in culture 'through the back door' of economy?
- Have we, in the meantime, ignored and undermined other, older arguments for culture?
- In wrapping culture up in economics, have we, in fact, failed to understand how arguments for, and understandings of, culture, might have moved on?
- In focusing on culture's contribution to the economy have we ignored the continuing necessity for culture's critique of economy?
- Would engaging in such a critique simply expel us from the negotiating table as 'unworldly', or are there other alliances at that negotiating table that culture could be making in order to help move us on from the current situation?

What can we draw from older values for culture?

There are other values associated with culture that do not register within the accounts of the creative economy.

Culture is an economy. It provides jobs, profits, royalties and tax revenue; it deals with contracts, intellectual property law, employment legislation, market regulation, stock market flotation, health and safety, budget reporting; it involves actors from the public and private sectors – local and global, large, medium and small, institutions and entrepreneurs. It is in this sense that the system of culture is sometimes called an industry or economic sector.

But culture is not an industry 'like any other'. Those involved in its production seek other values alongside the maximization of profit or income, just as its users seek other benefits than satisfaction of economic needs. Culture's public benefits certainly include employment and wealth creation and the contribution to city branding or innovation effects and so on. However, the core benefits of culture – those on which its value must be judged – concern individual and collective expression and identity building, celebration, tradition, aesthetic pleasure and entertainment, social cohesion, democratic citizenship, self-development and education in common.

Culture, taken in the standard terms of an economic sector, might be better seen not as a cutting-edge innovation machine but as a complex service sector, providing public sector services and infrastructure, as well as a range of producer and consumer services for the commercial manufacturing, agriculture and other service sectors. Painted in its broadest terms as 'culture, sport and leisure' – along the lines of the 2009 UNESCO statistical framework, which includes sport and tourism – this sector can account for 20% of GDP in

[9] Barbrook, R. and Cameron, A. (1996) 'The Californian Ideology', *Science as Culture,* Vol. 6, No.1: 44-72.

advanced economies.[10] The creative economy agenda has little to say from this perspective, built as it is on the out-dated nature of public services and a focus on the digital start-up economy as the face of the future.

Culture, along with health and education, as a public value is a crucial component of that system of modern nation-state governance developed across the course of the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe and America. It has been extended across the globe since 1945, though of course it has taken different forms. In this sense whilst culture is clearly an economy – as are health and education – it still retains its links to public goals and values. It is these latter that have been radically challenged by both neo-liberalism and the creative economy discourse.

Culture is more than a vector of productive creativity but is an extension of citizenship, requiring not just the right to freedom of expression but also the material means to fully participate in cultural expression, production and exchange (including education, infrastructure, satisfaction of basic needs, access to open markets). This is expressed clearly in the 2005 UNESCO Convention, and in the work of Amartya Sen[11] and Martha Nussbaum,[12] who have extended the discourse of human rights into that of a series of 'capabilities' to which all individuals should have access.

Culture has also been seen as a space of critique, dissent and even fragmentation. Culture emerged as a distinct sphere in Europe and America only towards the end of the 18th century, along with the new category of 'art'. Art and aesthetics have a complex relationship to culture – sometimes elided into art-and-culture, sometimes set against culture as everyday life, non-elitist or non-professional. This tension of art and culture is part of an ongoing one within modernity between culture as the logic of communal belonging, and indeed governmentality, and art as the free play of a creative individual. Art and Culture have been used for nation building, for the construction of 'imagined communities', and for constructing and governing ideal citizens.

At the same time art and culture have provided a key historical site in which more individual questions, deeply rooted in modernity, as to how authentic experience possible, in what does it consist, how does the self work on the self and to what ends?

There are persistent tensions between communal identities and subjective difference. As William Ray puts it: culture,

> ...tells us to think of ourselves as being who we are because of what we have in common with all the other members of our society and community, but it also says we develop a distinctive particular identity by virtue of our efforts to know and fashion ourselves as individuals.[13]

Within this zone of tension, art and artists have attempted to legitimize themselves in terms of an ongoing search for new sources of meaning, of imagery, of expression, in an ambivalent relationship to functional criteria of profit, pleasure, the social, based on a professional mastering of the materiality of text, image, sound, the performative. The creative economy discourse actively embraces the persona of the avant-garde, iconoclastic artist as a cipher for a putative Schumpeterian entrepreneur-driven creative destruction. However, critique was not derived from the persona of the artist (at least not until modernism) but rather from the distinct space of a culture that was autonomous from, or represented a set of values different to, the logics of economy and administration. These values of free 'useless' creation, of the complete human, of unified expressive communities could be nostalgic compensation for a disenchanted modernity, or an active critique of a modern world that progressively denied such values and thus needed changing. In any event that which was art and culture had values not amenable to those of the market, of politics or established morality.

Culture was never simply autonomy: it became a way of articulating what it was to be 'human' in a more holistic or existential fashion than mainstream economic and political 'modernisation'. In its anthropological definition culture was the meaning system produced by groups of humans in interaction with place and history. In the 'culture and development' tradition, which strongly influenced UNESCO until recently, culture was used to critique unilinear and western centric models of development. These models had failed to acknowledge the specific cultural meaning and value

[10] Piketty, T. (2014) *Capital in the Twenty-First Century,* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press: 91
[11] Sen, A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*, New York: Knopf.
[12] Nussbaum, M. (2011) *Creative Capabilities. The Human Development Approach*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
[13] Ray, W. (2001) *The Logic of Culture: Authority and Identity in the Modern Era*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell: 16.

systems in which specific groups of people lived their lives, and thus repeatedly either failed or succeeded only by destroying these cultures, leading to new problems. But alongside culture as *fact* was culture as *value*: culture here suggested the vital human importance of those forms of perception and meaning creation that took place outside the practices captured by economic metrics.

It is culture as value that is at stake at the present moment; culture as fact is now as much the province of developmental specialists, behavioural psychologists and 'change management' as it is cultural policy.

Culture, both autonomous and anthropological, has often been mapped onto the West (modern) and the Non-West (traditional). This distinction is no longer valid. Globally, culture stands for a set of meaningful values and practices that go beyond the abstract economic model of market-based efficiency that has now come to define 'the good life'. Pulling back a disembedded market system into a value system based on a broader notion of the common good is what many are asserting when they talk about the importance of culture in development or sustainability. In this 'creativity' has been a false friend. Promising a more human, more fulfilling, even exciting, route to economic growth it has succeeded in converting the lifeworld into 'the social factory'.

Culture's position of autonomy – always provision and contested – has been radically attenuated since the 1980s, from both inside and outside the cultural sphere.[14] This is not just a question of the 'reduction' of culture to economics, as in the old charge of 'philistinism', but of the active penetration of economic value-creation into the heart of both autonomous and anthropological (or lifeworld) culture. A key thrust of neo-liberalism was the disenchantment of politics by economics – issues that should have been decided politically are turned into questions of economic 'efficiency' and rational calculation. Only in the last ten years, perhaps, have we become aware that this process has taken place within cultural (and indeed education and health) policy. It is no coincidence that the replacement of 'culture' by 'creativity' by UK New Labour was accompanied by a demand for metric-based evidence that could stand up to the scrutiny of the treasury in the form of Return on Investment. This process has been well documented by Robert Hewison, for the UK.[15] But, unlike that author, we simply cannot dismiss this as a collective fad of dumb politicians; it speaks of a crisis of cultural value – of the very language of cultural value – but this was a crisis of long standing, going back to the 1970s, perhaps earlier, and to which the 'creative industries' attempted to provide an answer.

Culture has certainly become much more central within policy, just as cultural policy concerns have become much more global. 'Culture' carries with it all these older strands of tradition, radical contestation and aspirations to change, which interleave in complex ways with the aspirations articulated by the 'creative economy'. This complex bundle of values is inevitably transformed, adapted and contested as they encounter the new dynamics and realities of a modernity that now reaches beyond its Euro-American iteration. This is only to be expected as a massive wave of urbanisation, dwarfing the great 19th century urban migrations of Europe and America, is catalysing an explosion of alternative modernities across Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The Creative Economy agenda has been a dominant voice in articulating how this global transformation of urban modernities and cultural production is to be understood and directed. We are suggesting that creative economy can no longer be allowed to act as such an organising imaginary. We urgently need to reframe our approach in a way that acknowledges the entanglement of culture and economics, but does so in a way that can allow us to be critically engaged with both dimensions and articulate cultural policy in terms amenable to the new aspirations and the languages, practices and technologies through which they are expressed and acted upon.

What do we mean by Cultural Economy?

To reiterate: the concerns of the GCEN are with the intersection between culture and economics, a complex and critical entanglement that we call cultural economy.

[14] Many recent theorists have suggested that capitalism has lost any 'outside' – not just in the form of the Soviet Union and other socialist regimes, but also any values other than the market and profit. For many this has been to capitalism's detriment. It has spun out of control, resulting in the further commodification of land, labour, money and the environment, radically destabilising itself as it inverts the relationship between humans and the economy that is meant to serve its needs. After 20 years of creative economy thinking it would be ironic if the biggest contribution of culture to the economy turned out to be its critical refusal of that economic logic!

[15] Hewison, R. (2014) *Cultural Capital. The Rise and Fall of Creative Britain*, London: Verso.

We must first acknowledge that for many people culture is a source of income, a way of making a living, through state and corporate funding, commercial practice, informal exchange and a range of local, national, global, business and consumer markets. That these opportunities should be supported and expanded, and that access to these opportunities be made as open and equitable as possible, is a basic tenet of this network.

As such, we do not see the market as in itself anathema to culture or cultural values. Whilst we assert the important role of non-economic values within the production and consumption of culture, we need to break away from the Aristotelian aloofness from economy as the realm of necessity. However, unlike the creative economy agenda, we also have to acknowledge the limits of markets in providing the only measure of, and route to, the 'good life'.

For its most vocal supporters the expansion of production and consumption opportunities *is* the creative economy. For these the promotion of creative entrepreneurs and their audiences/ markets in a way that grows the creative economy can only be good for culture. This emphasis on growth as the single legitimating rationale for creative production and consumption ignores the question as to why 'culture' is a good thing – what is its value to us as individuals, communities and nations?

For example, much of current media policy is based on the unchallenged goals of product proliferation ('more is always better') linked to the built-in obsolescence of delivery devices ('permanent upgrading') under the organising strategic objective of advertising ('delivering eye-balls'). There is no interest in the quality of this experience, of the possibility of less consumption, less choice. The state's role is simply to ensure efficient delivery – efficiency here defined not just in terms of technological capacity or the configuration of the private companies that deliver, but also as the aggregated 'efficient' choice of individual consumers. The act of purchase, framed within the legal-regulatory consumer protection laws set (mostly) by the state, is the only information required in this system. The question of cultural value is of no import, merely the remnants of elitism or state tutelage that has no place in the contemporary world. What is the reason – outside the news – for public broadcasting? What reason for cultural policy? What reason for any values outside the act of purchase?

Once we raise the issue of the *cultural* value of the cultural economy then it becomes clear that questions of *how* the cultural economy is organised are crucial for *what* kinds of culture gets produced. The values we associate with culture are applicable to the equal opportunities for, and conditions of, cultural workers themselves. We also need to understand the ways in which funding streams, markets, contracts, laws, space, regulations, communications infrastructures and governance are organised. That is, the way the cultural economy is organised should be approached from the perspective of the public good (as well as the public goods) we expect from it.

Standard economic analysis, as in the important work of cultural economics, can help us understand the cultural economy, but it is limited. Standard neo-classical analysis has great difficulties in dealing with the kinds of cultural values at play in the production and consumption of culture or with the value of the public goods that are sought by states and civil society bodies. Cultural economics tends to accept the basic outline of neo-classical economics in outlining the formal exchange relations in the cultural economy, whilst acknowledging that there are other values at play amongst producers and consumers, as well as the right of the state to change these conditions by subsidy, tax-breaks etc. in order to secure these public goods.

We think this is no longer enough. First, cultural economics often ignores the ways in which neo-liberal economics has systematically attacked the grounds for anything but the most basic public goods. Oscar Wilde's famous formulation, 'the price of everything and the value of nothing' was made for a world in which economic and cultural value were seen as separate spheres. Hayek himself never intended his radical rethinking of the market to apply to the cultural realm. Since the 1980s markets and prices have been expanded to regulate all sections of social life – health, education, public administration and, finally, culture. Neo-liberal economics systematically denies any form of value that is not based on economic efficiency – that is, the best return to rational utility maximising consumers. If the subsidised arts can still maintain a distinction between its cultural values and the economic mechanisms with which its administrations and

marketing deal, the wider cultural economy simply cannot do this.

Second, in accepting many of the basic tenets of neo-classical economics, cultural economics provides a limited account of the values at play throughout the cultural economy. We cannot see the formal exchange relations governed by the laws of the market as a kind of parallel system running alongside or underneath cultural values. In many ways creative economy's attempt to dissolve this distinction is more prescient. However, as we have said, in dissolving this distinction creative economy reduces the public value of culture to that of economic productivity and growth, rather than opening a space for rethinking the interrelationship. Moreover, the ways in which the creative economy has invaded the shared and intimate spaces of the lifeworld, and sets out to reframe the identity of individuals under the code of 'creativity' make such a parallel system unworkable.

Cultural economy draws on the tradition of political economy, which produced much of the ground-breaking work on cultural and media industries in the 1970s through to the 1990s. This approach situated 'the economic' within its wider socio-historical context, refusing to see economics as either an autonomous system or *homo economicus* as providing a viable model of human behaviour and values. Political economy has links to those other approaches to cultural policy – the New World Information Order, and Culture and Development – which greatly influenced the work of UNESCO in the thirty years before the launch of creative economy.[16]

What has changed since that time is that the distinctiveness of cultural goods (public or otherwise) is no longer so easily accepted. That the market is the best means to allocate resources based on the revealed preferences of individual consumers is now a truth almost universally accepted. Those who suggest otherwise are deemed elitist or authoritarian (or both). In the 1980s, neo-liberalism was not concerned with culture as an economy (they were interested in the values underpinning enterprise and hard work). Since the 1990s neo-liberalism has systematically annexed the values of culture and creativity to its project, and creative economy has been central to this.

At the same time, practices of cultural production and consumption have proliferated beyond the large corporations and nation-state entities that formed the focus of political economy. We are now in the 'culture society', where aspirations to creative work, new forms of peer-to-peer distribution and sharing, and new forms of creative subjectivities have transformed the cultural landscape (though of course states and corporations are still there). Cultural economy attempts to register this more fluid interplay between economic and cultural value, as well as the distribution of proto-commercial production and consumption across the lifeworld of the social.

Cultural economy thus draws on work done by feminist, developmental and environmental economists and social scientists. These all try in different ways to expand/ contest the frame of what is formally described as economic activity. They seek therefore to register the role of, for example, domestic labour, or environmental damage, or socio-cultural meaning systems in underpinning/ undermining these formal economies. In so doing they have questioned the ability of neo-classical economics to exclude these aspects from the frame their formal models.

Cultural economy also draws on the work stemming from science studies and actor network theory (confusingly, also termed 'cultural economy'), and which tries to show how the 'economic' is a constructed entity. Here economics does not just have a limited or abstract model; it is performative. That is, it actively constructs that which it claims to describe. Economic analysis identifies a limited set of practices that are amenable to specific forms of measurement and analysis. The tools and the networks of actors that use these tools and validate the methods, thus produce the 'economy' as a distinct entity. We can think how the growing sophistication of techniques for measuring national economies in the 1920s and 1930s allowed the identification of a distinct national economy expressible in GDP and a range of other metrics.[17] Through the elaboration of these tools and analytical frameworks, and through the provision of the necessary training and accreditation (business schools, MBAs, professional associations, and so on) actors are created whose behaviours and

[16] Schech, S. and Haggis, J. (2000) *Culture and Development: A Critical Introduction*, Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

[17] Mitchell, T. (2005) 'The work of economics: how a discipline makes its world', *European Journal of Sociology* XLVI: 297–320.

understandings increasingly conform to those required by such an 'economy'.

The creative economy agenda, with its mapping documents, its repertoires of creative entrepreneurialism, its impact metrics and training workshops, has helped bring into being new policy actors who have the requisite persona and vocabulary for the pursuit of the liberating power of the market. However, as the (again rather confusingly named) neo-Marxist school of cultural political economy has argued, the economic is surely constituted culturally in some way, but it also has a logic that is outside the lifeworld, a systemic character that has an autonomy that cannot be abolished by exposing its historical and thus arbitrary foundations.[18] This is even more so in that the contemporary finance-driven economy is based on hugely accelerated flows of signs, which are no longer symbolic in the linguistic sense but act directly – through digital machines and their human keepers – on material flows. These flows of information signs increasingly determine how cultural signs are produced and circulated with the global economy.[19] These are new challenges for cultural analysis and cultural policy that are hardly yet being broached.

Cultural economy rejects the ontological distinction between economics and culture. If the economic is historically constructed as a distinct entity, dis-embedded from other forms of social life and values, then so too is culture. But unlike some writers, we do not see its historical contingency as a reason for disallowing the values it articulates. As writers as different to each other as Pierre Bourdieu and Jacques Rancière have argued, and as too did Raymond Williams, the historical genesis of the value of culture is both to be explained and to be valued as a gain, a site around which a democratic politics can be played out.[20] Recognising the historicity of culture attunes us to the fragility as well as the resilience of its value, and keeps us open to its changing forms.

We cannot see culture as the ontological space of value and meaning, as opposed to that of necessity or instrumentality. This is one of the drawbacks of the 'culture as fourth pillar' approach. In simply adding the 'pillar' of culture to those of social, economic and environmental sustainability, we cannot be sure if it is to remain separate from these others or provide the ultimate ground of value and meaning for them. In the first case it leaves economy (and the social and the environment) as a separate sphere somehow apart from cultural value; in the second it provides the meta-foundation for these other three pillars. Neither of these is feasible or desirable.

We are not unsympathetic to this attempt. Here the traditional distinctness of the cultural sphere is being used to assert human values different from the dominating metrics of economic growth, or material indexes of social progress (or 'happiness'). It is simply that we do not think culture can be asserted in this way, as corrective or supplement, without at the same time directly challenging the system of the economy and how it is organised. What alternative approaches to economics have shown is how people's economic behaviours are inextricably wrapped up in other forms of value – family, communal, cultural, environmental – and which actively inform the dynamics and modalities of that system of exchange and the allocation of resources. All of these, ultimately, are implicated in cultural policy.

Karl Polanyi showed this over fifty years ago in his book *The Great Transformation*[21] His account, reaching back to early European modernity, outlines how the activity of exchange was progressively dis-embedded from wider social practices and values. Its expansion into the dominant logic of the imperialist capitalist countries of Europe and North America not only produced a very narrow view of human practice and value but progressively subjected the basic attributes of human life to the abstract law of the commodity. With disastrous consequences. For Polanyi this meant fascism and totalitarian Communism. His revival has come as we face our own forms of impending disaster.

What the GCEN network is calling for are new languages, new concepts, new tools for understanding the values at play in the cultural economy, and how they can become effective at the level of policy. We do not have all the answers – by any means. What we do think is that reasserting

[18] Sum, N-L. and Jessop, B. (2013) *Towards a Cultural Political Economy: Putting Culture in its Place in Political Economy*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
[19] Lazzarato, M. (2013) *Governing by Debt*, South Passadena, CA: Semiotext(e).
[20] Bourdieu, P. (1996) *The Rules of Art*, London: Polity. Part III; Rancière, J. (2004) *The Politics of Aethetics, The Distribution of the Sensible* (trans. Gabriel Rockhill), London: Continuum; Williams, R. (1984) *Culture*, London: Fontana.
[21] Polanyi, K. (1957) *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time,* Boston, MA: Beacon.

cultural value against the creative economy, holding it to the promises often buried in its narrative, will involve an engagement with the full range of economic, cultural, political and social practices involved in its production.

This task will involve the retrieval and re-invention of the language of cultural value in a new context. This assertion of cultural value needs to go beyond the cosy corner of 'the arts' into which it is frequently pushed, re-engaging again those concerns with media and communication, urban planning and the crisis of public and democratic values present in the political economy work of the 1970s and 1980s. The current moment is marked by an impasse between social democracy and neo-liberalism. The former has lost its tongue, the latter (dominant for the last 30 years) can be described as 'a dead man walking'. The links between cultural policy and social democracy are very strong; so too those between creative economy and neo-liberalism. Cultural economy seeks to explore a new policy agenda at a moment of impasse, but also one in which the world has been brought closer and made more multi-centred. The task now is less to give voice to this multiplicity than to listen to it.

Key areas the Cultural Economy policy needs to address

Industry policy: despite all the hype, very little has been done in terms of developing a concerted industry policy. Creative industries policies – with a few exceptions in East Asia – have been grotesquely underfunded given the tasks for with which they are charged. Creative industry policy is often simply about skills training, a few showcasing events ,and a space and place strategy that usually becomes driven by real estate. We certainly should explore the reasons for this gap between rhetoric and reality and argue for more and better targeted funding – but we need to bear in mind two aspects.

First, that if the cultural sector is not an industry like any other – if it involves multiple values at all levels of production and consumption – then what implications does that have for a cultural economy policy? What would an industry policy look like that also had cultural policy objectives? This ambition was there in the initial cultural industries approach (with Jack Lang during the Mitterrand Presidency in France, or the GLC, the Greater London Council closed by Prime Minister Thatcher in 1986). It has also been there in various policies for national broadcasting systems. Can we learn from East Asian approaches that have tried to apply the top-down mechanisms so successful for them in other areas of industry policy, but with cultural values either instrumentalised (national characteristics as unique selling points) or bracketed out (assigned to a protected heritage culture)? And if these have limits – as is clear in China, for example – what lessons can we takes from these that don't involve 'West is Best'?

Second, if we do introduce the question of cultural value into industrial policy then this cannot be simply a strategy for production – as Nicholas Garnham saw long ago.[22] The market, the audience, the public and how they consume, access, participate, judge, learn, share and adapt has to be an essential part of an 'industrial' strategy. Production and consumption have to be seen as a whole in terms of cultural as well as economic value.[23]

Third, a cultural economy policy has something to say about the way the cultural economy is organised – a point made clearly within the UNESCO 2005 Convention – but also on the way the 'economy' itself is conceived and valued.

Media policy: how can we re-unite cultural and media policies that, we suggest, have tended to diverge since the 1980s. Paradoxically, the foregoing point is contradicted by the level of investment in media policy, which was closely linked to, and then increasingly uncoupled from, public service broadcasting. Forces of globalisation, convergence and de-regulation, coupled with the expansion of the Internet and other communication technologies, have made media as cultural policy difficult but absolutely pressing. Media policy and practice was a central focus of the political economy of culture approach but it was always only tangentially related to the creative/ cultural economy debate. At international agency level it tended to be more concerned with media freedoms and the public sphere. Recent work within the framework of the UNESCO 2005 Convention – on digital media and public service media[24] – points to new intersections of the agenda for culture and media. We would

[22] Garnham, N. (1990) 'Public policy in the cultural industries', in *Capitalism, and Communication: Global Culture and the Economics of Information*, Sage, London: 23–37.
[23] A point well made recently by Kate Oakley and Dave O'Brien (2015) *Cultural Value and Inequality: A critical literature review*, London: Arts and Humanities Research Council.
[24] See the UNESCO 2005 Convention Monitoring Report 2015 https://en.unesco.org/creativity/monitoring-reporting.

suggest that the issue of media policy as cultural economy policy needs addressing urgently.

Urban policy: so-called 'culture-led urban regeneration' was positioned as a replacement for old, dirty out-dated heavy industry, as well as a call for a radical re-thinking of the production-focused Fordist city-machine. In this it mobilised many of the cultural political aspirations of community arts, urban popular culture and the 'new left' cultural policy thinking of the likes of Jack Lang and the GLC. The creative economy re-charged its libido through the information and innovation economy agenda, exemplified by 'the digital' and the new 'start-up' economy is heralded. Neither of these have adequately addressed the multiple problems facing the post-industrial city, and in many ways have been complicit or exacerbated them.

On the other hand, the urban has been the site of detailed empirical work around the cultural economy, drawing on economic and industrial geography, as well as work explicitly badged under creative economy research. Equally, the success of Richard Florida's Creative Class thesis has begun a complementary process of mapping (and acquiring) urban cultural assets (often at the 'arts' end of the spectrum) that are set to work on rebooting the cultural consumption infrastructure and branding strategies of cities. This focus on both production and consumption has tended both to bifurcate – with strategies for one conducted in isolation from (or wrongly subservient to) strategies for the other – and to become separated from discourses of the value of the urban. By that we mean themes of citizenship and solidarity, collective meaning and identity, and the civilizational value of urbanity that enthused older generations of architectural and urbanistic planners and writers. The symbols of the Creative City, from the cool café district to the gleaming new startchitect-build eye candy, became uncoupled from the collective enterprise of living together in the city.

The consequences of this failure can be seen in the rapid emergence of the 'smart city' to replace that of the 'creative city'. The combination of social media, real time sensors and massive computing powers, have held out the promise that urban governments can bye-pass the 'social' and the 'cultural'. The enormous implications of these agendas, as well as the more democratic possibilities that they might also entail, has been missed by an urban cultural policy agenda now thoroughly immersed in marketing strategies.

Art, Artists and Cultural Labour: Investigations into the conditions of cultural work now make up a extensive literature. The 'conditions of artists' is a long standing concern in cultural policy. But the extension of the cultural economy itself has brought new problems. The intersection of the cultural economy with new flows of global migration, finance and digital signs enabled by new communication technologies and international regulatory regimes have allowed new forms of the International Division of Cultural Labour to emerge. This raises questions of labour conditions and how these might be made more equitable, but these are in part dependent on the way in which cultural production is valued. This is not to make cultural workers a labour exception, simply to acknowledge the kind of under-employment, precarity and 'self-exploitation' found amongst this group are to be seen as an aspect of their pursuit of cultural value. Though employment legislation is crucial, part of the issue is about the wider social and economic context in which cultural producers (and consumers) live and work. That is, the question of cultural labour is also a question of cultural value – how we value cultural workers within the wider economy of culture.

The creative economy agenda caused a major shift in the way in which artists have to position and legitimise their work. Many feel the need to present their artistic ambition and curiosity in terms of economic and entrepreneurial correctness. This problem speaks to the changing nature – indeed the very possibility – of the contemporary space of the artist. What does this position now entail? What kind of 'calling' (vocation) might it represent in the light of the declining space and time for cultural labour to work autonomously.

Perhaps a cultural economy approach might be able to explore new ways of turning a representational curiosity or even playfulness back into something of a public value. This in turn points to a shift in the position of 'art' – an area which occupies the most ambiguous position vis-à-vis the creative economy. On the one hand it is heritage culture, a publicly subsidised 'market failure', somewhat elitist or nostalgic. On the other hand its practitioners provide a contemporary role model for the ideal creative self, its institutions spear-head urban regeneration projects and global city branding,

and its products act as synecdoche for a general atmosphere of creative innovation and blue sky R&D.

Identifying the changing valence of art, the arts, creativity and the cultural economy lies at the heart of the current challenge for cultural policy, as we outline below.

Culture and Sustainability: it is often assumed that culture and sustainability go together. In part this relates to the idea that social and economic development rooted in culture is more reflective of human values and the lifeworld that sustains these, and thus provides space for the conservation and nurturing of culture with a view to future generations. At the same time it is assumed that as culture affirms human values that, if not set against are at least distinct from the purely commercial, then they provide a space in which the human and environmental degradations generated by unrestrained development can be countered and attenuated. It is on these grounds that cultural and environmental sustainability agendas have been seen as natural allies both philosophically and as practical policy.

However, set against this are some of the realities of the cultural economy: 'No digital without copper' is a phrase we might use by way of pointing to the huge environmental impact of the digital economy, from the mines of Indonesia and the heat-generating data centres in Utah, to the piles of discarded metal-and-plastic hardware in whatever country agrees to take them. In addition, it is frequently overlooked that one of the main platforms of the creative economy, and that of the 'pre-digital' cultural industries, was that these new growth sectors would form a new post-industrial economy based on a non-utilitarian consumption which, because it was non-utilitarian, was expandable *ad infinitum*. The goods and services involved in this creative economy demand material and energy resources that are by no means negligible. The shift to the digital has not attenuated such processes as the 'thingification of the media,'[25] the attachment of images to objects in the form of a range of cultural goods that are fully participant in that huge expansion of global transport manifested in containerisation, distribution warehouses and global logistic chains. Finally, the notion of creative production and consumption itself fits snugly with the ideological and systemic commitment to ever-expanding consumption, ever increasing growth as crucial to the sustainability of capitalism itself.

The failure to get culture onto the emerging UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) might be – as one commentator wrote[26] – a lucky escape. It provides a moment to reflect not only on cultural policy's marginalisation, but also on the debasement of the notion of sustainability before the global development industry. In any event, the easy connection between culture and sustainability needs to be – in the parlance of our times – *disrupted,* if it is to retain any critical meaning.

We should not end this section without noting some positive developments in this area. Without doubt, the publication by UNESCO/UNDP of a third Creative Economy Report in 2013 represented a coherent, evidence-based, locally informed and globally inclusive attempt to re-assert the value of 'culture and development' in a post creative economy context. Such a document might not have been what the proselytisers of the jobs and innovation school of creative economy would have wanted, but it brought many activists back toward engagement with a policy agenda around culture, economy and development. It is something on which to build.[27]

Conclusion: Cultural Policy in Crisis:

This paper began with an appeal to a 'we', a ramshackle epistemic community that emerged around a confluence between culture and economy

[25] Lash, S. and Lury, C. (2007). *Global culture industry: the mediation of things*, London, Polity.

[26] "As I have remarked in an earlier note on this subject, this is better viewed as a gain than a loss. On the debit side, 'culture' will remain external to the conventional idea of 'development' for the 2015-2030 period. But, that is a debit only if you had decided that the planned SDGs/post-2015 inter-governmental processes were in fact about people and systems of governance. They are not so, for the most essential aspects of the SDGs have been contracted out to banks and financial institutions, global management consulting firms, the extractive industries (petroleum products and coal), law firms that specialise in international trade (WTO, TTIP, TPP, bilateral trade, FTAs, trading blocs), media and communications firms (and their PR subsidiaries), the corporate social responsibility (CSR) departments of the world's largest consumer goods and retail companies, and a host of think tanks and 'NGOs' whose expenses are underwritten directly by individual companies that occupy the categories mentioned. That is why I do not consider it a debit. We would not want to have 'culture' mixed up in this apparently noble but actually quite mercenary activity. Not only mercenary, but also ecologically blind". Rahul Goswami: Private Communication.

[27] UNESCO and UNDP (2013) *Creative Economy Report*, Paris and New York, NY: United Nations. See also a discussion on this by David Bell and Kate Oakley (2015) *Cultural Policy*, London: Routledge: 148-158.

that we felt represented a potential for positive social change. This hope might be characterised as the 'culturalisation of the economy'. What we have been trying to register here is the slow morphing of this into the 'economisation of culture'. The erosion of the boundary between culture and economy was not some win-win 'reconciliation' but a process in which a new 'cultural capitalism' has now so thoroughly penetrated into the lifeworld, is so intertwined with our everyday individual and communal practices, that any appeal to some cultural value apart from the economic is now increasingly hard to sustain – especially at the level of government policy.

It is not just that 'culture' has been reduced to its economic value ('the price of everything and the value of nothing'). Rather than being ignored or marginalised, culture has been actively deployed to facilitate and accelerate the generation of new forms of economic value in which culture plays the role of hitherto untapped resources available to exploitation (Marx's 'primitive accumulation'). It has been deployed in ways that have fundamentally altered many of the key parameters of cultural policy as it has developed over the last hundred years. Take media policy, where content is no longer a factor to be considered in relation to ideology, legitimacy, identity, citizenship, social cohesion, and so on. These are now to be secured via processes inherent to the economy itself, of which culture is merely one facet. Media policy is now judged in terms of 'efficiency' – that is, a combination of consumer satisfaction (purchase) and consumer rights framed around the 'affordance' of currently available technologies.

Or take two elements of Raymond Williams' famous tripartite definition of culture – "a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development" and "the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity".[28] We can see how these ideals of individual and communal development ('you must change your life')[29] have deeply informed ideals of a liberal subjectivity compatible with a democratic citizenship. These ideals of value have formed the ground for the extension of citizenship claims around culture across the population and deeper into the social democratic state itself. We might also say therefore that these ideals have increasingly converged with Williams' third definition of culture – "a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general" – where 'arts' policy becomes 'cultural' policy, seeking positive social change through culture. The UNESCO 2005 *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Cultural Diversity of Cultural Expressions* – the nearest thing we have to an international convention on the cultural economy – itself is part of this, as were the cultural industries and even creative city agendas.

This value for culture, as an ideal vehicle of individual and collective development, has now fundamentally altered. Culture, as economically focused 'creativity', is not simply generative of value but linked to new forms of behaviour modification, new norms of subjectivity, new ways of socialising, and new imaginaries of the future ('disruptive innovation') in line with an economic rationale that has little use for older notions of culture, and upon which these older ideals have little purchase.

Why did culture get left out of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals? Was it bad tactics, behind the scenes machinations, some obscure veto? I do not know. What I do know is that for this to happen after twenty years of work at least (since the decade of culture and development), and despite the lobbying of UNESCO and other international agencies backed by a legal convention, is something serious we have to face.

We cannot claim to be negotiating with some kind of slightly slow, cumbersome development bureaucracy that doesn't really 'get it' and has to be talked through it slowly – the kind of slightly frustrated, condescending approach many in cultural policy take (*mia culpa*). We are trying to negotiate with people who not only do not 'get' culture, nor even do not care about culture – they actively dislike it. Do I mean they don't like opera, or literature, or music? No. I mean they actively dislike the ideals culture sets against a system of governance exclusively concerned with a particular sort of finance-inflected economic growth agenda. They like consuming culture, but actively refuse any social, political or economic implications that might be taken from this culture.

Cultural policy has been engaged in a 'softly softly' approach to getting its agenda accepted, gently redirecting the locomotive of economic development towards more socially and culturally embedded

[28] Williams, R. (1976) *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[29] Sloterdijk, P. (2013) *You Must Change Your Life*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

forms. In fact, the locomotive is travelling in precisely the opposite direction. To change the metaphor: we have been thinking to peel the onion layer by layer, when in fact we have been trying to peel a tiger claw by claw. It is now consuming us.

Cultural policy is being actively pushed out, not progressively adopted. Perhaps many of us register this privately, but it is time to do so publicly. What do we do about this? We have the 2005 Convention that I do not believe would be accepted if it were proposed today, and the proliferation of bi-lateral and area trade agreements that have already undermined its sharper bites. What we have is a legal instrument with very few resources and even fewer sanctions with which to set against a world order dominated by global finance and the corporations with which it is intertwined, governed by a complex range of state based and international agencies, non of which are directly accountable (if they are accountable at all) to the demos which (in some cases) elected them and in whose name they rule.

If any of this is true, where does this leave us as policy activists – as critical, engaged intellectuals working in the field of cultural economy? Is it time, in the words and images of Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera*, to Wake Up! Open your Eyes! Vertov's call was to the masses, this one is to the cultural policy world itself, which is sleeping its way into historical redundancy. In 1928 the masses were to awake to their own creative power, to recognise and seize hold of the vital pulse of the present. In any polemic like this we have to recognise the possibilities in the present moment, its potential, as well as the threats that seek to co-opt or smother it. The positive embrace of the transformative energies of the present characterised the cultural economy moment of the 1990s. Now (as with Benjamin in 1938) we face a moment of danger in which the alarm makes us, in the title of the film, *Wake in Fright*![30]

[30] *Wake in Fright* (1971) Dir. Ted Kotcheff from a book by Kenneth Cook (1961).

Law, Social Justice & Global Development

Interview: Cultural Policies and Cultural Activism: the South African Experience. An Interview with Mike van Graan

Yvette Hutchison and Jonathan Vickery

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ABSTRACT

Mike van Graan is Executive Director of the African Arts Institute [AFAI] in Cape Town, and is the former Secretary General of the Arterial Network. Mike currently serves as a UNESCO Technical Expert on the 2005 UNESCO *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions,* and has played numerous roles in South Africa's cultural sector. To many, he is best known as a playwright. He has received a number of awards for his plays including the Fleur du Cap Best New Script Award for *Nag, Generaal* (Night, General) in 2008; *Brothers in Blood*, a Market Theatre production that won the Naledi Theatre Award for Best New Play in 2009; and a Standard Bank Silver Ovation Award for *Rainbow Scars* in 2013, a play that was programmed as part of the Afrovibes Festival and toured the Netherlands and the United Kingdom in 2014. Mike was also appointed the inaugural Festival Playwright at the National Arts Festival in South Africa in 2013, where four of his works were showcased, including a new piece, *Writer's Block*.

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JV: *Mike, you are an executive director, a cultural consultant, a UNESCO adviser, and also a national playwright. How do these roles – if they do – fit together?*[1]

MvG: They fit together through *activism*. Each of them allows me a different form of activism. As a playwright, I explore the human condition in post-apartheid South Africa. Prior to 1994 (which is when our historic elections were held), the theatre work I engaged in was very much part of the anti-apartheid struggle, taking place in community halls, in church halls and as part of political rallies rather than formal theatre spaces. Now, much of my work is done at the country's leading festivals and I served as the Associate Playwright of Artscape, one of the six nationally-subsidised theatres, from 2011 to the end of 2014. This has allowed me as a playwright – with a commitment to social justice – to ask some of the hard questions of our society in transition. We may have defeated apartheid, but our society has become more unequal with high levels of poverty and unemployment (at least 25%, by official definitions).

After our first democratic elections and with Nelson Mandela as President, there was a real reluctance on the part of the arts community to ask hard questions – to be seen to be in some kind of opposition to a government that enjoyed political and moral legitimacy. For me, though, as we were a society in transition, we needed to keep asking the hard questions, keep reflecting our society back to itself in order to ensure that we deal with our major challenges. If we, as artists – or citizens – retreat from that public space, we allow others to define democracy in their self-serving image, and we'll wake up in 20 years' time in a society in decline wondering how we got there. So, with freedom of creative expression now being guaranteed in our country's Constitution for the first time, I believe that the best way to exercise and promote freedom of expression is to practice it. Hence the kind of theatre I do is about putting on stage the kind of things that people might feel anxious about, but are too afraid to voice them in public for fear of being labelled racists, or 'anti-transformation', or whatever labels political elites may use to suppress criticism. Theatre, then, allows me to be a social activist, in a particular way, but it also provides me with credibility as an artist, and which informs a second practice, that of being an arts administrator and a cultural policy activist.

By virtue of my practice as a playwright, I understand and know intimately the challenges of being an artist. This informs my activities and insights into cultural policy, and what needs to change and be implemented at macro-levels with regard to policy, strategy and funding, to change and make more sustainable the practice of an artist at a micro-level.

In my capacity as the Executive Director of the African Arts Institute, I have a platform that allows me a voice within our national cultural and political discourse. With the experience I've acquired in South Africa, I've been able to work with partners across the African continent in advocacy and related issues, most recently assisting the government of Namibia to develop an updated arts, culture and heritage policy. The roots of this experience are in my having been appointed as an advisor to the first minister responsible for arts and culture after the 1994 elections, when I had the privilege of helping to formulate post-apartheid cultural policies. And that has also influenced by appointment as a UNESCO expert on the 2005 *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, assisting governments to formulate policies and strategies aligned to this Convention that promotes international trade in creative goods and services. This, and my work as the founding Secretary General of Arterial Network – a pan-African civil society network operating in the arts and culture sphere across more than 40 countries – also provided me with regional and international platforms to learn and to be engaged with policy and related issues at a global level.

For example, there has been an international campaign to ensure that culture is included in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are to succeed the Millennium Development Goals after their 2015 deadline. (The MDGs aim to halve world poverty, ensure every child has a primary school education, reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, and so on). As advocates for culture to be recognised within the SDGs, we argue that, often culture – belief systems, values, worldviews, traditions, etc. – plays a

[1] *Acknowledgements*: This is an edited transcript of an interview conducted on Tuesday 5 May, 2015, at Millburn House, University of Warwick. It was made possible by the Warwick Institute of Advanced Study, at which Mike van Graan was a Visiting Fellow. The original recording of the interview was undertaken by Doug Cairns of the School of Theatre, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies, and the transcription was completed by Tomi Oladepo of the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies.

role in why the development challenges exist or persist, and that strategies to address them, must consider the cultural dimension. Since these SDGs resonate most with a continent like Africa, by virtue of being part of these continental and international networks, one is able to intervene sometimes in the spaces where policy is being formulated, rather than the traditional African experience, which is that we are at the recipient end of policies made elsewhere, (and which we then tend to embrace because of the resources that happen to be attached to them).

This is a long answer to your question, but I hope that the theme of social justice activism has emerged as the common theme in my various practices as a playwright, a cultural policy activist, arts administrator and consultant.

JV: *The reason I began with that rather banal opening question is to probe the tensions inherent in the relation between individual creative practice and cultural management – not least when it comes to negotiating with governmental agencies and national cultural bureaucracy. How do 'politics' animate or even motivate your cultural work?*

MvG: I was born into an apartheid world determined by politics that affected every aspect of our lives: where were lived, which school we could go to, what job we could do, even whom we could – and could not – love. 'Politics' also impacted on whose stories were told in museums, in theatres, in galleries, and indeed where these were located, who had access to them, and who governed and managed them. Inevitably then, 'politics' – in the same way as it needed to address and transform the legacies of apartheid in other sectors of our society (education, health, housing, etc.), needed to address the inequities in the arts and culture sector. From my high school years, I've always had a political awareness, and have worked with political formations such as the United Democratic Front, but I have never belonged to any political party. As an artist, I lean heavily towards political independence, to have the freedom rigorously to analyse and criticise – where necessary – any political or social formation without being prevented from doing so by virtue of being subjected to the discipline and political interests of a party or political entity.

You may wonder then how I came to be an advisor to the minister responsible for arts and culture in Nelson Mandela's first cabinet? After the unbanning of the ANC and other parties in 1989, and the movement towards a negotiated settlement, some of us in the arts and culture community said that as political change took place it was highly likely that arts and culture will be ignored – because the politicians would argue that the primary needs were to address apartheid's major legacies in education, healthcare, housing, employment and the like. For arts and culture to feature, it was up to us to place it on the agenda. So we formed the National Arts Coalition, the first time that an organisation that crossed ideological lines had come into being (not only within the progressive sector where black consciousness organisations and non-racial organisations had seldom worked together, but also between anti-apartheid cultural formations and cultural institutions that had been supported by the apartheid government). While we had been enemies (at least ideologically) during the apartheid era, we began to say that we now needed to come together to assert our independent interests as the arts and culture sector as it was likely that our respective "political sugar daddies" will be part of a new government that would serve interests other than ours. If we were serious about being part of a new democracy, then, as a sector, we had the right to shape policies, structures and strategies that would directly affect our sector, and to do this, we needed to have a strong, organised voice that would assert a politically-independent agenda. I was elected General Secretary of the National Arts Coalition, which was basically the role of national coordinator, or driver. We undertook research into international cultural policies, particularly in democratic contexts, so that by the time the elections were held in 1994 we had fully-fledged proposals for a post-apartheid arts and culture dispensation.

After the 1994 elections, we had a Government of National Unity with three parties that had won more than 10% of the vote entitled to cabinet positions. Each Minister was allowed to appoint two "Special Advisers" to help set up new departments and to develop policy for their respective areas, given that each ministry basically inherited an apartheid civil service. With the profile that we had developed by that time as the National Arts Coalition and my position in it as the Secretary General, the new Minister responsible for arts and culture (he was also responsible for science and technology) appointed me as one of his advisers.

While many of the organisations that comprised and led the Coalition had been in alliance with the ANC while it was banned, when we formed the National Coalition, we took a very firm non-partisan approach. So, when I was approached to be an adviser to the Minister, I went to the Coalition and asked for their guidance, as firstly, the Minister came from one of the junior political partners – the Inkatha Freedom Party – which had been part of the apartheid establishment; and secondly, this was a kind of political appointment, and I was the Secretary General of a non-partisan Coalition. The leadership said that the very reason we [the National Coalition] exist is to influence government policy, so that I had access to the Minister, we could not ask for a more influential position. And so that's how I got to fill that position till the Cabinet adopted the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage in 1996 – the first post-apartheid cultural policy that still stands today. A few years later, I left that position and returned to play a role within civil society – as the excellent policies that had been developed were being poorly implemented.

JV: *The history of the apartheid struggle is well-known, but what is not so well-known is the cultural dimension of that history, and the politics of apartheid-era cultural production?*

MvG: As with colonialism, apartheid also had a "cultural" premise: it was that because ethnic groups had different languages, belief systems, values, and so on, they needed to be kept apart, as having them in the same place would be a recipe for conflict. Apartheid was essentially an economic system that benefited the white minority through the exploitation of black people in a cheap labour system; but the way that it functioned was through a 'divide-and-rule' strategy, rooted in this "cultural" premise. Thus, if you were of Zulu origin, you would be required to live in a particular "homeland"; if you were Sotho, you would be located in a different homeland, and so on.

In this way, the white minority came to own 87% of the land, while 13% was divided up between the different black ethnic groups as their "homelands", with the farcical idea that these places would assume political independence and provide the context for black people to exercise their political rights, that is, without having any claim to white-owned South Africa.

The apartheid government essentially established a cultural infrastructure for the white community. Each of the four provinces then (we have nine now) had a Performing Arts Council, a huge multi-theatre complex, and a mandate to present opera, classical music, ballet, contemporary dance and theatre, in English and Afrikaans, which were the official languages of the time.

These particular institutions were governed by boards appointed by the state, so that they ensured the political and cultural hegemony within these institutions of the apartheid state. So, for example, black people were initially excluded from attending these institutions and from performing on the stages, so that even when such "petty apartheid" was removed in later years these institutions were then boycotted by black people. The anti-apartheid cultural movement was generally supported by international funding; progressive artists refused to take funding from the state or "workers' blood money" from the private sector. There were many expressions of anti-apartheid theatre – music, poetry, visual art, and so on – through the 1960s and 1970s, but it was in the 1980s that this movement took on a particularly organised form.

In 1983, the apartheid government introduced the "tri-cameral constitution", an attempt to co-opt "coloured" and "Indian" people into the formerly whites-only political system, and so to create an additional buffer against the political aspirations of the black African majority. This inspired the formation of the United Democratic Front, a broad coalition of civil society forces sympathetic to the banned ANC, to resist this constitution. With this came the intensification of the anti-apartheid struggle both internally and internationally with the gathering of momentum of the disinvestment and sanctions campaigns against the apartheid state. Against this background, the international cultural boycott grew legs, along with the sports boycott, the arms boycott, the oil boycott, academic boycott, and so on. This resulted in the establishment of internal cultural organisations to advise those in exile about which South African artists to boycott internationally, and which to promote as part of raising awareness about the evils of the apartheid system. Then, in the mid-eighties, because of the levels of internal resistance, a state of emergency was imposed, banning a range of organisations and thousands of leaders and activists were detained without trial for

extended periods.

In that context, culture and the arts became a shield behind which politics began to re-emerge. So instead of the traditional mass rallies to commemorate important dates in the political calendar like June 16 (Soweto students uprisings) or May Day (Workers' Day), there were cultural events, poetry evenings, soccer matches with anti-apartheid music and theatre during half-time, "people's creative spaces"…. funding that had been available from international sources for general political activity, with such activities being banned, was now channelled to the arts so that a new set of arts organisations emerged: these included the Congress of South African Writers, Film and Allied Workers Organisation, Performing Arts Workers Equity, the Association of Community Arts Centres. These formations represented in an ad hoc way the internal cultural wing of the ANC (though there were other cultural organisations aligned to the black consciousness movement as well).

There was an incredible amount of anti-apartheid cultural activity at the time – music, theatre, poster-making, graffiti, visual art, literature – and then, in the midst of the state of emergency, a progressive arts festival was to be held in December 1986. It was an attempt by anti-apartheid cultural forces to say to the repressive state, that despite your attempts at suppression we are still alive and well. This was also to serve as a morale booster to activists and organisations that had been decimated and demoralised by the detentions and bannings.

I was appointed as the full-time organiser for this Festival. About 3 days before it was due to open in Cape Town, the Festival was banned by the security police, as it was deemed to be a threat to national security, with some of those in the leadership of the Festival being detained by the security police. In a funny way, the banning of the festival also increased the credibility of arts and culture within the broader political movement. If the state sees it fit to ban an arts festival, then there must be something more to that than just song and dance to liven up a political rally.

After the Festival was banned I went back to university to do a Drama Honours degree in directing at the University of Cape Town (UCT) where I had done my undergraduate degree a few years before. At that time, with apartheid job reservation, jobs in the arts were really only available to white people. I was classified "coloured" by the apartheid authorities, which meant that I was due to attend the University of the Western Cape (UWC), an institution established by the state for "coloured" people. I wanted to attend the University of Cape Town though, as I believed I would obtain a better education, but for that to happen I had to do a subject at UCT not offered at the University of the Western Cape. And for me, that subject was drama. In the year that I got a permit to attend this "white" university, the authorities determined that the permit subject had to be pursued as a major, (i.e. rather than as an entry into UCT, with students dropping the permit subject after the first year). At the time, this was pretty onerous, as I would not have chosen to do drama as a major – despite my interest in it – yet later it stood me in good stead as I would not have been able to do the Honours Degree had I not done an undergraduate degree majoring in Drama. After completing the degree, I was invited by the Community Arts Project (CAP) to run a theatre course there. CAP provided access to training in the arts, particularly for black people who may not have had the academic qualifications or resources to attend tertiary institutions.

So yes, there certainly was a lot of anti-apartheid cultural activity and there were real synergies between the anti-apartheid cultural movement and the broader anti-apartheid struggle, since both had to do with the struggle for freedom of expression. The apartheid authorities had a censorship board that banned literature, music, films, theatre and the like, which were deemed to be critical of the apartheid authorities.

YH: *If I may interject here, the ANC had a cultural desk and had mobilised culture, as you say, very effectively. But when political change finally arrived, there was a tendency not to use culture as a 'political weapon' any longer. It seems to me, that immediately after the 1994 elections, theatre went two ways, almost polarised – what we may call 'entertainment' (with no confrontation or political engagement) and 'theatre' proper. Political engagement remained to a lesser degree at community level, but it was only by the mid-2000s that this issue really began to be addressed. In 2006, for example, your position was a radical one, you protested against cultural conformity, you openly discussed the place of protest in the post-apartheid*

where some felt this was provocative and potentially undermined the new constitution and perceived consensus. You remained impassioned, and insisted that conditions existed that ought to be protested. So where do you position the contemporary artist in South Africa now? To what degree have the older [segregated] institutions of culture – like the theatres – been de-constructed?

MvG: What was interesting after 1994 was the many people within the arts – and in theatre in particular – who were happy to see the back of apartheid, and yet somewhat self-pityingly said "what do we have to write about now that apartheid is gone?" I could not believe that they were staying in the same country as me, because from where I looked, South Africa was actually a much more interesting place for artists *after* the demise of apartheid. But then, we knew the narrative; we knew who the good guys were, and we knew who the bad guys were. There was a clear good and bad, right and wrong, black and white.

Now, though, we are a society in transition; there is so much more complexity and irony and contradiction to explore. This country was a gift to a playwright intent on exploring what the "personal is political" (a refrain from the apartheid era) meant in contemporary, post-apartheid South Africa. This was the path that I took.

Despite us having gone through a historic election in 1994, our country didn't automatically change overnight. In fact, what has happened over the last 21 years is that our country has become more unequal; it has more poverty now than it did in 1994; there are more people who are unemployed now than was the case then. Average life expectancy was 62 in the dying days of apartheid, but because of the ANC government's *denialism* during the Mbeki presidency, life expectancy declined to around 50.

So for me as a writer, as an artist, as a social justice activist, there is at least as much for us to be writing about now in terms of social justice issues as there was during the apartheid era. For as long as the majority of people are still living below the poverty line, for as long as you have unemployment sitting at between 24 and 34%, for as long as ordinary people do not have access to quality education, health care and standards of living that affirm their human dignity, there are social justice themes to explore and injustices to interrogate.

But other artists have chosen different paths. Many white artists, for example, feel that despite there being injustice, they have no right to criticise the black government now, as they were beneficiaries of apartheid. So for them to critique government would now be inappropriate. And they would most likely be called racists, which is a contemporary form of censorship, resulting in self-censorship.

Post-1994, white Afrikaans-speakers – having lost political power at the elections – were keen to ensure that their language, and their culture would be sustained. So, having acquired the economic means under apartheid, they established a range of festivals that have become the primary producers and distributors of a new and really amazing Afrikaans theatre. Unfortunately, many people – black people in particular – do not have access to this theatre because they don't speak Afrikaans, or because Afrikaans still carries the political baggage of the apartheid era. The audiences at these festivals, in turn, do not have access to the black experience or the stories being told in English mainly but also in indigenous languages by black theatre makers. So, in an ironic twist, there are new forms of apartheid in our theatre culture in post-apartheid South Africa.

Then there is the category of theatre practitioner who has decided that this is *our* government, we voted for them and we are not going to be critiquing them. To be critical would be to give ammunition to "the enemy" who would love to see a black government failing. Black theatre makers are also, now – for the first time – able to access public resources to support their art, and black folk can now run the country's major subsidised theatres, which places them in compromising positions: What kind of theatre can we do that may address some of our challenges while still being funded by the state? (This may have been the case a decade or so ago, but increasingly there are indeed independent and subsidised black voices that are assuming highly critical positions in relation to the current regime).

I think the overriding reality, though, is that most theatre makers are dependent on box office income to pay the rent, put food on the table and so on. Many have decided then to do work that doesn't alienate the existing audience. A few years ago I did some research into why it was, that given our history of political theatre, there were so few mainstream plays that dealt with the pandemic of HIV/AIDs, a pandemic that at one point was claiming on average

a thousand lives each day! There were many "community" theatre pieces dealing with the theme, but one could count the number of mainstream plays on one hand. The overwhelming response from my fellow theatre makers – emerging from the research – was that they did not do theatre on this theme as it would alienate their (primarily white) audiences, for whom HIV/AIDS was not a direct issue of concern. I suppose this is understandable within the current policy context – with its neo-liberal, market-oriented creative industries approach, where theatre makers are now dependent upon the box office; they tend to give the market what they believe the market wants. Yet so, stories which speak to the experiences of the majority of people are ignored, and what gets staged perpetuates the inequities of our society.

YH: *A lot of interesting work is happening in what we call 'found spaces'. Last year I saw amazing theatre in church halls, where one pay what one can, with people giving 50 cents or 50 rand, or whatever they want. There is very interesting work being done by young and often female artists, which is not making it beyond these spaces or being programmed in festivals. Who is 'controlling' the festivals? Who is included, and who is not? I think that 'marginal' theatre is no longer just at community theatre levels, but also impacts on interesting new young artists. Yet, the economics of culture mean that they have to keep their day jobs.*

MvG: Absolutely! About 10 years ago, I had the opportunity to do plays in three different theatres in the same year and I thought at the time I would never have a better opportunity to see if I could make it as a full-time theatre maker as then. Now, I had worked in policy and I knew that it was just about impossible to do, but I thought, let me do it anyway. I think I'm still recovering from that decision….Since then, I've always had a full time job (in which I've mostly had to raise my own salary) and worked in theatre on a very part-time, almost hobby-like basis. From 2011 to the end of 2014, I was in the very fortunate position of being the Associate Playwright for Artscape, where they agreed to produce at least one of my plays each year. I wrote, they invested in the work and took the financial risks, which was really a very privileged position to be in.

You asked the question about how the theatre spaces have changed. Post-1994, transformation has been one of the biggest features of the subsidised theatre sector. With apartheid having primarily benefited white practitioners, the process of transformation, with its moral and political imperatives, saw changes to the governance and management structures of state-subsidised institutions so that these now better reflected the demographics of our society with regard to "race", gender, disability, etc. While this was necessary, many people appointed to management and governance positions weren't necessarily the most informed about what those institutions were required to do, and they were appointed at a time when these institutions were also facing their most severe financial cuts in their histories. So, "transformation" took on a very formulaic approach: how many black people are in the play, or in the ballet, or in the musical? And so on. This approach to transformation was not peculiar to the cultural sector, and the irony of this superficial demographic transformation of institutions has actually compromised substantial transformation – in terms of the delivery of services to, and changing the lives of, ordinary people, those now tasked with such delivery do not necessarily have the experience and skills to do so.

The impact of this in our subsidised theatres was massive, with the State Theatre for example being shut down and more than 450 people losing their jobs. The former performing arts councils still assume a large part of the national budget, and they are not the nimble decentralised institutions that our country really requires right now to deliver theatre to all our people. We need more community arts centres and support for theatre happening in people's homes and in backyards, etc., but there is little policy vision – and thus limited funding – for this at the moment.

YH: *This is certainly interesting, and space is so important – public space. I am concerned with how performance can affect the city, open new spaces, create theatre with very little or no technical engineering – and bring the local and the international communities into dialogue: festivals have been instrumental in this. There are around forty festivals currently in South Africa.*

MvG: One of my major criticisms of post-apartheid theatre spaces in South Africa is that we now have these nine provinces, as opposed to the four under apartheid, but the subsidised spaces are still in the

major cities rather than the less-resourced provinces. In fact, in Gauteng, our country's richest province, they now have three nationally-subsidised theatres, while in five others there are none. So what's beginning to happen, is that over the last 5 years or so people are using local infrastructure to distribute the arts. We are working with a project in a local township for example, where the lounge areas of ten houses also serve as art galleries for local artists. There's the Voorkmerfees, (Front Room Festival, in English), about an hour from CapeTown, which takes place during the first weekend of every September. They use the lounges of people's houses for this festival. As a punter, you buy a ticket for a particular route, and there are seven routes that happen simultaneously. Everyone arrives at 5 o'clock on a Friday and Saturday, and 12 o clock on a Saturday and Sunday, with the festival usually sold out before it starts. No-one knows what they will see. Two minibus taxis collect the first 20-30 people in each route, take them to a house, (generally located in the poorer parts of town to help spread the benefits of tourism to these areas). Patrons squeeze into the front room of the house and for the next 25-30 minutes, you are entertained by a stand-up comedian. Then you get collected and are dropped off at a second house, where you may see a string quartet; and thirty minutes later you are taken to the final house on your route to listen to, for example, a poet. In 90-120 minutes, you see things that you might not have ordinarily bought tickets for; and you will see it in people's houses.

So local spaces, church halls, community halls, peoples' houses – there's a whole national movement that has jazz appreciation sessions on a Sunday afternoon in the townships where,they play the CDs of African and international jazz musicians. "Let's not wait for government to deliver infrastructure", seems to be the approach, with people finding creative ways to access and enjoy the arts. Then there's also an increasing amount of art in the public space with festivals like Infecting the City hosted by the Africa Centre taking place each year, with performances where people are, rather than people having to go to theatres to access performances.

JV: *This is heartening to hear, but is it not true that institutions possess a form of political agency that is not available to improvised and provisional creative production, and with such agency comes opportunities for generating discourse, engaging in negotiation and working with the politics of national cultural production. This is not possible with the kind of creativity you have mentioned here (the 'informal economy' of culture, if you like). How then do we negotiate the apparent contradiction in the evident significance, energy and emotive power of such small-scale, often improvised, art on the 'margins' and the global discourses of development – with UNESCO, debates around the future of the 2005 Convention on cultural diversity, post-2015 policies for culture and sustainability, and the empowerment that comes from solidarity with international movements? Tell us about the work of Arterial Network, which is surely significant in relation to this issue.*

MvG: This is an interesting issue: I'll give some background. The Arterial Network was formed in 2007 on Gorée Island, which once served as a centre of the slave trade in Senegal. There were about 60 cultural activists from only 14 African countries at that meeting..Rather than complain about this, we decided to form a network across national, language and other boundaries, and find international and regional partners to assist us as we took responsibility for our own lives and artistic practices. The network now has members from just about every African country. I no longer serve in the leadership of Arterial Network, but concentrate on the African Arts Institute where we build capacity for Africa's creative sector and engage in cultural policy issues at national, continental and international levels.

The reality is that many artists, creative enterprises and practitioners are not concerned about policy issues; they believe that it doesn't apply to affect them, and yet, it does. So, as an institute, and with our links to national, continental and international networks, we are constantly engaging in advocacy around changing policy, changing funding mechanisms, addressing issues in which government is intervening, to the detriment of the sector. And, we also keep the arts and culture community informed of their rights and of possibilities afforded them through international and national cultural policy protocols. As we are located and active within the sector, we are able to engage in policy-making rooted in real conditions and praxis, rather than in government buildings.

JV: *For you, what is the significance of the 2005 UNESCO Convention? Is it a 'living' document – and does it offer a certain legal weight to the political aspirations of 'live' culture?*

MvG: Again: a background summary: after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of our bi-polar world, free trade became the dominant approach to international economic relations. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) emphasised the removal of barriers to trade, allowing the "free market" to prevail. Governments could no longer impose measures – like import tariffs – to protect their local industries against cheaper goods from elsewhere. So, for example in the case of South Africa, we had a thriving clothing manufacturing industry, but when we signed up to the WTO our government could not prevent retailers from importing much cheaper goods from China. The consequence was that our clothing industry contracted and thousands of jobs were lost.

When it came to trade in arts and cultural goods and services, countries like Canada and France argued that if "the market" was allowed to prevail, then this would lead to greater cultural homogenisation. They argued that – as opposed to, say, toothpaste, cars and T-shirts – cultural goods, like audio-visual materials, films, television, literature and music, are embedded values, ideas and world views. Thus, if we simply allowed Hollywood, for example, to dominate the world through the market because they have superior resources, consumers will imbibe the values and worldviews embedded in these products, so that we will begin to see the world in the way that Americans see it. This led to the idea for an international convention that would provide countries with a *legal basis* to implement policy and other measures to protect their own creative industries, and to ensure that their citizens had access to a variety of cultural products. Examples of measures would be screen or music quotas to ensure local movies and music are broadcast, which in turn would also help with the growth of these and related cultural industries.

African governments signed up to this Convention after its adoption in 2005, even though it hardly had any creative industries to speak about, and, as the UN Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD] has shown, the continent's share of the global creative economy is less than one per cent. But they signed up because of the promises made in the Convention, such as the establishment of a fund for cultural diversity to support the creative industries in the global south, the call for wealthy nations to invest in creative industries within the global south, and to provide preferential access to global north markets for creative goods and services from the global south.

However, the fund – the International Fund for Cultural Diversity [IFCD] – only attracted less than 10 million $US, which is less than the marketing budget for an average American movie. It was and is as if wealthy countries, once they got the right to have this convention to be able to defend their own industries, forgot about the rest of the world upon whom they were dependent for having the Convention ratified.

After the adoption of the Convention though, "9/11" happened, and suddenly the notion of cultural diversity was disfavoured. The security of countries in the global north became of paramount concern. Cultural diplomacy and intercultural dialogue replaced "cultural diversity" as themes of the day, and Africa – and global south countries generally – often are the recipients of such policies and themes that are created elsewhere, because of conditions that exist there rather than because of the conditions in the global South. We embrace these policies because they often come with resources, and with the lack of support from our own governments, we panel-beat our projects to align with the latest cultural policy theme in order to access their concomitant resources.

The Convention has good political content though, as it points to the use of arts and culture as a means of "soft power". I attended a conference on cultural mobility earlier this year in New York, and one of the speakers said that within the American military there is more money for arts and culture than within their national endowment for the arts. This is, in part, because the military recognises that it cannot win people's hearts and minds simply through bombs and bullets; it employs arts and cultural strategies to attempt to win over citizens in Afghanistan, in Iraq, etc.

Soft power is exerted through the mass media, through the shaping of people's consciousness through CNN and similar international media outlets, as well as through movies and television programming; this is where the contestation of ideas, worldviews, and values takes place, and I don't think

that African governments have bought sufficiently into that argument, because for me, that would be a much more convincing argument for investment in the creative industries than the supposed economic benefits of such investment.

The truth, is that Africa does not have a problem with economic growth. We've had GDP growth rates of between 4 and 11% in most African countries since the mid-1990s.

YH: *Arterial Network has engaged in 'arts watch' work, as well as networking across the continent, and acting as a policymaking and debating platform. One significant aspect of this network is the extent to which it has given women an opportunity to find their own roles in cultural leadership. This is a huge issue on the African continent, particularly in Kenya. How much do you think women are engaged in discussions around cultural policy, given the obvious demands of their domestic roles? Their place in the theatre is often maintained at the level of actress, rather than writing or directing – never mind policy. Where are the women sitting in this arena?*

MvG: From its inception, Arterial Network pursued the principle of at least 50% participation of women in our training programmes, in our leadership, in our staffing. The first two presidents of Arterial Network were both women (the first from Zambia, the second from Ghana) and it is only with the third election that a man (Moroccan) was elected President. In our office at the time that I worked as Secretary General, two of us were males, the rest of the core of seven staff were women. It's by no means perfect; there is still a real struggle to empower women in leadership positions in the African cultural space, but there are real attempts to do this.

YH: *But that is unusual.*

MvG: It is unusual, but it's precisely because of the conditions in the continent that you mention, where more traditional cultural practices disempower women, that if we are serious about the Millennium Development Goals – which includes the empowerment of women – that we have to be engaged in this arena of work.

I have been fortunate to travel across our continent and to facilitate various training courses and I can assure you that there are some amazing people in civil society, and many of these are women – powerful, dynamic and energetic leaders. Our continent suffers from incredibly poor, self-serving political leadership. With different, better leadership, we would – I'm convinced – be a quite different, quite amazing continent, and women leadership could probably provide this difference.

In South Africa, our artists complain all the time, and yet our situation is probably 10 times better than anywhere else; to see what people do with what they have – the creativity, the commitment – is mind-blowing and humbling. Huge amounts of work still need to get done; it's a huge continent with 54 countries and one billion people. To bring about change, there needs to be vision and political will and then the resources will follow.

YH: *So, the Arterial Network is creating a model that can be implemented in other spaces and creative places, with peer-to-peer workshops and the growing importance of peer-to-peer learning, developing the skills of leadership for cultural policy and creating art. This is necessary for women.*

MVG: When I arrived here on Sunday, I opened my email and there was a message from a woman in Tanzania; she had been through one of our training courses and now she has been appointed to coordinate the African chapter of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies [IFACCA]. She and two other women who have been through a training course we ran (on the 2005 UNESCO Convention) have been appointed as new members of the expert facility on the Convention. She was writing to thank us for the training provided, and the opportunities that it opened up as a consequence. This is what makes doing the kind of work I do worthwhile; it's the people on the continent. It's neither about pessimism nor optimism. It's not this 'African rising' narrative or that 'African the bottomless pit' narrative. It is all of these and many things in between that make it challenging, exciting and fulfilling, to work there.

A question from the audience**:** *what is your assessment of the way theatre and arts practice are being used to engage people who are not interested in culture? I am not talking about 'theatre for education', but the role of theatre for cultural education and participation.*

MVG: There's a movement at the moment around arts education within the school context. One strand of this is about learners growing "citizen attributes" –

creative problem-solving, self-confidence, etc. – through engaging in the arts (music, drama, visual arts, etc). Another strand is that promoted by UNESCO's *Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist,* which speaks about arts education as a means of vocational training from primary school level. I would support both strands, as they help with human development on the one hand and with growing "art astuteness" on the other (people who will grow into informed audiences for the arts). Too often, though, it is people who have had access to more privileged forms of education, or who have disposable income, who are best able to access the arts and the benefits of engaging with these.

I think that a good example of the way in which the arts can engage people is the painting – *The Spear* – by an artist in South Africa [Brett Murray] a couple of years ago.[2] You may heard about it; it was very controversial. The artist hosted an exhibition entitled "Hail to the Thief" bemoaning the high levels of corruption within our country, and berating the ANC for having sold out its liberation ideals. The art works were very critical, provocative and satirical, but one in particular was of the South African President in a Lenin-like pose, but with his genitals exposed. The male organ, of course, has quite often been used as a symbol of power, of rape and plunder. While the art work was safely in the gallery, no-one took notice. But after a photograph of the painting was published in a newspaper, along with a review of the exhibition, it caused the biggest outcry that an artwork has ever provoked in our country. Many in the political elite were outraged; the artist received death threats and had to move out of his home, the ANC led a march on the gallery, demanding that the work be destroyed, and other things. But over a 2-3 week period, there was the most incredible discourse around culture, tradition, modernity and freedom of expression.

It's precisely this experience that led us as the African Arts Institute to engage in public art interventions – to move the arts out of the theatres and galleries and into the public domain. This advanced issues to do with human rights and democracy. So, the second anniversary of the Marikana massacre where 34 miners were shot dead by police in 2012, we engaged in re-naming of streets in the Cape Town CBD (central business district) after the slain miners, and we dressed up monuments in the uniforms of miners so as to confront people and raise debates about our society in transition. It's nowhere near what should be happening, but we're hoping that this will lead increasingly to more artists being creative and active in the public space for education and participation purposes, with the latter allowing the audience to engage creatively with the works too.

YH: *There was a Zulu artist from Durban (Doung) whose performance in Cape Town – involving painting a pink line along Cape Town's roads to trace the underground Camissa river that runs off the mountain to the sea – was allowed only if he agreed to remove all the traces of the art away afterwards. It 'infected' the city: even the colour pink was seen by some as problematic, as it evoked gay discourse.*

MvG: Yes, this was a performance as part of the *Infecting the City* festival. This is a festival that is endorsed and sanctioned by the City – but which does not mean that the items that constitute the festival are all safe and self-consciously aware of the need not to alienate the City. But when we did the Marikana public art interventions, we didn't apply to the city for permission, because we knew that they wouldn't give it to us. So we engaged with it as a kind of guerrilla activity, putting up the street signs early in the morning so that people encountered these on their way to work the next morning.

One has to make strategic choices about the role you want to play, and how to engage the city and its citizens through art. It is still a kind of activism; you may not get detained without trial for six months, as was the case during apartheid, but there could still be consequences like charges for damage to state property, not being allocated public funds, not being invited to be part of official arts exhibitions abroad, and so on.

JV: *To concluding this interview, please tell us what your current aspirations are.*

MVG: I suppose it's to end where we started… that I would continue but become a better social justice activist through my theatre work, through my work as an arts administrator and cultural policy activist,

[2] It was exhibited at the Goodman gallery in Johannesburg. It depicted South African President Jacob Zuma with his genitals exposed, in a pose reminiscent of Lenin (insofar as it cites Victor Ivanov poster's *Lenin Lived, Lenin is Alive, Lenin Will Live)*. The painting triggered a defamation lawsuit by Zuma's party, the African National Congress (ANC), and was vandalized on 22 May 2012.

and to do this at a local level, at a national level, within the African continent and at an international level. And importantly, I would be identifying, training and mentoring younger theatre and cultural activists, all with a strong sense of social justice.

Law, Social Justice & Global Development

The Arts, Africa and Economic Development: the problem of Intellectual Property Rights

Patrick Kabanda

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this article is the application of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) to Africa's cultural economy, and its implications for development. Drawing on extensive research, including field work in Africa and interviews with key people in the field, the study explores the concept, definitions and various ways in which Intellectual Property is formulated, particularly with regard the production and international trade in cultural goods. The paper tackles two widespread assumptions: the first is that Intellectual Property is a necessary condition of successful cultural production; and second, that Intellectual Property is antithetical to African culture -- that an effective Intellectual Property regime in Africa is inoperable. On the first point, the paper observes Africa's extraordinary levels of cultural production, without substantial IP protections; and on the second point, it explains that while property rights in Africa are complex, an effective IP regime could indeed be devised. With reference to various events and projects by the World Bank and others, the author sets out the necessary conditions for an IRP development in Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

Poor People's Knowledge, a collection of case studies published in 2004 by the World Bank and Oxford University Press, reported that culture and commerce can and do complement each other, particularly within the contexts of development (Finger and Schuler, 2004). Citing examples, such as the World Bank's Africa Music Project and traditional African crafts, the collection authors suggest that if developing nations can promote intellectual property rights [IPRs], they can also increase both revenues and earnings from their peoples' traditionally exponential cultural innovation, knowledge and creative skills. Working with several African governments, the World Bank has, for one, recommended the establishment of relevant policy and legal reforms to help develop Africa's local, regional and national music industries. This article will explore the implications of supporting Africa with the international IP regime. From research that started in 2011, I will charter the conceptual and cultural-political issues of IP for the African continent's creative producers.[1]

In industrialised countries, artists, writers, inventors, and others who create 'intellectual property' are ascribed a legal identity and so widely benefit from intellectual property rights in terms of both monetary contributions to their countries' economies and professional credibility in terms of the value of their national-economic role. The economy of IPRs has been attributed to factors such as strong legal systems and infrastructure, as well as a robust professional class and civil society. And while African countries indeed have immense cultural resources, creative energy and countless cultural producers, intellectual property law and enforcement is weak. Artistic creations in Africa — from music and literature, to dance, film, and the visual arts — are, by and large, not subject to strict protocols or processes of commodification and ownership, but are shared freely, in part due to a traditional understanding that 'knowledge' itself has communal ownership.

The free exchange of knowledge has helped Africans, from Cairo to Cape Town, and from Dakar to Dar es Salaam, to learn from each other. On the other hand, the lack of reward for knowledge-based products often stymies investment, professionalisation, innovation and marketing, generating the "monkey see, monkey do" phenomenon in the arts and other sectors, particularly pervasive from Kampala to Cairo and from Lagos to Lilongwe, for example. Among other disadvantages, African knowledge products, ideas and artistic forms, bleed beyond Africa and we can find them available 'for free' and thus often adapted for other's copyrighted material, enabling others to profit from African artistic creativity. Yet, if the transmission of culture or transfer of knowledge moves in the opposite direction – from the USA to Africa, for example – there are no shortage of international agencies or legal representatives that remind African nations to obey international intellectual property regime and its laws. Based on empirical research on this topic, as well as interviews with two leading experts involved in the World Bank Africa Music Project, this study will examine the relationship between the arts, IRPs and economic development. I will argue that if African countries can institute and enforce intellectual property rights, the African continent could more effectively use culture for economic development without exposing its culture to forms of international market commodification. African culture could be monetised and play an 'economic' role, without simple becoming a product for sale on the international market for cultural goods or services.

Properties of Intellectual Property

Legal scholar Robert P. Merges argued in 2011 that intellectual property today is like the character of the "chaotic, sprawling mega cities in the developing world … [such as] Mexico City, maybe, or Shanghai" (Merges, 2011: 1). It's an odd juxtaposition, but Merges suggests that the order and regulation required for Intellectual Property is not antithetical to the seeming chaos or confusion

[1] This paper is related to my earlier World Bank working paper, 'The Creative Wealth of Nations' [see References]. Much of the research material used in this paper was derived from field and desk research conducted during the period 2010-11, after the publication of the second (revised) UNCTAD Creative Economy Report 2010. My references span the decade prior to this, in the content of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but my conceptual approach assumes that the analysis and the principles I articulate remain valid to the contemporary situation in Africa and with regard the application of the international IP regime, as supported by WIPO and others. While I am not critical of the IP regime itself -- which is highly competent and valid for many Western markets -- but its application to Africa requires further critical scrutiny.

that accompanies emergent global economic activity (the vast portion of it taking place in today's rising metropolises). Rather, IP, like urbanisation, can locate order in dynamism. In his book, *Driving Innovation: Intellectual Property Strategies for a Dynamic World*, Michael A. Gollin suggests that Intellectual Property [IP] can be defined at least five different ways and that even people experienced in IP may be unfamiliar with all its available manifestations (Gollin, 2008: 22). By way of introduction, we must consider his definitions:

(i) IP (for a dictionary approach) "...is something intangible, created by the use of mental ability, to which legal rights attach." Such legal rights, of course, have been associated with property ownership since Roman times.

(ii) Lawyers use IP as a term by which to refer to a variety of legal doctrines, including industrial inventions, innovations and manufactured objects (patents, trade secrets, trademarks) and literary products (copyright).

(iii) In accounting, IP is viewed as a "form of intangible asset."

(iv) In business and management, IP is often understood as a "management tool for converting human capital into value by defining and capturing new knowledge". Gollin cites Patrick Sullivan's description of human resources and a firm's intellectual assets as "intellectual capital."

(v) Unsurprisingly, many scholars maintain the broadest definition of IP, which "…refers to an ethical system that values all that is known…including individual creativity and socially adopted innovations as well as old and collective knowledge. [This interpretation] may go beyond the legal definition to include everything in the public domain." (Ibid: 23)

With such varying definitions, crossing vast tracts of industry, social and cultural life, as Gollin points out, individuals from varying professionals or academic disciplines easily misunderstand each other. Lawyers could misunderstand accountants, business people could misunderstand scholars, vice versa and so on. In this paper, the definition of intellectual property I will maintain is the definition '(ii)', which is the legal framework – of 'IPRs'. I will do this in order to identify a critical and 'political' issue central to international development and the emancipation of Africa as an actor in the global economy.

Today, intellectual property, particularly when discussed in the context of the global creative industries, is perhaps synonymous with the World Trade Organization's (WTO) 'Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights' (TRIPS). Negotiated between 1986 and 1994, TRIPS débuted into a multilateral trading system at the Uruguay Round in 1995.[2] The Agreement invited members, including developing states, to enforce IPRs as a means, among other things, of encouraging innovation and the exploitation of the value of the products of innovation. Article 7 adequately articulates the TRIPS' aims:

"The protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation and to the transfer and dissemination of technology, to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge and in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare, and to a balance of rights and obligations".[3]

These aims indeed posses a certain economic logic, but there are many who point out that this Agreement does not begin to address the specific needs of developing countries in relation to IPRs. J. Michael Finger, former Lead Economist and Chief of the World Bank's Trade Policy Research Group, asserts that TRIPS "is about the knowledge that exists in developed countries, about developing countries' access to that knowledge, and particularly about developing countries paying for that access" (Finger and Schuler, 2004: 1). In an interview, Finger added: "TRIPS is about collecting across borders … [but] if you are a Senegalese musician [for instance,] and your problem is piracy within the local economy, then the TRIPS agreement has no relevance."[4]

While intellectual property rights are consequently often viewed as a Western construct, their origins can historically, with some irony, be traced back to the African continent. Gollin writes that the "roots of intellectual property may be

[2] World Trade Organization, Intellectual Property, Understanding the WTO: The Agreements: http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/agrm7_e.htm. (accessed 20th December 2015)
[3] World Trade Organization, WTO legal texts: http://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/legal_e.htm#TRIPs (accessed 20th December 2015)
[4] J. Michael Finger, interview by author, tape recording, Somerville, MA, November 28, 2011.

found in the difficult skill of keeping a secret — choosing not to communicate information. The ancient Egyptians' respect for trade secrets is clear from Stele C-14 of Irtisen, a hieroglyphic tablet from 2000 BCE on display in the Louvre museum" (Gollin, 2008: 26-7). In translation, Irtisen, who identifies himself as the chief scribe and artisan of Pharaoh Nebhepetra Mentuhotep of the Eleventh Egyptian Dynasty, "boasts about his extensive knowledge of hieroglyphics … ink making, magic, weights, sculpture …[and] vows that no one will know these secrets except for him and his eldest son, permission having been given from the divine Pharaoh…Stele C-14, although it relates to a 4,000-year-old political and religious order, has the elements of a modern employee confidentiality agreement … " (Ibid).

Like Gollin who notes that trademarks also existed in antiquity — "Egyptians branded cattle, Chinese marked their porcelain, and Romans used logos and brand names for stores, lamps, and other products" (ibid: 28). Scholars Christopher May and Susan K. Sell also argue that marking objects was perhaps the first practice of the differentiation and separating of goods, conditions of their designation as intellectual property: "Marks could indicate reliability and the reputation of the craftsman [or] maker as well as origin. Marking to establish ownership long precedes formalized laws to adjudicate disputes regarding ownership" (May and Sell, 2006: 44). Here is May and Sell in their chapter, 'Greek Ideas about Owning Ideas':

"Intellectual property did not emerge (in any form) in the Greek society of Simonides and other poets, but they seem to be the first "creatives" to become intellectual entrepreneurs in a sense that we might now recognize. Prior to the Greeks of sixth century B.C., patrons "kept" artists, poets, or singers, as well as intellectuals, who were expected to perform on demand. In the Greek city-states, direct support by patronage began to be supplemented by prizes for recitations in public as well as paid performances (similar to recitals)" (Ibid: 45).

As these above quotations indicate, IPRs are not actually an invention of advanced industrialisation, and thus will inevitably favour the most 'advanced' (or competitive) nations. There is something 'internal' to intellectual property that involves the identity of the producer, the place of production, the composition of the audience or market, and the distribution or performative iteration of the art. In recent times, these have all become indissolubly bound up with the commodification of property and the politics of that commodification process, but we need to remind ourselves of the 'intellectual' and not just 'property dimension of intellectual property, and thus the 'rights' of IPRs.

The Case for Intellectual Property: Harvesting Riches from Africa's Arts?

Africa is a continent of unimaginable proportions. At Harvard Law School on November 18th, 2011, Hauwa Abrahim opened her remarks on human rights by exemplifying the vastness of Africa.[5] The continent, she said, could swallow the landmass of the United States, Western Europe, China, and India, and still leave extra space. Parallel to its scope, the continent's culture is equally grand. One can marvel about its cultural influences such as its music, visual arts and dance that have penetrated the world, but a question arises: How much does Africa benefit, profit or earn from these natural endowments? Contributing to an event entitled 'Workshop on the Development of the Music Industry in Africa' (sponsored by the World Bank and the Policy Sciences Center in 2001), philosopher and Nobel economist, Amartya Sen, wrote:

"[T]he contributions of the music industry to Africa's development extends far beyond the direct contribution that the development of music makes to the living standards and the quality of life of the people. In the list of contributions, a prominent place must be given to the economic returns from well designed programmes of distribution at home and abroad, with adequate protection of rights and entitlements. I am impressed to see in the "briefing book" (*Developing the Music Industry in Africa*) how much attention has been given to the diverse aspects of the task of commercial and economic use of the opportunities offered by the music industry, combining safeguards and fairness with availability and access. This can not only be a significant revenue earner (especially for some of the economically marginalized people), but also the support that this will provide to musicians can be expected to play a constructive role in making the

[5] Unpublished.

industry and the practitioner's more secure and resourceful."[6]

While the global music industry has been dominated by Europe and the USA, the fastest growing music markets today are in the so-called developing countries. With modern technology, young countries can easily transmit their creative "raw materials," providing a fresh perspective on the global cultural stage. The greatest advantage is that the music is there, a natural bequest impossible to deplete, and needing no synthetic products to make it. African nations, however, are not gaining an adequate share from their indigenous creations, so that a self-sustaining economy of artistic production can compete with the West.[7]

However, one of the major obstacles that prevent the African continent from drawing adequate capital and earning rightful profits from the arts is, of course, piracy. According to Gerard Seligman, General Director of Womex[8] (and a World Bank Africa Music Workshop participant), nearly all African countries have piracy levels no less than 25 percent of gross production. In West Africa, where one of the leading cultural hubs of Africa are located, studies invariably suggest that piracy is at a huge 85 percent to 90 percent of production. Finger has said that in Senegal, contrary to the belief that consumers are the major pirates, once a recorded song became popular, the recording engineer (with the master tape) would often covertly reproduce and sell copies quite apart from the interests of the musicians.[9] Walking the streets in any city or even town across Africa, one will routinely notice the presence of street vendors selling items ranging from vegetables and jewellery to newspapers and apparel, but also CDs and other recording-based products. The item that most of them carry illegally are copied music and video discs. Moreover, it is commonly known that many if not most of these vendors are likely to have little knowledge their sales are not simply breaking the law, but involves a kind of theft from artists that has huge consequences – social, cultural and ethical.

Another central issue is that many African countries on the whole do not possess the kinds of strong legal and administrative mechanisms by which enforcement, the collect and distribution of royalties, can take place systematically. Finger explained what he saw in Senegal: the Senegalese musicians complained that radio stations do not pay them royalties. The radio stations said they do not pay royalties because the cultural ministry does not distribute them the money collected from taxes from users of radios and TVs. The cultural ministry said that it does not distribute the money because it does not get taxes from the taxation collection authorities.[10] In such a cycle, artists are inclined to accept short-term deals in which they "sign away their rights to the music" in exchange for small sums of money from producers.[11] In the West, of course, things are not at all pitch perfect either. But the opposite is generally true: in addition to signing an initial advance, an artist can be legally entitled to royalties on future sales of their works from all media sources, enforceable by law but also internal to the funding of production and the cycle of distribution and consumption and further production (Penna, Thormann and Finger, 2004). Piracy and the lack of efficient royalty collection mechanisms cause African nations not only to lose from individual payments and profits, taxable income, and the public funds that result, but lose substantial domestic and foreign investments, and lose the mechanisms to construct a self-sustaining economy. Moreover, it is not just the primary industries of recording, production and distribution, but secondary industries of marketing and communications media, ancillary manufacturing of materials and merchandise, artist's agents and specialist agencies (and other, what since Bourdieu have been called 'intermediaries') are lost or simply fail to develop.

[6] The World Bank, The Development Economics Research Group on International Trade, Workshop on the Development of the Music Industry in Africa, June 20-21, 2001.
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCEERD/Resources/CWI_music_industry_in_Africa_synopsis.pdf
(accessed 20th December, 2015)

[7] See Birgitte Andersen, Zeljka Kozul-Wright & Richard Kozul-Wright, 'Copyrights, Competition And Development: The Case Of The Music Industry', United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, January 2, 2000:
http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=2101&lang=1
(accessed 20th December, 2015)

[8] According to the UNESCO Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity, Womex is "[t]he most important international professional market of world music of every kind."
http://www.womex.com/realwomex/main.php?id_headings=65&id_realwomex=10
(accessed 20th December, 2015)

[9] J. Michael Finger, interview by the author.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Cited at the Workshop on the Development of the Music Industry in Africa (see note 6).

Taking into account these issues central to the development of the African music industry, it is evident that IPRs are central. If intellectual property rights can help to create a strong music industry in African nations, it is important to examine and critique models of IPR within the creative economies of the West. The World Bank Africa Music Workshop suggested a 'Nashville model' for Africa. Dubbed the 'Music City' Nashville, Tennessee, grew from an economically poor city four decades ago to a global music center, generating billions of dollars a year, but more importantly, generating a critical mass of artists and artistic innovation (Ibid: 97). Data from a 2006 study sponsored by Belmont University and Nashville's Chamber of Commerce, illustrated that the music industry's impact on Nashville's economy was as follows: [12]

Nashville's music production industry supports about 19,500 jobs directly, generating about US$722 million in labor income annually. A so-called 'ripple effect' continues to grow as music industry workers (for example graphic designers, lighting and sound technicians, marketing specialists) spend their income, creating an estimated 19,800 ancillary jobs. An additional 14,995 jobs are generated from sectors that 'piggyback' on music — these include music-related industries such as tourism and the restaurant and beverage industries. So in summary, the city's music industry generates about 54,000 viable jobs in Nashville, and this could be a conservative number: it is not only dated but also it does not include such areas as the 'informal' economy or visiting freelancers and arts education. After all, Nashville's music industry is an amalgamation of global corporations and local business that support independent artists.

The study reports that Nashville generated US$2.64 billion from the music industries' primary expenditures; the secondary expenditures were US$3.96 billion. The grand total of the direct and indirect impact of Nashville's music industry was US$6.38 billion. Using data from the Tennessee Department of Revenue, the study made the following observations: Nashville's core music business contributed over US$24 million in sales tax. The property taxes that filled the coffers of local governments totaled US$45.1 million; and accommodation taxes related to music-related tourism generated US$7 million. The study concluded that Nashville's music industry generated more than US$75 million in taxes in 2006.[13]

While I am not suggesting that the urban economy of US cities and its free market ideologies are universally valid or even adaptable to development contexts, we can learn much from the basic economic mechanisms of productivity itself -- the interconnections that cultural production generates between individual capabilities, rights, freedoms and opportunities, and the places within which, through which, and for which, this can incubate and develop. While empirically, Nashville's music industry has little relevance to Africa's developing economies, there are acute points of relevance. For example, Nashville and Kinshasa, (the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo), have one thing in common: a large proportions of their musical production is defined within and by global markets. Moreover, the evolution of music and artistic innovation in both places has taken place without economic micro-management or explicit cultural policies for music. Perhaps Adam Smith's invisible hand was at work here through the music itself – but there is good reason to see a linkage between a Nashville in America and a "Nashville" in Africa. After all, whatever the location, when there is a confluence of musicians, and economic conditions that enable the empowerment of the producer (in this case artists) an industry can begin a process of self-definition, differentiation, professionalisation and internal sub-cultural intensity that makes for both direct and indirect economic benefits to a given place.

The ever-mushrooming digital technologies may bring about changes in the music production scene as they increasingly penetrate Africa and elsewhere in the developing world. But when the majority of African music is produced in places like London and Paris, as has been the case, we should not be surprised if this generates jobs not in Africa but in

[12] Patrick Raines and LaTanya Brown, 'The Economic Impact of the Music Industry in the Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro [Metropolitan Statistical Area] MSA', Commissioned by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce; conducted by the College of Business Administration, Belmont University, January 2006
http://meiea.org/Journal/html_ver/Vol07_No01/2007_Vol_7_No_1_A1.htm
(accessed November 20, 2011-- original webpage *now expired).*

[13] Ibid. These serve, of course, as indicative only given their date.

the West (Finger and Schuler, 2004: 97). And it is in such places as London and Paris that young Africans may find and experience and learn from intense place-based musical sub-cultures as much as a viable industry. While surviving economically has never been easy for many artists (many often supplement their income by working multiple jobs) it is in such places that they are likely to develop in their competency, resources, and mobility.

The main advantage for America's Nashville, however, is that its industries are physically integrated – structurally in an economic sense, socially in an urban sense and mutually beneficial in a legal sense. David Sanjek, who was Director of Archives at Broadcast Music Inc. (BMI), discussed the Nashville experience at the World Bank Africa Music Workshop in 2001:

"One of the notable features of the music industry in Nashville is its physical integration. Recording studios, publishing companies and performance rights agencies are literally within eyeshot and in some cases virtually earshot of one another. This is a physically integrated landscape. BMI (Broadcast Music Inc) and ASCAP (The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) collect performance royalties from broadcasters, concert promoters and the like on behalf of composers and publishers: "…It is the existence of these other institutions, such as BMI, which are as important as the economic structures that allowed the cultural activity to flourish initially. It was these that make Nashville a global enterprise, and also to allow the creators to be rightfully compensated. If we are to help in creating a Nashville in Africa we must also help create a music industry infrastructure."[14]

The creation of an infrastructure of accessible production facilities and equitable distribution is a priority for development, and I have been indicating that such an infrastructure for music has a number of dimensions, of which IPRs are central. Regarding infrastructure in Africa, the Internet-based mechanisms of music distribution and collection of rights are within reach. At the Africa Music Workshop, IBM and the World Bank envisioned an electronic media management system that would be mounted on a truck serving as a roaming sound studio. The truck would travel across the continent, recording artists who want to record their music. The music would be copyrighted, uploaded to a satellite in South Africa, and then transmitted worldwide. Listeners around the world would pay for it via credit card or other online payment mechanisms, and the musicians would be credited. The Bank offered to come up with US$4 million for the truck, and South Africa, which had the technology, had agreed to work with other African nations. Nevertheless, the project never materialized, as the governments of the countries initially approached — Ghana, Mali, Senegal and Kenya — simply did not (for a range of reasons) want to cooperate in an international music distribution system.[15]

According to international development policy consultant Betsy J. Fowler, the crafts industry is traditionally the major source of income for many developing countries (Fowler, 2004). The industry represents an estimated US$30 billion in global markets. In some countries the production and sales of handcrafts contribute a considerable percentage to GDP. In Burkina Faso, for example, directly and indirectly crafts have been said to comprise up to nearly 20 percent of GDP, and in so doing employs over half the working population[16] and in Morocco, 10 percent. The industry's workers are mainly the rural poor who generally make most of the crafts (Ibid: 114). Besides monetary benefits, the crafts industry also helps to preserve indigenous arts and culture.

Burkina Faso, a major crafts hub in Africa, is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a population of around 17 million and a GDP of only between 10-13billion USD per annum.[17] Nevertheless, Burkina Faso's developing cultural niche has earned it a place on the international stage: it hosts the Festival Pan Africain du Cinéma et de la Télévision de Ouagadougou (Pan African

[14] Cited at the Workshop on the Development of the Music Industry in Africa (see note 6).

[15] Frank J. Penna, interview by author, tape recording, Medford, MA, November 29, 2011.

[16] The Burkina Faso Embassy in Canada reports that the "Burkinabe craftsmen contribute up to 20% of the gross domestic product." The October 1998 Periodic Report of Burkina Faso to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights reports that the crafts sector contributes 15% to the GNP. The Report also indicates that the crafts industry employs 54% of Burkina's population. http://www.univie.ac.at/bimtor/dateien/burkina_faso_acomhpr_2003_2nd_periodic_report.pdf
(accessed 20th December 2015)

[17] Figures vary. I am using an indicative average derived from a variety of sources for the last decade. For a current overview, see: http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/burkinafaso/overview
(accessed 25th March 2016)

Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou: FESPACO). This biannual film festival held in the capital, Ouagadougou, is the largest African film festival worldwide. Burkina Faso also biannually hosts one of the most important African handicraft fairs in the world, Le Salon International de l' Artisanat de Ouagadougou (International Arts and Crafts Fair, Ouagadougou: SIOA). With such rich cultural capital, the crafts sector has a strong presence in Burkina Faso's economy. A 2003 African human rights report notes:

"Industry and crafts are the most important economic sectors in Burkina Faso after agriculture and livestock farming. Although [the] industry is still in an embryonic phase, crafts constitute a thriving sector…Crafts, like agriculture, are a traditional activity in Burkina Faso. This sector contributes 15% of the Gross National Product and occupies 54% of the population. Various forms of crafts activities exist…artistic crafts, service crafts and production crafts."[18]

Moving up to North Africa, Morocco, like Burkina Faso, has a rich crafts industry that links the country's tourism, culture and economic sectors. The following are observations from the study 'Tourism, Culture and Development in the Arab Region', a part of UNESCO's World Decade for Cultural Development (1998 to 1997).[19]

In the early 1970s, Morocco's Ministry of Tourism estimated that 54 percent of tourists spent their daily expenditures on crafts. The direct and indirect spin-offs from the crafts industry comprised 8 percent of GNP and supported on average one in three urban households and one in ten rural households. Unlike Egypt, a North African "tourism superpower," Morocco does not have iconic attractions that match Egypt's great pyramids or Nile cruises. Nonetheless, Morocco's crafts "are one of the most effective means of tourist promotion. In particular, one thinks of the 400,000 to 500,000 Moroccan carpets that [have been routinely] exported worldwide straight into people's homes."[20] Also, tourism is promoted via Moroccan artisans who are often sought after to decorate mosques, palaces and other major sites around the world — the Morocco pavilion at Disney World in Orlando is one of such examples. Discussing the synergy between Morocco's tourism and crafts industry M. Mohamed Berriane concludes: "By making the most of the quality and diversity of the crafts industry, tourism is improving its brand image, while tourist demand for craft items energizes the craft industry."[21]

Like music piracy, the major problem facing the crafts industry is counterfeits. As Fowler notes, along with modern economic globalization, industrialized counterfeiting is proliferating. Artisans may be driven out of the industry all together, as they cannot compete with the mass reproductions and lower prices of machine-made handicrafts that mimic their designs.

The implementation and enforcement of intellectual property rights, one would surmise, could help curb the problem of counterfeits. However, the legal stipulations and jurisdictions of property rights are often shrouded in mystery in African countries. "Although standard legal mechanisms are in place to protect artisans in general, in most countries [in Africa and elsewhere] this protection is not sufficient to prevent counterfeiting of artisan crafts."[22] Ghana is one example. While a law aimed to register textile designs was passed in the 1960s, some celebrated designs like the Kente were purposely omitted "because of their communal nature".[23] Here, for example, we see that although Ghanaian artist Gilbert "Bobbo Ahiable's Kente weaving has garnered international attention, appearing in places like the Smithsonian and selling globally, Bobbo has no legal protection for his designs. When J.C. Penny reproduced his designs on bed sheets that ended up in American malls there was no legal mechanism to help Bobbo."[24] Frank J.

[18] African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Status on Submission of State Initial/Periodic Reports to the African Commission, 'Periodic Report of Burkina Faso to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights', October 1998 – December 2002, (July 2003).
http://www.univie.ac.at/bimtor/dateien/burkina_faso_acomhpr_2003_2nd_periodic_report.pdf
(accessed 15 March 2016)

[19] M. Mohamed Berriane, 'Tourism, Culture and Development in the Arab Region: Supporting Culture to Develop Tourism, Developing Tourism to Support Culture', UNESDOC, 1999.
http://www.unesco.org/ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?catno=118316&set=4ECE8200_2_351&gp=1&lin=1&ll=1].
(accessed 25 December 2015)

[20] Ibid: 22.
[21] Ibid: 24.
[22] Ibid: 113.
[23] Ibid: 126.
[24] Ibid: 126-7.

Penna added, "This is the new form of imperialism. … It is economic colonization."[25]

At the 1999 World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Roundtable on Intellectual Property and Traditional Knowledge, Ghanaian representative and Chief State Attorney Betty Mould-Iddrissu reported that copyright infringement in Africa stunted cultural creativity: "For a developing country [like Ghana] whose national identity and cultural roots are inextricably linked with its national economic development, [cultural piracy] may have far-reaching consequences" (Fowler, 2004: 127). These factors augment the need for intellectual property rights in Africa. But, upon examination of other factors, the question arises, are intellectual property rights adequate to the broader and more complex requirements of developing a self-sustaining economy?

The Case Against Intellectual Property

It is common knowledge how Africa's traditional, continent-wide and central values are embedded in an investment in community. Through communal ties, Africans generate their identity, sociability and social skills, learning and mobility, and the social capital that extends beyond sharing chores and food, but also to physical and intellectual assets. While ever evolving, Africa's legal and regulatory systems tend to address and favour the collective or group rather than the individual. For example, in many African communities a strong sense of communal land ownership prevails, and in addition to physical commodities, intangibles such as communal knowledge sharing are central to the economy of a given place; and they are valued and commonly practiced in a way that passes them down from generation to generation. In essence, community is integral to the social economy of African culture.

Arguments against strengthening or initiating intellectual property rights notes that its inherent individualisation of the concept of property will make it harder for people, especially the poor, to access knowledge. With Africa's immense challenges, the last thing any policy should do is to close access routes to knowledge. Legal scholar Irwin A. Olian, Jr.'s comment from 1974, still rings true today: "Of the many problems facing developing countries, none is more urgent than the need for wider dissemination of knowledge, for ultimately this will act to further the educational, cultural, and technical development of their people" (Olian, 1974: 88).

Some argue that for developing countries to catch up with new ideas, simply copying ideas and patents is a good way to jumpstart innovation. Some developed countries have undergone this phase. For example, while the United States today is criticizing developing countries for failing to enact stronger intellectual property rights enforcement, in the 19th-century the rapidly industrializing America was a bold intellectual property pirate.[26] Citing the book publishing industry, Steve Lohr, a New York Times reporter on technology, business and economics, asked America to look at its past in order to understand where developing countries are coming from. He makes an important observation (and I paraphrase): The works of English authors were copied and sold at low cost and price to an American public hungry for books, a situation that so irritated Mr. Dickens — whose *Christmas Carol* sold for only 6 cents a copy in America, versus $2.50 in England — that during his 1842 tour of the United States, he called for the national adoption of international copyright protection, deemed to be in the long-term interests of American authors and publishers as well as everyone else.[27] Yet these appeals were fruitless, until 1891. The United States possessed a thriving literary culture and book industry and decided it needed its own intellectual property protections. Congress duly passed a copyright act, extending IP protection to foreign works in return for similar protections for American authors overseas. The concern about trade treaties like TRIPS, Lohr notes, "is that it is too much of a one-size-fits-all approach that works to the detriment of developing nations."[28] Jeffrey D. Sachs, a noted development economist, agrees: "'It would be fine if we lived in a world of all rich

[25] Frank J. Penna, Phone conversation with author, Somerville, MA, November 30, 2011. Frank J. Penna was instrumental in implementing the World Bank's Africa Music Project.

[26] Steve Lohr, (2002) 'New Economy: The Intellectual Property Debate Takes a Page from 19th-century America', New York Times, October 14, 2002: http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/14/business/new-economy-intellectual-property-debate-takes-page-19th-century-america.html. (accessed 25 December 2015)

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

people. … The danger with TRIPS is that it will mostly hurt the developing countries' access to ideas.'"[29].

Exploitation in the arts and knowledge-based industries is rampant. So enacting strong intellectual property rights may not, as has been broadly cited, necessarily help the creator, but benefit the owner, who is often not the creator. Or enforcement may not help the poor, but benefit those with capital already. On the macro level today, it is no secret that rich countries benefit more from intellectual property rights than their poor counterparts. Under the discussions leading up to the TRIPS protections, most of which were anticipated to take effect in 2005, the USA, a supporter of stronger intellectual property protections, was projected to gain immensely compared to developing countries. Lohr points to the World Bank study that indicated that "American companies would pocket $19 billion" U.S. dollars while developing countries, including China, India and other importers of knowledge like African countries would, instead pay more for intellectual property.[30]

On a micro level one could easily see a situation in which industries that own rights would make money that the artists or creators would never see – where artistic production becomes a form of corporate administered industrial production (South Korea's music industry is an example). Artists themselves, even as members of professional associations, have very limited ability to structure the economy in which they work, or even to organise and collect royalties. This demands a form of corporate organisation, on the level of the State or commercial corporations; if the latter, then the emerging system of production, distribution and consumption, would damage the very people responsible for its emergence and whom it therefore ought to protect, even if that 'protection' is conceived purely on an economic level.

The Costs of Implementing Intellectual Property

In January 2011, after the worst of the global financial crisis, the World Bank reported that "[t]he strong growth of domestic demand in [developing countries] will continue to lead the world economy."[31] This surely generates some welcome scenarios, but by 2016 this hopeful forecast has not materialsed with such force as one would have hoped. Nonetheless, the majority of developing countries have remained in a virtual economic hibernation for decades. The conundrum is that most of these countries have tremendous physical and culture resources, but are plagued with chronic economic difficulties, and can only but scrape the funds to mine their resources at a subsistence level. The result is a dependency on foreign aid, or foreign direct investment tied to the mechanisms of foreign aid. Implementing the necessary legal and social conditions — such as strong intellectual property rights — for a developing infrastructure can rightly be seen as 'a die out of reach.' It is simply too costly for growing countries.

To be sure, a number of African countries have intellectual property laws. The African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) to date has 19 member states. These include Sudan and Zimbabwe, states that are accused of blatant human rights abuses. While intellectual property laws may be in place, enforcing them could be akin to lions fighting for prey on the African savanna. In the brutal battle, the one that can take the biggest piece wins. Piracy currently takes a big piece. It always wins in places where laws are weak. So for developing countries, the opportunity cost to enforce intellectual property may not be worth it, especially when their state coffers are normally in the red.

One of the ways to promote intellectual property is to educate both the inventors (creators) and consumers. But that, too, is expensive. In a developing country like Burkina Faso, teaching about intellectual property rights to the public would not be easy, even if it becomes a priority at all. A notable commission report 'Integrating Intellectual Property Rights and Development Policy', regarding the cost issue, published in 2002, is telling. I quote:

"Establishing the infrastructure of an [intellectual property rights] regime, and

[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 'Global Economic Prospects: Navigating Strong Currents', Vol. 2, January 2011. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1322593305595/8287139-1327345093457/GEP2011JanFullReport.pdf (accessed 25 December 2015)

mechanisms for the enforcement of [intellectual property] rights, is costly both to governments, and private stakeholders. In developing countries, where human and financial resources are scarce, and legal systems not well developed, the opportunity costs of operating the system effectively are high. Those costs include the costs of scrutinising the validity of claims to patent rights (both at the application stage and in the courts) and adjudicating upon actions for infringement. Considerable costs are generated by the inherent uncertainties of litigation. These costs too need to be weighed against the benefits arising from the system."[32]

Considering this picture, opponents of intellectual property rights argue that African countries may benefit more by using their resources elsewhere, than trying to fight a costly and seemingly perpetual battle. The arguments for and against intellectual property are sound from intellectual, ethical and religious perspectives, and in many African states, religion is an integral part of the culture and social order. One could argue that if people take seriously the commandment "Thou Shalt Not Steal," then piracy is blatant theft. On the other hand, the same religious orders promote sharing among themselves, and especially with the poor. So for those who need the knowledge or music, it seems entirely reasonable to share such goods (or rather services). The danger with this seemingly moral ethic of the common share is that there are significant actors who will abuse the equitable practice of sharing. Why do radio and TV stations, of which some are state-owned, abuse copyright laws? Why do wealthier producers and artists exploit poor artists?

On a 2005 trip to southern Africa in order to research 'music as social action', these two approaches — communal sharing and the respecting of property rights — was illustrated to me in vivid ways. Lindokuhle Mpungose, a music lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, asserted that to boost creativity, enthusiasm and a sense of pride, several more traditional of the music teachers had encouraged their students to make their own instruments.[33] Mpungose added, that unlike West Africa, South Africa is not known for a diverse drumming culture, and so instead of simply purchasing imported drums they started making their own, based on West African designs. Indeed, (in my presence at the music shop, Fields of Rhythm), Mpungose was completing a drum that he had modeled from a Nigerian traditional drum. And yet, what if it was prohibited for Mpungose to directly adapt (even to copy) ideas and designs from this Nigerian drum? What scenario would ensue if he understood that he would be acting outside of patent protection? He would either desist from the cultural production that became so much a part of this and many other educational practices, or that he would face legal infringement (and it would be unlikely that this kind of dissemination of knowledge would continue – and that the Nigerian knowledge of such benefit to his students, would be made redundant).

On the other end of the spectrum, some musicians in Cape Town, Durban, and Gabarone, whom I interviewed, were reluctant to talk to me precisely because they were tired of people from the West taking their knowledge and writing books or papers about their work, or reproducing their music and profiting from it. To their ire, they never hear from such people again. They said that they needed to be compensated fairly, hence, in one instance there was a significant charge for me to interview a traditional music virtuoso.

As one of Africa's major economies, South Africa has many social and economic institutions that are absent in other African states. The Southern African Music Rights Organization (SAMRO), which, we are told, serves over three million music creators worldwide, is one of them.[34] In an interview at SAMRO headquarters in Johannesburg, Mzilikazi Khumalu, one of South Africa's celebrated composers, a music professor, and SAMRO board member, commented on how SAMRO benefits South Africa's traditional music: the "traditional music sung by Ladysmith Black Mambazo is making lots of money; they sing

[32] Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, 'Integrating Intellectual Property Rights and Development Policy, Final Report', 2002. http://www.iprcommission.org/graphic/documents/final_report.htm. (accessed 25 December, 2015)

[33] Patrick Kabanda, 'Music as Social Action in Southern Africa', Unpublished Manuscript (2005) http://musikaba.net/projects/category/botswana-southafrica-swaziland/. (accessed 25 December 2015)

[34] SAMRO, company profile: http://www.samro.org.za/about-SAMRO/company-profile (accessed 25 December 2015)

beautifully and their music is accepted all over the world."[35] The impact that SAMRO has had on piracy in South Africa is unclear, but as Africa's leading rights organization it "ensures that composers' and authors' talents are adequately credited both locally and internationally for music usage."[36] SAMRO, which is affiliated with a number of rights organizations worldwide, reports that it collected the majority of its income from Europe and the least from Africa, but is committed to working with African countries. On celebrating its 50th anniversary, in 2012, SAMRO considered "pragmatic ways to become pro-actively involved in assisting fellow African societies in the development of Collective Administration [a central agency] in their countries so that, in turn, just dues for the use of our music on our continent may accrue to our members."[37]

It is impossible for African artists to fight the copyright battle without organization. The SAMRO example demonstrates the need for a collective force of representation. While it is true that some intellectual property rights discourage the sharing of ideas, as indicated, there is strong evidence that artists and some fields such as the African music industry need its mechanisms of protection. Africa has some rights organizations such as the Uganda Performing Rights Society, but few have the muscle that SAMRO has. Strong advocating organizations such as SAMRO could be useful across Africa — in East and Central Africa, West Africa, and North Africa. An effective intellectual property regime needs to be created to support artists, and the broader communities and nations within which they work – where the emphasis of the legal practice of IPR implementation is the protection of the creators and their artistic communities, and the cultivation of cultural production, not the systematic extraction of profit from an abstracted property form by a third party operator (like a foreign corporation).

On the Ground in East Africa

Growing up, as I did, learning classical and jazz music in Uganda in the 1980s, was difficult. The lack of music scores and recordings made it hard to access the knowledge required to develop any level of expertise or professional competency. Ultimately, my friends and I resorted to copying not one or two pages but complete music books and CDs. That, in such circumstances was, we judged at the time, the only way to learn. At our first performances in Tanzania and Kenya many attendees, including European diplomats, indeed wondered where we obtained our music education. Musicians, like myself, later received scholarships to study in the United States and Europe. We competed with some of the most talented musicians from around the world, whose beginnings in music education was far different than ours. However, the fact that Europeans and Asians learned 'legally', and we learned 'illegally', in time mattered little. We all found ourselves in the same situation.

Meanwhile, back home in Uganda talented musicians who had no access to music books and records, whether illegal or otherwise, simply could not improve on their artistic talents. Many of them simply became stuck; they had little or no access to educational resources. In this case, it is not hard to see how intellectual property rights can completely inhibit the very development of embryonic forms of cultural production or the next generation of producers. Pragmatically, in many situations facing developing countries, there is no alternative to the scenario that those who seek to learn from copied works should have the opportunity to do so. How does an African intellectual property framework accommodate this material and educational necessity?

Years later, as we began performing, composing and collaborating professionally with other musicians, it became apparent that we ourselves did not want our works to be copied illegally. Moreover, our artistic aim in performing and composing music was not only emotional satisfaction or aesthetic fulfillment, but

[35] Mzilikazi Khumalo, interview by author, tape and video recording, Johannesburg, South Africa, summer 2005
http://musikaba.net/projects/comments/music_as_social_action_in_southern_africa/
(accessed 25 December 2015)
[36] SAMRO, Purpose Statement:
http://www.samro.org.za/about-SAMRO
(accessed 25 December 2015)
[37] SAMRO, International Standing:
http://www.samro.org.za/about/intenationalstanding/
[Accessed November 27, 2011. Original page configuration has expired: see: http://www.samro.org.za. Accessed 25 December 2015]. See:
http://www.samro.org.za/sites/all/themes/corporateclean/images/newsletters/samroNotes/50thSpecialEdition/samroNotes-50thSpecialEdition.pdf
(accessed 25 December 2015)

professional life with consistent remuneration. We realized that our income would disappear if our works were widely pirated. As stated earlier, even state-owned radio and televisions abuse copyright laws, particularly those running commercial programs.

The Uganda Performing Rights Society has formally requested that the Ugandan government help enforce copyrights. Licensing all users, the Society argues, will expose infringers and directly increasing the revenue of the artists. James Walusa, Secretary-General of the Society, described the benefits of government involvement: "If the government can work with us to enforce copyright and other relevant laws, music will be among the top 20 taxpayers in the country."[38]

In 2009, the Society collected 16 million Uganda shillings (about US$7,804) in fees. Nearly 300 copyright owners shared that sum. However, only 11 radio stations out of the 200 broadcasters paid copyright fees. That figure could dramatically multiply if broadcasters complied with the copyright law. For Moses Matovu, the Society's chairman and founding member of Afrigo Band: "If the government supports us, we can collect over Ush3 billion (US$1.4 million) annually." [39]

The Uganda experience also shows that intellectual property rights involve complex cross-sections of social, public, economic and governmental interests and are too important to be ignored, and given their lack of relative political power, not left to artists. In attempting to identify where the laws should allow 'copying', especially for educational purposes, yet still to penalize theft or individual profiteering, strong legal and public policy mechanisms need to be in place. The failure of governments and NGOs to assist the arts, creative and cultural industries, is in part because the economic benefits accrued to individuals and communities are not easily quantifiable. As we see even from the Nashville 'model', economic benefits are not abstract from the social and cultural life of a place, and a self-sustaining economy that emerges within that particular place.

Regarding foreign direct investment, it can be argued that lax intellectual property laws can entice foreign investors; yet it can also be argued that the lack of laws and public policy can hinder foreign investment. Either way, many African entrepreneurs are jumping on opportunities the African arts industry can provide. Anyone who has seen "Osofia in London" a Nigerian comedy, cannot help but marvel about Nigeria's booming movie industry, Nollywood. While Nollywood has benefited from modern digital technology, besides piracy, it faces numerous hurdles. "In Nollywood we don't count the walls. We learn how to climb them"[40] said Bond Emeruwa, a Nigeria film producer. Despite functioning on shoestring budgets — the average cost is about US$15,000 per movie — Nollywood is the second largest movie industry in the world in terms of output.[41] In addition to slim budgets, "Electricity goes out. Street thugs demand extortion money. The lead actor doesn't show. During one crucial scene, prayers blast from loudspeakers atop a nearby mosque."[42] These obstacles, however, have not deterred Nigerian entrepreneurs from investing in an industry that produces from 500 to 1000 movies a year — the average time for producing a movie is 10 days. Each week, on average, the industry sells 50,000 copies at about US$2. Nollywood generates about US$250 million per year and employs thousands of people.[43]

The commercial benefits of Nollywood are evident, but Nollywood's contribution to African culture is not so easily quantifiable. African movie consumers from Accra to Harare, and London to New York, are loyal patrons. In Nollywood Africans see something that Hollywood and Bollywood cannot match: the presence of their own experiences in the plots. These are movies of Africans, by Africans, for Africans. Nollywood producers argue that their work helps to educate Africans about social issues. The documentary film,

[38] Bamuturaki Musingizi, 'No Royalty in Music Industry', The East African, June 14, 2010:
http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/magazine/No+royalty+in+music+industry/-/434746/937536/-/mo1h4k/-/index.html.
(accessed 25 December 2015)

[39] Ibid

[40] 'This Is Nollywood': http://www.thisisnollywood.com/film.htm.
(accessed 25 December 2015)

[41] UNESCO, Culture, Creativity, News, Nollywood Rivals Bollywood in Film/Video Production, May 5, 2009:
http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30707#.Vxt2i5MrJ2Q. (accessed 25 December 2015).

[42] 'This Is Nollywood'

[43] 'This Is Nollywood'. A more recent indication of figures are to be found here:
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/11/insider/how-the-times-named-nollywood.html?_r=0
(Accessed March 2016)

This Is Nollywood, sums up that philosophy: "Many of the films deal with AIDS, corruption, women's rights, and other topics of concern to ordinary Africans. The impetus behind Nollywood is not purely commercial; the traditional role of storytelling is still alive and well — just different."[44]

Though Nollywood is standing strong, piracy is biting its back. CNN reports that "Nollywood insiders estimate that up to 50 percent of the industry's profits are currently being lost to Nigeria's endemic piracy and corruption problems" -- one insider, Emmanuel Isikaku, a Nollywood producer told CNN that "Piracy has dealt a big blow to the industry."[45] His 2007 film, *Plane Crash*, was popular, but he claims that he lost so much money, that he failed to breakeven. "A lot of people watched the film," Isikaku said, "but unfortunately they watched pirated copies."[46]

Industries like Nollywood might internally corrode, or incubate sub-cultures of piracy and corruption unless the greater good they can do, both economically and socially, is strengthened, and this can be done through intellectual property laws. However 'unAfrican' it may sound, the creative industries need to be empowered economically through the support of legal and policy instruments, not only rendering artists their rightful royalties, but giving the industry a means to police itself, protect itself and develop a sphere of free and honest association.

This will be crucial in cultivating aspects of Africa's creative economy that remain weak. Africa's culture of reading and writing is slight. Even more striking, most of the books about Africa for sale in Africa are not written by Africans. Part of the reason, is that there is virtually no market for books in Africa, and writers are not encouraged with any form if institutional or state support to write, as once a book hits the market it is susceptible to massive copyright abuses. The lack of immediate market value, raises the question of value per se. In Kenya, for example, Ashley Lime in 2011 reported that the country loses about 2 billion shillings (US$22 million) per year in book piracy.[47] The issue is therefore not simply a matter of making revenues, but protecting realms of culture from impoverishment; and many realms of culture are intrinsic to the civil well-being and general order of society.

While folk tales, ideas and stories in Africa have been passed on orally from generation to generation, epidemics like AIDS are challenging that tradition; people are dying young, taking their knowledge with them. It is not difficult to see a pressing need for African people to write, and generate personal histories and accounts of life and society, and stories that explore a range of ideas — political, scientific, social, and personal. IPR legislation and enforcement can be a framework through which cultural production can increase; a new generation of African writers would not simply contribute to a vulnerable publishing industry, but provide an intellectual stimulus and literary substance for the emergence of cultural and civic institutions across Africa.

Conclusion

While this article has been arguing for the need for an intellectual property framework across Africa, is has also offered examples of context. Africa is place-sensitive and context-specific, in the sense that abstract legal systems along cannot be expected to generate uniform and predictable social and economic outcomes. Any IPR regime needs to be implemented by way of negotiation with its context of implementation, and the dynamics of the creative economy it seeks to structure, regulate, protect and cultivate. And, how indeed should rights be (or not be) enforced, given other patterns of law enforcement prevalent in Africa? As asserted above, there is and should not take place a superimposition of a Western individualised model of IPR on Africa. There should be no illusion of a one-size-fits-all law or regulation, which seems to have the appearance of consistence and therefore equity. I have indicated how arguments for and against IPRs can both provide useful insights into the complex socio-cultural landscape of Africa. The often heard

[44] Ibid.
[45] Mairi Mackay, 'Nollywood Loses Half of Film Profits to Piracy, Say Producers', CNN, June 24, 2009: http://edition.cnn.com/2009/SHOWBIZ/Movies/06/24/nollywood.piracy/ (accessed 25 December 2015)
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ashley Lime, 'Sh 2bn Lost to Book Piracy Every Year', *Daily Nation* / In2 East Africa, July 18, 2011: http://in2eastafrica.net/sh2bn-lost-to-book-piracy-every-year/. (now expired).

perspectives that intellectual property is a Western tool being adopted in Africa to its detriment, or that the concept of intellectual property simply has no relevance in Africa because of its communical social systems, both miss critical issues.

The legitimacy and illegitimacy of intellectual property rights need to be assessed critically in terms of how they both adapt to local realities, cultivate cultural production by empowering producers, and protect exchange mechanisms enabling a self-sustaining economy to emerge. The historical roots of intellectual property ownership – through differentiation or guarding valuable secrets – as I indicated with ancient Egypt, demonstrates that intellectual property is an historically evolving set of distinctions emerging out of the requirements of production itself. It is not simply a machination of advanced Western economies, keen to commodify uncolonised cultures and generate new markets. The African continent has its own histories or practices of intellectual property, perhaps difficult to detect given its strong investment in the communal and shared ownership, or at least shared access. These observations I deem important for debates on whether intellectual property is a Western instrument whose application in Africa can only be exploitative — something also said of other legal frameworks deemed foreign. Yet the lack of the rule of law in Africa is omnipresent in areas that must convince that law is necessary and must be adapted — in commerce, in landownership, and in the judicial system itself. What is at stake in the implementation of intellectual property is the rule of law itself, but this rule must be defined and implemented in ways that are productive not prohibitive and empowering not repressive. It is required not only to secure for artists an economic agency but cities and regional economies a means of consistent and systematic growth. African nations — lawmakers, government and business leaders, religious and arts organizations – will only see this if they work together to generate a nuanced and place-sensitive legal regime. It cannot simply be imposed, as an already prefabricated system of law, by the State downwards. It must be defined through dialogue and negotiation – by all agencies involved.

To achieve what Penna calls the "economic justice of intellectual property", African artists, creators and consumers therefore need to be educated about the rights and nature of benefitting artistic creation and consistent cultural production. In Senegal for example, as Finger and Penna observed, many musicians were unaware about the potential for protecting their intellectual property; many had never heard of copyright or a trademark.[48] Even if laws are enacted, if they are not enforced, and the artists are ignorant of them, it is difficult to break the cycle of "Big Fish Eat Little Fish."[49] Even the benefit-sharing schemes, which Penna describes as akin to Fair Trade, are impossible to streamline. As broadly acknowledged, public opinion influences public policy. How could artists influence public policy if they cannot articulate the very subject in their interest?

Governments and arts organizations need to introduce preliminary education mechanisms, and thus empower people at grassroots level. This empowerment could in turn help the public educate government officials not just about the benefits of intellectual property rights but the forms of social conduct by which those benefits are sustained. This can help avert disasters like what occurred in the 1950s, in Ghana, for example, where a thriving music industry was effectively destroyed by taxation. The government imposed a tax on the use of traditional music as a way of enforcing intellectual property rights, with the impact that many local musicians were simply driven out of business. Ghana's music industry was almost wiped out.[50]

Governments are responsible for educating their citizens, but riddled with other priorities, and corruption, it is often not in their interests. This is where engaging non-state actors is crucial. NGOs, such as economic development foundations, local and international charitable and arts groups, as well as religious organizations, must play a role in the preliminary task of education that must be prior to developing intellectual property rights for African artists and their respective industries.

In Senegal, Finger and Penna report that the Ford Foundation sponsored training program for musicians, involved education on the basics of intellectual property. The program drafted contract

[48] J. Michael Finger and Frank J. Penna, interview by the author (see notes 4 and 15).
[49] The term depicts the exploitation of poor musicians by their rich counterparts; see *Poor People's Knowledge*: 102.
[50] J. Michael Finger, interview by the author (see note 4).

templates and taught musicians negotiation skills, and how to write a basic contract. These were basic skills, but such knowledge can make a difference. The musicians became better equipped to effectively negotiate with private entities, the collections agency, and the ministry of culture. As Finger points out, many foundations want to work on "big news" items and tend to neglect nuts and bolts projects such as this Ford Foundation initiative.[51] The Ford Foundation's involvement in Senegal, however, shows that NGOs can play a significant role in training and promoting intellectual property laws.

Africa has many religious groups and organizations. Places of worship, which provide opportunities to showcase musical talent, could also work to promote and educate their performers. Also, a number of African schools are affiliated with religious institutions, and these schools could also train their young musicians and artists, not only in the arts but also in artists' property rights. Religious groups can also promote the moral implications of intellectual property rights.

In today's digital era, strong leadership to promote copyright enforcement in Africa is crucial today more than ever before. As Penna notes, intellectual property law connects politics, economics and culture. Penna, who worked with lawyers[52] to improve Senegal's local copyright code, helpfully identifies the conditions required for developing an intellectual property regime: (i) identifying markets for products, (ii) recalibrating the regulatory mechanisms and local intellectual property laws, (iii) investment capital for businesses, and (iv) engaging non-profit organizations such as musicians' associations.[53] But none of those factors would work effectively without effective leadership, given the complexity, diversity of spaces and places of implementation, and the tendency to communal and collective values. In fact, while the role of aid agencies and NGOs is important, a coordinated effort by governments, multilateral organisations and the private sector is badly needed.

With respect to the Africa Music Project, as Finger and Penna point out, there was considerable improvement in the enforcement of copyright law, at least in Senegal. The extent to which that spread to other countries is unknown. Nonetheless, in Senegal the improvement was notable particularly in the efficiency of the collection agency and supervision by the Ministry of Culture. This was partly because Senegal's Minister of Finance Makhtar Diop (now Vice President for Africa at the World Bank) took a strong interest in the project. His input was politically and juridically important. When Abdoul Aziz Dieng, president of the Senegal Music Works Association, suggested improvements, the Finance Minister (a musician himself) insisted that the government pay attention to this group and their economic contributions. The combined leadership from top to the bottom contributed to Senegal's overall copyright enforcement.[54]

In 2000, back in Washington, D.C., for the first time in the history of the World Bank an African Music project was launched. This was partly because the Bank's president at the time, James D. Wolfensohn (an accomplished cellist) created "political space" for Penna. Penna was able to orchestrate his work on the music project, cutting through intricate policies at the Bank and in African governments.[55] With leadership from Wolfensohn who, like Amartya Sen, believes that cultural contributions to development go beyond industrial benefits, even an African music project was considered. These examples from Dakar and D.C. illustrate how leadership and commitment from the top and the bottom is vital.

Africa's future intellectual property regime is impossible to envisage, and could be cumbersome to develop and enforce. The continent, however, has potential to generate huge leaps in cultural production, and reap immense rewards from the arts and creative industries if intellectual property rights so provide carefully calibrated set of protections and enablements. The challenge is to emancipate what lives within Africa's creative capital. Burkina Faso, one of the most important cultural centers in Africa means "the land of upright (or honest) people." Maybe all of Africa can be seen as Burkina Faso. As "the land of

[51] J. Michael Finger and Frank J. Penna, interview by the author (see notes 4 and 15).
[52] The lawyers were affiliated with the Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Social Law, now called the Max Planck Institute for Social Law and Social Policy.
[53] Frank J. Penna, interview by the author (see note 15).
[54] J. Michael Finger and Frank J. Penna, interview by the author (see notes 4 and 15).
[55] Frank J. Penna, interview by the author (see note 15).

upright people," Africa can honor the rule of law, yet must find its own way in doing so. Intellectual property rights can be a powerful framework for understanding the complex, place-based, interrelations between cultural production, distribution, markets and the geo-politics of trade that impacts artists, cultural enterprises and culturally-engaged development organisations at every level.

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SLAM: the Music City and Cultural Activism

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ABSTRACT

As recording and related publishing revenues have declined, live performance has assumed increasing importance within the popular music industries. Global competition for the status of 'live music capital' has increased as cities recognise the various cultural and economic benefits, including tourism and heritage opportunities. In 2010, licensing changes to many music venues in Melbourne, Victoria, threatened the city's self-proclaimed status as Australia's 'music city', with collateral damage to its wider claim as the nation's 'cultural capital'. This article examines the subsequent protest by the city's musicians against government labelling of music venues as 'high risk' sites of alcohol-fuelled violence. The SLAM (Save Live Australian Music) rally to State parliament on 23 February, 2010 provoked wider industrial and legislative change. Beyond its affirmation of the cultural and social importance of the local music venue, the protest is interesting in successfully challenging dominant law and order discourses relating to local music subcultures. The article also examines the ways in which the SLAM event provoked more informed engagement by the state in popular music.

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Introduction

Popular music studies scholars have contributed a strong body of work in the last few decades, which examine the relationships between popular music and politics. Much of the earlier work in this new field was preoccupied with the role of music in wider political movements, and, more explicitly, within specific protests (Denisoff, 1972; Denselow, 1989; Garofalo, 1997). Since the 1980s, 'politics and music' research has examined other instances and contexts. This has encompassed the role of politics in forms of censorship and related debates (e.g. Cloonan and Garofalo, 2002), how the state deals with what it deems to be "unpopular" music (Redhead 1995), or the particular discourses at play in decisions about what music activities are funded by the state (e.g. Shuker, 1998; Stanbridge, 2007). Equally, attention is now being paid to city policies and the urban contexts of the music industries, particularly live performance (Chevigny, 1991; Shank, 1994; Homan, 2003; Cohen, 2007).

Such work has, of course, been complicated by understandings of popular music as a key site of identity-formation and politics (Frith, 1996; Grossberg, 1992), and as expressions and formations of communities (e.g. Mattern, 1998; Marcus, 1997). This requires further delineation between music's role as *communication* (as expressive forms and messages), and its industrial roles as part of *cultural policy*. In terms of communication, Mattern (1998: 25-32) identifies three modes of political action relating to music communities: *deliberative* (internal forms of debate around shared interests and actions); *pragmatic* (promotion of shared interests in goals of increased awareness); and *confrontational* (uses of music in resistance or opposition). While these modes are useful categories, they remain limited to music's textual functions as message, where it primarily "serves to communicate or convey what the political context requires" (Street, Hague and Sevigny, 2007: 6).

In contrast to the performance of popular music as texts within political and social contexts, this article examines the "performance of participation" (Ibid: 15) by musicians and other interested music industry workers in *contesting policies governing local music venues*. In this case study, both instances of pragmatic and confrontational action are apparent in the formation of a music community opposed to their state government. While this is much more of a case of "the politics of music" rather than the "music of politics" (Street, 2012: 8), it nonetheless invoked a series of political rights from participants (state and industry) in relation to live music venues. In this sense it is in keeping

Figure 1: *Save Live Australian Music rally*, Melbourne, 23 February, 2010. Photograph courtesy of Quincy McLean and Helen Marcou (SLAM. org)

Figure 2: *Save Live Australian Music rally*, Melbourne, 23 February, 2010. Photograph courtesy of Quincy McLean and Helen Marcou (SLAM. org)

with Street's assertion that music and politics are "not to be seen as separate entities whose worlds collide only occasionally, but rather are extensions of each other … music *embodies* political values and experiences, and *organizes* our response to society as political thought and action" (2012: 1). Within the contested terrain of state cultural policy, what is at stake is the assertion of cultural power and its consequences.

The state, then, remains an important actor in not only constructing policies that inhibit or enhance activity, but in the setting of discursive frameworks that shape debates and outcomes (Homan, Cloonan and Cattermole, 2015). I am equally interested here in the construction of the *cultural citizen* (Miller and Yiduce, 2002; Miller, 2006) and the extent to which musicians and related industry sectors become engaged with music/cultural policy. The case study that animates this paper is also useful for the ways in which the initial forms of protest reached out to other constituencies, and engaged broader issues and meanings of music and culture.

Popular music, politics and culture: Australian contexts

Arts and cultural policy has never played a prominent role in daily Australian political life, and this has been reflected in various ways. Firstly, the Arts ministerial portfolio, at both federal and state government levels, is usually attached to other responsibilities, including communications, regional development and the like.[1] Secondly, the cultural policies of the two dominant political parties (the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal Party of Australia) barely feature in election campaigns.[2] In the 2013 federal election, the Liberal-National Party Coalition – the incoming government – did not produce an arts policy at all, instead believing that a few newspaper interviews and a public speech would suffice. Thirdly, the rare instances of fully developed cultural policies, have failed

[1] Australia has a tripartite system of government, with local councils, state governments and a national federal government. 'Arts' ministries exist at the state and federal levels (in contrast to 'Culture' ministries evident in Europe).
[2] 'Labor' is a spelling anomaly in the context of the Australian Labor Party, where the British use of 'Labour' is not used.

politically. *Creative Nation* (1994) and *Creative Australia* (2013) both died with their respective Labour governments.

While cultural policy debates usually remain on the fringes of mainstream political debate the world over, the arrival of the conservative federal government in 2013 (under Tony Abbott) has provoked eruptions from the arts and cultural sector. In 2014, nine artists boycotted the Biennale of Sydney in 2014 to highlight that its major sponsor Transfield was a company that was also involved in the operation of the Australian migrant detention centres on Nauru and Manus Islands (Taylor and Gruber, 2014). In response, new Arts Minister George Brandis requested that the national arts funding body, the Australia Council, draft a policy that denied state funding to arts organisations who refused private sponsorships (Cox, 2014). In 2015, Arts Minister Brandis diverted $104.7m from the Australia Council to establish the National Programme for Excellence in the Arts (NPEA). This decision has unified much of the arts and cultural sector in protests, with criticism based on several factors: the establishment of a program that will duplicate existing Australia Council funding structures; evaluation structures to be determined by the Minister's office; and the rhetorical deployment of 'excellence' to justify additional support to the already considerable funding of the high arts sector, driven by the Minister's funding preferences (Mendelssohn, 2015; Letts, 2015; Eltham and Verhoeven, 2015).

For the popular music industries, growing disquiet at classical and art music gaining the majority of arts funding at state and federal government levels was further fuelled by the restoration of $275,000 to Melba Recordings (ABC Radio 2014), a classical music company who had previously received funding outside the purview of the Australia Council through Ministerial directives (Eltham, 2012).

The funding contexts outlined above are important in noting the 'proper' place for popular music in Australia, viewed as a series of commercial enterprises, and so not deemed worthy of greater state support, or part of the 'market failure' arguments mounted by the classical music and opera sectors. Live music, then, has assumed greater significance to musicians and their peak representative bodies in terms of livelihoods, state structures and meanings of cultural nationalism. Apart from increased support for export music schemes (the Sounds Australia program), the establishment of a national Live Music Office is the most notable evidence of federal government support for popular music in the last decade. This is in keeping with Australian capital cities – particularly Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane – investing greater funding and regulatory resources to live music ecosystems, as part of intrastate competition to brand themselves 'music cities'. Thus, despite calls for Australian rock, pop and hip hop musicians to engage more deeply in "complaint rock" (see Giuffre, 2008), political activism is most often engaged through industrial structures, rather than broader causes and movements.

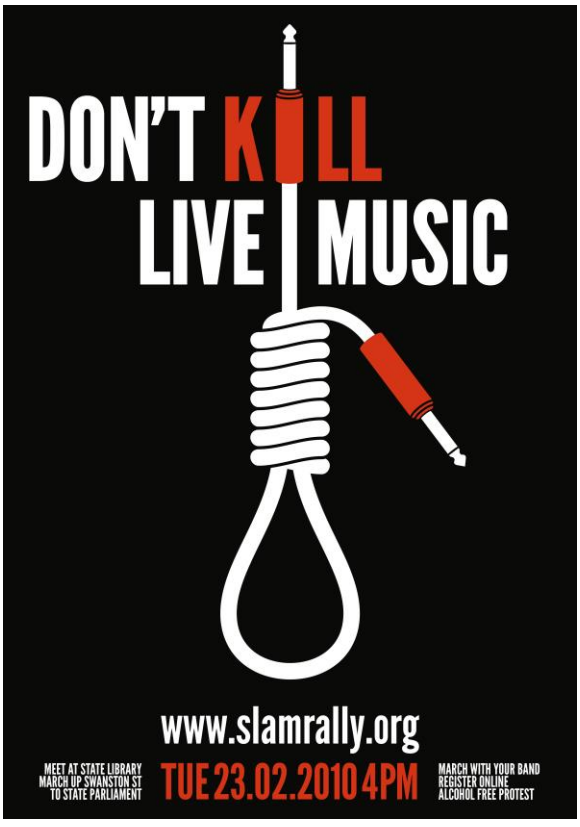

Figure 3 *Save Live Australian Music rally*, Melbourne, 23 February, 2010. Photograph courtesy of Quincy McLean and Helen Marcou (SLAM. org)

Indeed, the case study here is one that combined the threat to very localised industry structures – live music circuits – with calls for a state government to properly recognise and fund popular music for a range of cultural, social and economic reasons. The SLAM (Save Live Australian Music) rally in February 2010 has been described as the largest cultural protest in Australian history (Levin, 2011); yet it is useful to assess not simply for the size and depth of feeling, but, to return to Mattern, the "pragmatic" and "confrontational" modes of activism at work. In this case, the live music sector in Victoria is an interesting example in the mix of interactions between a state government, the professional music lobbyists, musicians, fans and the media.

SLAM (Save Live Australian Music)

Australian live performance continues to be a significant sector of its popular music industries. In 2014, live performances contributed $1.51b to the Australian economy (Live Performance Australia 2015). For Melbourne (and the wider southern State of Victoria), its live music venues remains an important part of its claims to 'cultural capital' status, with an estimated 550 venues. It has provided an industrial base for local and national music economies; and foundational sites for micro-communities and scenes, with a range of aesthetic, political and social experiences valued by musicians and fans. Beyond its tourism potential as a marker of inter-city difference, Melbourne venues have played their part in the city's distinct sense of its cultural identity:

> It is important to remember that musical Melbourne has evolved neither by design nor from one particular set of circumstances but by a combination of fortitude, generosity, creativity and continuity. But it is not just the music that makes Melbourne special: the invisible support system that enables it to happen is just as essential to its being (*The Age* editorial, 7 July, 2007).

The "invisible" support system – and Melbourne's reputation for diverse live music scenes – was threatened by a series of events in late 2009 and early 2010. Several venues were told that licensing conditions were to change (this was preceded by attempts by the State government to introduce a 2 a.m. lockout for all entertainment venues across the CBD). For the first time, the presence of live music seemed to be a catalyst for the Director of Licensing to instigate compliance changes. Many venues were deemed 'high risk' because of the presence of music, and thus required to hire 'crowd controllers' (security guards) at a ratio of two for the first 100 patrons, with one additional controller for every further 100 patrons, in addition to the installation of CCTV cameras.

This was asked of all music venues operating beyond 1 a.m. The effects were particularly felt by owners/managers of small venues who hired musicians once or twice a week, and with small audience capacities. For example, the Railway Hotel in North Fitzroy, six kilometres north of the Central Business District, hired blues, jazz or Irish music bands on Friday nights and Sunday afternoons, who share the small central lounge with its audiences of 20 to 40 people. The hotel was asked to comply with the new security provisions:

> Our crowd were mostly regulars, people who had been turning up week after week, year after year, to eat, drink, talk and dance. It was a wonderful atmosphere. Most of the customers were aged between forty and seventy-odd (our drummer, by the way, is seventy three, and has been playing in bands since 1957). The pub played no canned music during the band breaks; all you could hear was the sound of talk, laughter, eating and drinking … Well, our 'welcome back Aubrey' night turned into our 'farewell Brunwsick Blues Shooters' night. [Pub owner] Peter [Negrelli] had had the inspectors in, and with no security staff on, he was given a hefty fine, and our cosy little gig came to an end. (musician Rick Dempster, SLAM 2015).

Querying the need for two crowd controllers for a small pub with established entertainment and audiences of an average age of 50-60 years, lobby group Fair Go 4 Live Music was initially informed by the Licensing Director that the Railway Hotel had been the basis of various noise complaint.[3] This explanation caused unrest -- in acting upon a venue without providing a proper or true assessment of the scale of its entertainment, the nature of the music performed or the behaviour of its audiences. To many musicians, this seemed the reverse of usual government emphases, in the construction of 'policy-based evidence'. More importantly, the government was explicitly linking noise complaints to issues of patron and licensee behaviour. Further, the Tote hotel, a famous venue that had hosted 'indie' bands for the last 25 years, was also subjected to the new compliance orders (although its story is more complex, given the mix of financial, legal and police narratives related to the venue and its owner, Bruce Milne). Yet the Tote's battles to stay open after 1 a.m. served to galvanise Melbourne's rock communities, with a rally outside the pub on 17 January 2010 gaining front page attention from several state and national newspapers.

SLAM and Fair Go 4 Live Music also challenged the State government's evidence that venues were a source of public order and alcohol-related violence. The government's *Liquor Control Reform Regulations: Regulatory Impact Statement* (Department of Justice, 2009) argued that there was insufficient data to firmly conclude that live music was a high risk factor in venue anti-social behaviour. At the same time, a spokeswoman for the Director of Liquor Licensing, Sue McLellan, argued that live music:

> …can cause problems for local residents in terms of the impact on local amenity … [staff are unable to hear] verbal cues of intoxication and aggression … and more crowded areas of a venue, or queues outside a venue, which also increases the risk of anti-social behaviour and violence (spokeswoman Sam Parkinson cited in Hall, 2010: 11).

A further issue here was the lack of detailed research into different forms of venues, audiences, locations, trading hours and music genres. While the Central Business District continued to experience weekend policing problems with the larger nightclub venues and strip clubs, the small music pub or bar did not register as a first-order behavioural problem: "most venues [I] work with were well managed and co-operative … the majority of licensees are quite actively seeking to improve the overall perceptions surrounding the city" (regional licensing unit's Senior Sergeant Michelle Young cited in Cooke, 2010). Feelings within live music scenes can be summarized by one Australian cultural commentator who argued that "If the government can't spot the difference between the Tote and a King Street nightclub, perhaps people will let them know at the polls" (Westbury, 2010: 15).

Beyond the re-activation of Fair Go 4 Live Music, the owners of Bakehouse Recording Studio, Quincy McLean and Helen Marcou, formed SLAM (Save Live Australian Music). Both groups met almost weekly at the Railway Hotel throughout 2010 and into 2011.[4] The combined group then worked on various related issues: to ascertain the number of venues who had experienced changed conditions to their licences in relation to live performance; to explore the rationale behind the State government's links between venues and 'alcohol-fuelled violence'; and to begin to formally engage the government in discussions about the licensing changes on the live music sector. Meetings were held with the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Tony Robinson, as the State government became increasingly concerned with the media coverage of the 'high risk' venue issue, particularly in an election year.

Despite the ongoing negotiations for a proposed Live Music Accord, SLAM devised a march by the local music industries to State parliament for 23 February 2010. This visible protest at the lack of government action to

[3] FairGo4Live Music is a group of musicians, venue owners, music industry workers, academics, lawyers and managers formed by venue owner Jon Perring in the early 2000s.

[4] The author attended most meetings and was involved in the groups' strategies.

withdraw the onerous licensing conditions provided the central narrative of the campaign. On 23 February, 2010 shoppers and café patrons in Swanston Street in Melbourne's Central Business District were confronted by the sight of an estimated 20,000 musicians, fans, publicans, school children, parents and music industry workers marching to State parliament to protest the branding of music venues as part of the city's problems relating to alcohol consumption and law and order. While a Live Music Accord was signed between representative groups and the State government on the day before the march, the SLAM rally served its purpose in ensuring the issues remained prominent in the media (the State Premier John Brumby had argued that the march was a "celebration of Melbourne music" in a transparent attempt to dilute the political contexts of the event).

The march to parliament was a successful combination of street theatre and political intent. The carnival atmosphere was underpinned by a band of famous musicians on a flatbed truck performing AC/DC's 'Long Way to the Top (If You Wanna Rock and Roll)', with a procession of well known Victorian and Australian musicians delivering short speeches in front of parliament at the end of the march. On 7 April 2010, SLAM, Fair Go 4 Live Music and Music Victoria presented a petition to the Legislative Council of Victoria calling for the 'high risk' conditions to be uncoupled from venues.

The Live Music Accord had several components, including promises to undertake music industries research and the formation of an industries policy as part of a broader reconstructed State cultural policy; and the formation of Music Victoria, a taxpayer funded advisory body. But it contained the crucial government concession that music venues were not the primary cause of alcohol-fuelled violence.[5] The government also undertook to remove related onerous conditions placed on affected venues – although rather than a blanket removal, it was contingent on the venues to submit the state paperwork required.[6] In addition, the Director of Licensing had been removed and replaced with Mark Brennan, a former Commissioner of Small Business who was viewed to be more amenable to viewing venues as primarily small businesses. 18 months later, on 9 August 2011, the new conservative Premier of Victoria, Ted Baillieu, launched a live venue study at the Tote hotel, which had also re-opened under new management. In December 2011, the cultural role of live music venues was noted and inserted as one of the 'Objectives' within the State's Liquor Act.

Further reform

The success of the rally prompted SLAM founders Marcou and McLean to engage in wider circles of activity. 'SLAM Day' has become a national strategic day to celebrate live music, and to recognise ongoing problems within live music economies. Its website contains a list of national and State issues about popular music, urging readers to address these with their local MP. The site also contains a large number of endorsements from famous musicians (including Elvis Costello, Neil Finn) stating why they support live venues. Run on a volunteer basis, SLAM is also active at state and federal elections, in asking party candidates for their views on popular music policy.

SLAM also precipitated other reform work undertaken by Music Victoria and other organisations beyond the rally. Two local Melbourne councils, Port Phillip and Yarra, established live music taskforces and subsequent policies for venues in their areas. The Victorian Live Music Roundtable conducted its first meeting in July 2012, and has proved to be a useful means to bring together Music Victoria, Fair Go 4 Live Music and SLAM with key government departments and resident groups. The Roundtable has provided the forum for the activist groups to examine lasting noise law reform. The 'agent of change' proposal first

[5] The Accord stated that "the parties agree that live music does not cause violence … A flexible, common-sense approach to crowd controller licence conditions for live music venues is appropriate" (Live Music Accord, 2010).

[6] The Accord document included an undertaking from the Labor government that it had "created a help desk with dedicated licensing officers to assist licensees who provide live music to navigate the liquor licensing system".

proposed in 2003 – that whoever is the agent of change (resident or venue) must conform to existing conditions – is designed to protect music venues from residents or developers seeking changes to existing trading/performance conditions. This legislative change was made in September 2014, and depending upon individual case interpretations, may provide venues with cover against unfair noise objections. How this principle will work in practice is viewed by the lobby groups as the true test of the state's ability to value and preserve local music subcultures.

SLAM can arguably lay claim in influencing other Australian States to review live music's role in local cultural economies. A 2013 New South Wales Live Music Taskforce again reviewed licensing, noise and planning regulation in its *Live Music and Performance Action Plan* (City of Sydney, 2014). The agenda in August 2015 of the national Contemporary Music Roundtable included ways to nationalise many of the recent Victorian reforms, including the agent of change law.

After its strategic troubles in 2010, the new Labor State government has made considerable efforts to include popular music as part of a more considered cultural policy over the next four years. In terms of regulation, it has removed the restrictions upon small venues to trade after midnight, accompanied by the new Consumer Affairs Minister's commitment to supporting the city's "vibrant nightlife" (Garrett, 2015). In terms of funding, it has committed to a generous popular music funding platform over four years. Its $22.2m Music Works package includes plans for a music hub/headquarters for local industries; a music Hall of Fame; export, mentoring and tourism/heritage programs. The package also includes the Good Music Neighbours program, designed to assist venues in better operating their local environments, through the funding of acoustic, soundproofing or PA improvements. While fine-tuning continues by the relatively new government, the package represents a governmental view that popular music must be provided with proper support within the newly created Creative Industries portfolio. Future funding of this scale is contingent upon popular music's ability to build employment and revenue capacities.

Reflections

Several interrelated factors were at play in successfully changing the licensing policy. Firstly, the impact of an organised protest of this size and scale cannot be underestimated in an election year for Victoria. The essential message of the SLAM rally, 'Don't kill live music', emblazoned on t-shirts and placards, was highlighted in a series of media, including six o'clock TV news bulletins and front page articles in state and national newspapers (e.g. 'They're marching, not dancing, in the streets for live music', *The Age*, 24 February, 2010). This provided the sitting Labor administration with more than a distraction to their efforts to address the more usual elements of policy debates (such as transport, health, the economy) prior to the election, particularly when Labor was considered the 'natural' party for the arts and cultural communities. With an election scheduled for November 2010, both SLAM and Fair Go 4 Live Music skilfully built upon the February rally to maintain pressure upon the Labor government on live music policy throughout the year. The Liberal-National Party coalition, who narrowly won the November election, argued strongly against the 'high risk' licensing label, with protection of local venues sitting comfortably within its pro-small business themes and associated policies. Despite its minority status in both houses of parliament, the Green Party also played an important role in legislative change; and in ensuring the conditions of the Accord were observed. The Greens' Sue Pennicuk tabled a petition of 22,000 signatures on 13 April in the Victorian Legislative Council seeking the removal of 'live and amplified music' from amenity clauses in venue licences (the trigger for changed venue conditions) (Donovan, 2010a).[7]

Secondly, despite the messy detail and density of state licensing laws, and the triggers within local legislation for acting upon anti-social behaviour, both SLAM and Fair Go 4 Live

[7] Greens' Councillor Cathy Oke was also influential in ensuring live music policies were addressed by the City of Melbourne Council.

Music were successful in distilling the complexity of different venue histories and contexts to a simpler theme of government heavy-handedness against small music sites. Indeed, the role of the local music venue was broadened into more fundamental themes. The founder of Fair Go 4 Live Music's Jon Perring argued that the 'high risk' venue debate was essentially one of human rights. In letters to the government, and in private and public meetings, Perring believed that the current policies and regulations breached the Human Rights Charter, which guarantees the right for people to participate in their own culture and the right to assemble freely (Schaefer, 2010). While this was regarded by the government as semantic exaggeration, it nonetheless reinforced the belief in some local circles that the ability to hear local, live performances was not an 'optional add-on', but fundamental to life in a cosmopolitan city. In this sense, the SLAM rally and its aftermath was in accord with United Nations' declarations on the rights and needs for cultural expression for individual, city and national growth (e.g. see United Nations 2013), at least implicitly.

Thirdly, the protest represents an interesting debate in notions of 'risk' within contemporary western societies. Earlier attempts by the State government in 2008 to establish a 2 a.m. lockout for all CBD entertainment premises (see Homan 2011) were halted by successful court objections by the venues, amidst growing concern at weekend violence in the city. However, the subsequent crackdown on venue liquor licences linking behavioural problems to live music ignored the government's own policing statistics, which revealed the larger CBD nightclubs to be the dominant problem in the city's night-time economy. In effect, greater surveillance (chiefly through bureaucratic means) was directed towards the least of the city's problems – the small suburban music pub. The diversity of members' (particularly legal) expertise of SLAM and Fair Go 4 Live Music provided the collective knowledge to challenge the prevailing discourses of risk, and more importantly, the evidence upon which the government based its licensing actions. In contrast, in 2014 the New South Wales government established a 1.30 a.m. lockout and 3 a.m. 'last drinks' law for Sydney's entertainment precinct, which encompasses much of the city's CBD and pub/club strips. Here, the contexts of the moral panic about alcohol consumption and night-time economies were very different. The NSW licensing changes stemmed from public and media concern at the growing number of deaths from 'one hit' or 'coward punches' derived from street fights, and medical workers' calls to reduce the number of alcohol-related hospital treatments in the Sydney CBD on weekends (Hasham 2015a).[8]

Finally, the protest became an effective means by which to call out the state's *bona fides* in its use of popular music (and culture, both high and low, in a more general sense) in furthering Victorians' sense of themselves. Beyond querying the basis of claims of popular music as the source of night-time law and order problems, the SLAM rally also succeeded in shifting the debate to themes of economic and social benefit. It is instructive that the Live Music Accord not only dealt with the licensing minutiae required to ease individual publican concerns, but also called upon the State government to conduct more precise research of its local music industries. The subsequent release of the government-commissioned report, *The economic, social and cultural contribution of venue-based live music in Victoria* (Arts Victoria, 2011) by Premier Ted Baillieu and Consumer Affairs Minister Michael O'Brien in August 2011, partly fulfilled the (new) government's commitment to properly recognising the value of the live music ecosystem to the State. The choice of venue for the launch – the resurrected Tote hotel under new ownership – was also symbolic for a government keen to establish a working relationship with music communities. As outlined above, the Arts Victoria report and the establishment of the Live Music Roundtable did much to ensure that future governments could not proceed with traditional law and order

[8] While the NSW government has committed to a review of the lockout laws, its Premier Mike Baird has stated no intention to change them, despite pressure from venue owners citing loss of patrons and profits in the CBD (see Hasham, 2015b).

discourses about the local live bar, pub or club, where these sites had to be also considered within cultural and economic frameworks.

Conclusion: local protest, translocal action

> …the complexity of cultural infrastructures around the world means that the best policy responses are not always obvious or straightforward. Where a great deal of creative activity occurs under informal conditions, targeting specific actors for subsidy or promotion may have an unwelcome "museumization" effect, converting embedded aesthetic traditions into officially sanctioned spectacle. For all these reasons, then, informal creative activities require a different kind of policy thinking. Appropriate responses and interventions will vary widely from locality to locality (UNDP/UNESCO, 2013: 28).

It is rare for Australian arts or cultural policy to insert itself into the mainstream of political debate. The SLAM rally not only achieved unity amongst Victoria's music industries and communities in presenting a coherent force for change; it succeeded in linking particular policy decisions to the *realpolitik* of the election cycle, ensuring popular music policy was part of individual MPs' considerations. The right for a band to set up in their local pub and play was accepted and supported by the wider cultural communities in Melbourne and elsewhere, and found significant levels of support outside cultural interests. This was also a rare case of a populist deconstruction of traditional law and order discourses – the traditional rights of the state to make licensing changes under the cover of a crackdown on 'anti-social' behaviour was ultimately viewed to be without foundation.

The SLAM actions also fed into pre-existing debates about cultural value(s). While the case was strongly made for the live music venue as a source of community cohesion, wider governmental change (increased funding, fine-tuning of regulation and better knowledge of industrial practices) was based on economic discourses. The Arts Victoria 2011 report findings that the live music sector contributed $500m annually to the economy, with more patrons than the State's favourite sport, Australian Rules, was significant in achieving government attention beyond the Live Music Accord. SLAM also succeeded in arguing for the local music venue as the incubator of national, regional and global success, as the foundational base for future recording and publishing achievements. Part of the rally speech on parliament house steps by Australian musician Paul Kelly is often quoted: "I didn't learn to write a song at school – these places were my university" (Donovan 2010b: 1).

The SLAM rally was included as a case study in the recent global report on music cities prepared by Music Canada's Amy Terril, *The Mastering of a Music City* (IFPI/Music Canada, 2015). This is appropriate, given that the rally and its subsequent interactions with the State government sought to address many of the issues facing music venues globally, particularly noise laws and land use changes and values.[9] *The Mastering of a Music City* emphasises the need for collaboration and a unified strategy, and this was one of the rally's greatest strengths. The high level of co-operation between APRA (Australasian Performing Right Association), the PPCA (Phonographic Performance Company of Australia), The Push, Music Victoria, Fair Go 4 Live Music and SLAM ensured a thick network of complementary activity, where the gathering of evidence on the individual and collective health of the live sector was equally important to protest strategies.

While the SLAM case study can be seen to fit within an emerging broader theme of 'music city' problems and discourses (e.g. Holt and Carsten, 2013), it also reinforces the very localised nature of cultural and governmental interaction. The SLAM participants agreed with the historic and relentless promotion of Melbourne's status as 'cultural capital', which provided considerable cover for change. [10]

[9] The continuing pressures of property development upon land use policy was confirmed by a Melbourne City Councillor who argued that Melbourne rates were "$8500 a square metre, and $11-13,000 per square metre for apartments" (Ong 2014).

[10] In March 2015 SLAM founders Quincy McLean and Helen Marcou received the $20,000 Facilitators Prize in the 2014 Sidney Myer Performing Arts Awards.

Equally, the threat to Melbourne's global claims as a live music city did not require the usual corrections through state subsidy, but via regulatory reform. The rally and its aftermath continue to influence global conditions; for example, other 'music cities' are seeking to establish equivalents of the 'agent of change' principle in relation to local noise laws. More broadly, in terms of a critical cultural policy studies (Lewis and Miler, 2003), it offers an interesting study in a localised politics of culture, where the usual contexts for who has a say in what is produced, funded and consumed were refashioned.

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China's Soft Power Policies and Strategies: The Cultural Activist State

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ABSTRACT

'Soft power' has become a popular concept in Chinese political discourse, frequently appearing in government documents, academic discussions and the mainstream media. This article defines soft power as a form of *state activism* through culture – and examines the ongoing discourses at home and abroad on China's soft power in transition, exploring the strengths, weaknesses, and potential of China exerting soft power in the West. The paper starts with an exploration of China's embrace of the concept soft power as a strategic compass for its efforts to enhance comprehensive national capabilities. It then investigates the obstacles that China hitherto has encountered when building and implementing soft power. Through reviewing China's soft power assets and liabilities, the paper suggests that Chinese soft power strategies should be performed on the basis of humanitarian values, pacifistic policies, multilateral cooperation, and multiculturalism. In addition, the implementation of China's soft power strategies in the West will be more effective if non-governmental bodies can be allowed more institutional space.

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The term "Chinese Dream" [中国梦] was put forward by President Xi Jinping in November 2012. It has been heavily popularised in political circles and the mass media since that time, particularly on and since Xi's accession to Prime Minister in March 2013. The official interpretation of the Chinese Dream (as routinely articulated by government propaganda) is oriented towards a large-scale planning initiative for national capacity building and aiming for prosperity and "rejuvenation".[1] Xi subsequently delivered a significant speech in the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris on 27 March 2014, asserting that "the realisation of Chinese dream is the development of material civilisation and spiritual civilisation", and "with the peoples of the world together", China wants to "create a colourful civilisation for mankind and provide the correct spiritual guidance and strong motivation".[2] Chinese Vice-Premier Liu Yandong, (in charge of culture and education), elaborated on the Chinese Dream in her speech at the third annual conference of the Tai-Hu World Forum (a Chinese NGO, aiming to promote cross-cultural communication). She addressed three points: first, China is set to build the strategic means to strengthen its culture, and for culture to play a major role in pursuit of the Chinese Dream; second, China will give attention to cultural development to boost its soft power; third, China will expand people-to-people exchanges with other countries, so as to open up larger room for "win-win" cooperation in the world.[3]

Liu used the term 'soft power', the now globally-famous term first forged by Harvard professor Joseph Nye, who coined the term in relation to a country's power of attraction and persuasion (as distinct from the "hard" power of force or coercion).[4] Since its introduction, the term has proven to be a flexible concept, generating an architecture of terms for strategic deployment within established international relations or foreign policy frameworks. Through both qualitative and quantitative analyses, this paper articulates the term's adaptation in a Chinese political context, ascertaining the effectiveness of China's soft power strategies in the West – on both the sender's and the receiver's side. This paper then assesses the factors contributing to China's soft power resources, and looks at potential ways of improving China's soft power against the background of its current, dominant, national policy framework – the Chinese Dream.

China's embrace of 'soft power'

The concept 'soft power' has found a receptive audience in China, entering Chinese academic and political debate as much as the speeches and documents of China's highest leaders. The enthusiasm for the 'soft power' concept is now firmly embedded in Chinese political, social and cultural spheres. The term appeared for the first time on an official occasion in the government report at the 17th CPC Congress (The National Congress of the Communist Party) in October 2007. The then-president Hu Jintao announced clearly that "China must enhance its cultural soft power". Some five years later, in his report to the 18th CPC Congress, (one of the most authoritative documents of China's current government), Hu elaborated on soft power and reclaimed its significance:

To achieve the great renewal of the Chinese nation, we must create a new surge in promoting socialist culture and bring about its great development and enrichment, increase China's cultural soft power, and enable culture to guide social trends, educate the people, serve society, and boost development. [5]

Hu's successor, President Xi Jinping embraced the concept soft power as part of his ambitious Chinese Dream. On 30 Dec 2013, Xi presided over a conference on the topic of how to enhance China's national cultural soft power within current policy frameworks. Xi stressed that improving China's cultural soft power matters to the very realisation of

[1] Xi said, "We must make persistent efforts, press ahead with indomitable will, continue to push forward the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and strive to achieve the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation." China Daily (accessed 17 March, 2013) http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013npc/2013-03/17/content_16314303.htm

[2] The full Paris speech is available from: http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/2014-04/01/content_31964496.htm (accessed 2 April, 2014)

[3] Liu Yandong's speech available from the Xinhua News Agency: http://news.xinhuanet.com/2014-06/18/c_1111208467.htm (accessed 18 June, 2014)

[4] See Joseph Nye's original development of the concept in his work *Bound to Lead* (1990), which disputed the view that the United States was in decline, then further elaborated in *The Paradox of American Power* (2002), then properly defined in *Soft Power: the Means to Success in World Politics* (2004).

[5] Full text of Hu Jintao's report at the 18th Party Congress available from: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm (accessed 18 November, 2012).

the Chinese Dream,[6] claiming that "we should strive to spread the values of contemporary China, namely the values of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and strive to increase China's international discourse power."[7]

Notwithstanding the confluence of the terms 'communism', 'socialism' and Chinese society', the term 'soft power' has proliferated in Chinese official discourse on both domestic and international issues in very specific ways. Especially after the humiliation of the torch relay for 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, where because of protests China was forced to cut short the relay (and so reflect on its international image and political reputation). In the light of such global media exposure, the Chinese leadership has recognised soft power as an important indicator of a state's international status, contending that China's soft power must be strengthened so to match the nation's economic power and political status on the world stage. The government decided to make its own voice heard, investing in the cultivation of China's own global media brand.

Chinese scholarly discussions about soft power have mushroomed since 2008. Chinese scholars have gone to great lengths to explore the uses of soft power and its implications, and numerous papers have been published in China on the topic. Table 1. records the number of published Chinese academic papers on soft power from 2004 to 2013 (Source: CNKI.net). It demonstrates that after 2008, the number of Chinese papers on soft power virtually doubled.

Year	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Papers	2020	2365	2433	2569	2079
Year	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Papers	2068	1041	500	165	75

Table 1: *Research papers published on the subject of Soft Power in China.*

Chinese scholars have been actively exploring the concept's possibilities as much as its political or practical uses. The main academic issues that have emerged in China include: the appropriation of soft power in improve China's global standing; how to develop a peaceful national image and dispel perceptions of a 'China Threat' – otherwise tempering foreign suspicions of China's growing strength; how to enhance China's percentage in the global market of cultural and creative industries; how to maintain the balance between the exploitation and protection of cultural resources; how to harness the role and the power of the media in nation branding; how to influence the opinions of an audience through the transmission of ideas and values; and how to design 'public diplomacy' to serve the interest of politics.

Having explored and expanded the concept, evaluated its importance and implications, Chinese theorists have not reached a visible consensus on how to formulate soft power theoretically in a Chinese context. Notwithstanding specific deployments of the term by China's leaders, for scholars there seems to be no definitive distinction between soft power strategies and 'public diplomacy' or 'cultural diplomacy', for instance. The opaqueness in Chinese theoretical interpretations of soft power is due, in part, to the complex and non-quantifiable nature of cultural, affective, aesthetic, visual and image-based forms of communication, as well as events, the coordination of international relations through events, the particular and relational qualities of relations between nation states, and the nebulous nature of one's global 'image', perceptions, cultural identity, reputation, 'standing', influence, credibility, confidence, and the reception of expressions of one's national virtues – the armory of soft power strategy, combined with the vagueness in Nye's original conceptualisation of soft power, make for a difficult subject of theorisation. Nye (2004) did not specify how to translate soft power into actual political influence or to produce specific desired specific political outcomes within international relations; nor did he clarify whether the concept tailored for US foreign policy and orientated within US experience, would be effectively applied to the cases of other countries (even in the West, let alone the East). Although Nye updated a refined version of his concept through prescribing the use of 'smart power' in his The Future of Power (2011); the operability, measurability and sphere of application of soft power remained unspecified. In fact, Western academia has not reached a definitive clarification of the term either. For example, Hayden (2012) suggests that

[6] While Xi has not offered a single definition of the Chinese Dream, it is generally accepted that it refers to a cultural renaissance of the Chinese nation as a means of rapid and maximum social, economic and military growth – all within the framework of Chinese socialism.
[7] http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-12/31/c118788013.htm (accessed 31 December, 2013).

"soft power encompasses three broad categories: influence, the force of an actor's argument, the 'attractiveness' of an actor's culture and institutions" (p.5). Meanwhile, when Kurlantzick (2007) analysed how China uses soft power as its "charm offensive" to project a benign national image in the world, he controversially includes trade and overseas investment in the definition of soft power.[8]

Nevertheless, conceptual ambiguity per se does not prevent China appropriating the idea as a convenient tool of political science to understand China's position in the world. Instead, the complexity inherent in the term semantically actually allows Chinese political discourse the opportunity for an easier assimilation – for it can serve as an umbrella term accommodating various interpretations and uses. The proliferation of writings on soft power suggest that the mainstream Chinese politicians and scholars simply accept soft power as a general and infinitely variably political instrument, which has the potential to serve China's national and international interests, considering China's political and economic successes on the international stage often spark applause as well as fears.

The most significant feature of discussions on soft power in Chinese academia is that its usage is not limited to international image-building or international cultural communication for political effect: It is also applied used within domestic cultural affairs to strengthen national and collective consciousness. In other words, soft power is an instrument for deepening debates about culture at home. The definition of soft power has been broadened in Chinese discourse and thus is often interchangeable with the term 'national cultural soft power', implying of certain domestic mobilisation capability.[9] China's interpretation of soft power sounds more like Morgenthau's 2005 identification of the nine elements of national power, among which national character, national morale, diplomacy, and the quality of government, form the intangible source of the 'power' itself. The Chinese have similarly conceptualised soft power generically, as both a foreign and a domestic policy tool, forming a fundamental difference with Nye's classical iterations of the term and other subsequent scholars' definition of soft power as a singular strand foreign policy instrument.

Another feature worth mentioning is that some scholars – including Western sinologists – believe that the concept of soft power resonates with Chinese intellectual traditions. For example, Sheng Ding (2008) argues that "such ideas [soft power] have been embedded in ancient Chinese philosophies and culture throughout its history" (p.25). According to Ding, Chinese strategists, Taoist thought, and Confucian thinkers, all recognized that power can be derived through morality and benevolence, good governance, and the winning of hearts and minds (Ding, 2008; Ding, 2010). The idea of soft power is therefore not something in itself new to the Chinese, but internal to the historic synthesis of Confucianism and Taoism and the social means by which they formed a unique Chinese cultural character. For more than two millennia, the ideal image of Chinese traditional culture the world over can be attributed rather to soft-power than hard-power. Abundant evidence of comparable understandings to the idea of soft power within ancient Chinese thought can be found in Alastair Johnson's (1995) important discussion on how culture in China was always 'strategic'.

The reception of China's soft power in the West

The idea of soft power has evidently (and curiously) stimulated the imagination of Chinese politicians as much as scholars, perhaps that during the current era of its history China has reason to be acutely sensitive to foreign perceptions of its national image and policies abroad. It can be observed that the Chinese government has made great efforts to promote its soft power in the West, embarking on numerous soft power initiatives. These efforts include holding large-scale events of cultural exchanges (art, literature, music, film, historical relic, performances, and so on), investing a large amount of financial resources in various schemes to cultivate a better national image, enhancing media outreach aimed at the Western public, and establishing Confucius Institutes throughout Europe and North America. The Chinese government has signed formal agreements with Western countries that help integrate Chinese language teaching into their public

[8] Kurlantzick's book on soft power recognises only one player (state elites) in the Chinese soft power universe, consequently ignoring the soft power activities of non-state actors, thus failing to recognize and acknowledge the cultural complexities and diversity of China.

[9] 'National cultural soft power' has a similar but wider spectrum: it ascertains resources of culture, morality, political values, institutions, foreign policies, patriotism, and even then qualities of citizens.

schools' curricula. The China Scholarship Council oversees a wide range of educational activities worldwide, awarding generous scholarships to Western students for study in China, also sponsoring educational exchange programmes. Furthermore, "the diplomats from China are more amiable and skilled at engaging local communities […] more skilled than earlier in navigating foreign media outlets" (Lampton, 2008: 128). China has placed special emphasis on the soft-power aspects of its engagement with the West, seeking to be accepted as a nonthreatening, constructive, and reliable power, and a responsible stakeholder in the international system. As Hayden (2012) argues, "China's efforts to cultivate soft power reflects a strategic awareness that soft power resources and mechanisms are crucial to the larger effort of managing China's rise, addressing challenges, and leveraging a highly mediated and increasingly transparent environment for international politics" (p.169).

Investing billions of Chinese RMB (Yuan) into soft power promotion in the West, China's central government, however, has hitherto obtained a limited return on its investment. The public opinion studies conducted by YouGov, the BBC World Service, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and the Pew Global Attitudes Project, all suggest that China's soft-power achievements have not been as effective as expected. Compared with its rapid economic development, China's soft power facility lags significantly behind the rate of performance of its newly-acquired hard power. Of course, opinion poll outcomes are influenced by sample selection, question formulation and interview timing, and the perceptions of China and of China's soft power differ significantly per Western country and per target group. Overall, however, these polls indicate that China's massive investment has not been translated into more supportive views of China's current political quest for status and legitimacy both within the global economu and in the realm of international relations. China, which is ever perceived as a 'significant other', has encountered specific difficulties in implementing soft power strategies in Western societies.

For example, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs released a public opinion survey 'US Attitudes towards China' in 2010. It shows half of American adults consulted consider that financial indebtedness to China will become a critical threat to vital US interests in the next ten years; two-thirds believe China practices unfair trade; a majority is opposed to having a free trade agreement with China; and a majority prefers to hedge against a possible future threat from China by building up strong relations with Asian-Pacific allies, even if this might diminish relations with China.[10] The results demonstrated the Americans' widespread negative impressions of, and attitudes towards, the People's Republic (in the framework of geopolitics, though it is difficult not to consider this as reflective of attitudes more broadly). Similarly, according to a YouGov poll (28-29 April, 2013) with a sample size of 1632 British adults, the participants were asked to choose a number (from 1 to 7 on the scale, where '1' means "the political system in China is not at all free" and '7' means that "the political system in China is completely free"). 72% of those polled awarded China a low freedom score (1-3), while only 6% thought "China has a free political system" (those who give a high score 5-7). While this may seem factually obvious to some, questions on freedom are value-laden and in China are understood to reflect a general positive regard. In this case the response was not positive. YouGov also conducted research for the YouGov-Cambridge Programme (11-12 June, 2013) with a sample of 1000 US citizens. The samples are classified into Gender, Age, Party ID, Race and Education. Participants were asked to consider words and phrases tabled in boxes, and decide which one they most associate with China (selecting up to four or five). Five of the top six words associated with China were negative: 'can't be trusted', 'undemocratic', 'corrupt', 'lacks important morals', 'bullying'. Only 2% of American participates believe China is 'a force for good', 2% think China respects human rights, and only 1% links China with 'democratic'.

The BBC World Service annual global polls offer a broad picture, and in this case (June, 2014) reflects a predictable state of affairs:[11]

[10] Available from: http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/publication/us-attitudes-toward-china-results-2010-chicago-council-public-opinion-survey (accessed 28 March, 2014).

[11] Available from: http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/country-rating-poll.pdf (accessed 30 August, 2014).

Country	Mainly Positive	Mainly Negative
Canada	28%	64%
USA	25%	66%
UK	49%	46%
France	26%	68%
Spain	24%	59%
Germany	10%	76%

Table 4: *China's Influence.*

That the majority of Western publics regarded China's influence as 'mainly negative'[12] is not surprising, and it is not surprising either to find that China's soft power strategies have resonated in liberal-democratic Western countries on a much lower level than the third world. Shambaugh (2013) depicts China's embarrassment at promoting soft power: "we witness a large and growing number of China's cultural activities abroad – but very little influence on global cultural trends, minimal soft power, and a mixed-to-poor international image in public opinion polls" (p. 207). It is recognised that a country's international reputation is shaped by its government, multinational corporations, products and brands, and people. The effects of soft power strategies depend heavily on the 'receivers'' acceptance, which is often difficult for the 'senders' to control. When a country is perceived as representing moral integrity, social progress, and economic success, it will exert appeal to other nations, but if a country is associated with the impressions of 'untrustworthy, immoral, corrupt, bullying, undemocratic', the country will hardly be able to exert soft power over others. This is particularly true if any soft power strategy is framed by media and information sources over which a government may have little influence, even on the level of factual accuracy. Soft power strategy can also be compromised by foreign dissidents, or critics, or even celebrities whose publicised opinions (however ill-informed) can have a major impact on a given public.

Western societies have by and large firmly embraced the values of individualism, human rights, the rule of law, justice, freedom of speech, and other fundamental principles common to what is routinely referred to as 'liberal democracy'. However, the government of China cannot easily borrow Western values so as to find political legitimacy or justify itself; it seems that China has unconsciously sought to challenge the West's monopoly on such 'legitimacy' by contesting how we interpret this. As long as the general perception in the West persists – that China is an autocracy respecting no human rights and lacking in democracy – no Western society would wish to imitate China's model of governance, or indeed accept China as a trustworthy partner. It seems that China has to contend with many negative perceptions on this front, which are all very difficult to change. These negative perceptions spring in part, of course, from conflicting political ideologies, different political systems, different interpretations of human rights, economic competition, cultural and racial alienation, historical mistrust, a misreading of Chinese policy and political orientation in the world, a disagreement with China's strategies, and fears of yet another unpredictable rising power on the world stage, and so on. As Michael Barr (2011) agues, the rise of China as an alternative model to Western liberalism could question the very basis of traditional political legitimacy (p.5). Shambaugh (2013) describes the macro-context of China's awkwardness so: "China is in the community of nations but is in many ways not really part of the community; it is formally involved, but it is not normatively integrated" (p.7). Because of China being different in all of the above respects, it would find it hard to avoid being seen as a potential challenge to the West's hegemony – in making the 'rules of the game' of global political legitimacy. Such resulting alienation and such indissoluble differences, form a fundamental barrier for China's soft power efforts in the West; China's strength and difference combined contain the seeds of a potentially fierce strategic competition between two great global forces.

China's soft power assets and liabilities

In the context of China's current strategi concerns, soft power is associated with intangible assets: with foreign policies, political values, diplomatic artistry, international reputation, traditional culture, and the new creative industries. As mentioned above, it also includes domestic factors such as citizenship education, scientific development, social cohesion, and harmonious ethnic relationship. I wish now to focus on reviewing China's soft power in terms of its

[12] Available from: http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/07/18/global-image-of-the-united-states-and-china (accessed 28 September, 2014).

assets and liabilities and do so in the context of President Xi's Chinese Dream, and so I will attempt to articulate the more effective approaches to soft power that China does or could engage in by which to extend its influence in the West.

In terms of its political values, the Chinese Dream is, in its own phraseology, engaged in constructing a "socialism with Chinese characteristics" [中国特色社会主义], which demands a systematic application of "core socialist values" [社会主义核心价值观]. But, is the Chinese Dream an asset to China's soft power? There are, on the face of it, two aspects to a country's political value system: one domestic – by what principles a government rules its own people – and the other international – how this government deals with other nations and conducts international affairs. Domestic political values and its corresponding political system are important considerations for a state's soft power capabilities – to a certain degree soft power if a representation of such. The Chinese constitution does provide for guarantees of economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights. But all such rights must only be exerted in accordance with "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and concommitant 'core socialist values'. According to Report to the 18th CPC Congress, the core socialist values embrace "patriotism, collectivism, and socialism; prosperity, democracy, civility, and harmony; freedom, equality, justice, and the rule of law; dedication, integrity, and friendship" (Chapter VI). These values have indeed the potential to develop into a consistent and persuasive universalism. Meanwhile, the term "socialism with Chinese characteristics" emphasises China's uniqueness and implies a sense of exceptionalism.

It seems that there is here a paradox: for the core socialist values (to be promoted in the West) are universal (for socialism itself was always internationalist and exceeded the traditions or political systems of any one nation state), but the 'Chinese characteristics' form an emphatic focus on Chinese particularity. How therefore can China's socialism function as an attractive model for Western societies? Will China export its 'core socialist values' as a crtical alternative to Western liberal and democratic values? To answer those questions, two facts must be recognised: first, since Deng Xiaoping's 'Reform and Open-Door' policies [改革开放] of the late 1970s, China largely abandoned its role as a protagonist of ideological arguments with other countries; second, China is actively seeking an understanding of its political system and policies, rather than an 'export' of such as a 'model'. China's political leadership does not (at least in policy terms) expect the West to emulate the Chinese model – in fact, China itself knows that Western publics are reluctant to promote any part of the Chinese political system. Yet the slogan 'Chinese Dream' itself can be rightly perceived as a soft-power instrument, albeit both coined and used for defensive purpose. The slogan suggests an alternative, a bold proclamation of a coherent worldview, a testimony of faith in the trajectory of the current political system, and a conviction of belief in a viable future for this system. It is a banner to strengthen its standing in the world, defending the Chinese government against criticism from the West, and at the same time it emphasises China's uniqueness.

Actually, some of the 'core socialist values' of the Chinese Dream (such as 'democracy, freedom, equality, justice, the rule of law'), of course resonate with the fundamental principles of Western liberal-democratic thought. To some extent, the predominance of Western thought (both ideological and political terms) in China's new political rhetoric of 'socialist core values' implies that China, at least presently, has no intention of challenging the ideological dominance of Western liberal democracy. The Chinese Dream is subtle and sophisticated in the way it presents difference within a fundamental unity. The difference is lodged in both history, culture and of course interpretation – the Chinese government's interpretation of these values does not lead, for example, to Western-style suffrage or individualism. Yet it proposes that both China and the West can together embrace the enlightenment and the humanitarian values required for an equal political dialogue.

The Chinese Dream appeals to the philosophical register of politcal values – where both sides can affirm a vision of a common humanity rather than a fixed set of interests divided by national boundaries. On the level of political pragmatics, both the Chinese Dream's socialist values and classical Western liberalism maintains an opposition to religious extremism, advocating tolerance and equality, respecting and protecting women's and children's rights for example. China and the West equally share pragmatic agreements on a range of global

challenges, such as their responses to natural disasters, epidemics and terrorism. Like Western social contract theories, China also has its own version of 'social contract' – the principle that central government obtains legitimacy only through fulfilling its responsibilities to its citizenry.[13] It is therefore conceivable that on both philosophical and pragmatic registers, the Chinese Dream might find a measure of acceptance with Western publics, providing that China does not maintain a stance of ideological opposition to the West's pre-eminence in connecting the philosophical and the pragmatic when determining the shape of the global order (such as the operation of global markets, global security, international cooperation, and so on). Through the permanent seats on the UN Security Council, China is in any case an established partner and plays a role in such 'shaping' in any case.

In foreign policy terms, the Chinese Dream inherits Chairman Mao's "five principles of peaceful coexistence" [和平共处五项原则]. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council with veto power, China is conscious of international security, and President Xi's foreign policies can therefore be understood in terms of the application of the 'five principles of peaceful coexistence' to the current world order. Originating in the 1950s, these principles are: respect of national sovereignty and territorial integrity; non-aggression; peaceful coexistence; non-intervention in another country's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit. As a political principle, China holds a long-standing opposition to the use of force, insists non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, and refuses to participate in economic sanctions against certain regimes simply on account of international consensus. China's foreign policies are applauded in some developing countries, but in the West are met with suspicion, particularly in relation to human rights, or humanitarian crises in other countries. China is widely regarded as a forthcoming superpower, yet within the context of a sustained Western hegemony, it increases the likelihood of contention and conflict. And so in its foreign policy effort, China's soft power liabilities will alert us to the limitations of the concept of soft power itself. Foreign policies as soft power will stop to be a dominant consideration in situations where there are real differences of diplomatic interests and geopolitics: economic competition regularly leads to uneasiness between China and Western Europe, geopolitical competition in Asia-Pacific often contributes to the clash between China and the United States. Nevertheless, Chinese foreign policies can still offer China soft-power resources if the Chinese government can enhance its proficiency in global governance on the basis of pacifist multilateral cooperation. China needs to accept international standards, behave according to international rules, and participate in establishing international rules and norms. The Chinese diplomacy must convince the world that China is a trustworthy, cooperative, and responsible member of the international community, capable of and willing to contribute to world peace and prosperity. China has expanded its contribution to offering global public goods. For instance, Xi's 'Chinese dream' in foreign policies has been converted into the ambitious proposals of 'the Silk Road Economic Zone' and 'the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road' [一带一路] The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is another successful example of using diplomatic skills and economic temptation to shape soft power.

China possesses one of the most ancient, vibrant and sophisticated cultural traditions. Mainstream Chinese intellectuals view culture, both traditional and modern, in a very serious sense as internal to the country's stability and development (and so, where a core resource in the country's soft power, authentically representing Chinese society as grounded on an historically deep and diverse cultural life). Chinese culture – which can be listed simply as its language, traditional Chinese painting, calligraphy, literature, philosophy, music, Peking opera, film, online game, medicine, acupuncture, martial arts, cuisine, historic relics, architecture, sightseeing – can indeed be appropriated so as to create a favourable image of China abroad. As Sheng Ding (2008) contends, "China's cultural attractiveness has become its reliable soft power resource" (p.73). One dimension of the Chinese Dream policy framework is to revive a sense of China's historicity. And China has a long history of being an object of fascination for Western scholars.

Western studies of Chinese classics began with the Jesuits as early as in the sixteenth century. The

[13] Confucianism argues that the ruler ("the son of Heaven") must be a capable, responsible, moral and benevolent protector of the people as well as of Chinese civilisation. If the ruler fails to fulfil his duty in this, Heaven will abandon him and replace him with other rulers who can better fulfil these responsibilities.

celebrations of the Chinese New Year around the world, spreading outside the diaspora of people of Chinese origin, is a reminder of the growing popularity and expanding international recognition of the vibrancy of Chinese culture and traditions.[14] The richness and diversity of Chinese culture is also something of a surprise to Westerners educated on a stock imagery of the 'Orient'. Since the end of the First World War, there emerged arguments in China contending how traditional culture could apprehend the negative consequences of modernisation, providing alternative values in addressing global challenges. President Xi himself also holds great enthusiasm for Confucianism and other Chinese classics.[15] Furthermore, traditional values are apolitical or ideologically neutral, thus much less threatening. [16]

However, it is arguable that traditional Chinese culture only provides soft power potential, not soft power itself given its complexity. It remains to be seen how traditional culture can be translated or represented in its full character as a contemporary reality, and so applied through the sustained institutional practice of soft power. Joseph Y. S. Cheng (2012) observes "the exploitation of traditional culture strategically to provide re-assurance to the international community has now been raised to the official level" (p.183). For example, such traditional virtues are, namely "winning respect by virtue" [以德服人], which actually objects to militarism and national chauvinism, advocating a resolving of international conflict through equal negotiation; "harmony without suppressing differences" [和而不同] can be interpreted as a multiculturalism, respecting cultural, political, religious, and ideological diversity while encouraging tolerance; "do not do to others what you do not want to be done to you" [己所不欲勿施于人] articlates a biblical-like call for understanding and a respect of each other's different interest and welfare; "harmony between nature and humankind" [天人合一] can be appropriated to confront environmental problems such as global warming.

China can thus increasingly resort to the deep virtues of its own traditions for inspiration. The articles collected in Callahan and Barabantseva (2011) describe and explain how traditional Chinese concepts, particularly those stemming from Confucian thought, are rediscovered in modern Chinese political rhetoric and foreign policies. China's traditional values provide a much needed ontological and epistemological underpinning for the country's future development. As a nation retreating from Leninist communism, the Chinese government has moved closer to an official embrace of Confucianism and the forms of collectivism, corporate responsibility and respect for authority contained within Confucian tradition. While interpretations on the difference between Confucius' teaching and historical Confucian traditions, which are plural and pan-Asian, the CPC nonetheless uses Confucius as a symbol to signify its ideological approach to leading and unifying the nation (Bell, 2008).

Such political exploitation of traditional culture may of course generate negative impacts and misunderstanding if handled inappropriately. For example, some Chinese cultural nationalists tend to idealise Confucianism and China's imperial past, claiming that Chinese culture can restructure the world order and address its chronic failures. Such statements will diminish rather than enhance soft power. Traditional Chinese culture is much more complex than a few slogans or models of global order, and there are surely always differring interpretations of history. For example, M. J. Li (2009) observes that "the traditional Chinese cultural emphasis on social hierarchy generates suspicion among some international observers that China seeks a Sino-centric international order in East Asia" (p.8). Furthermore, Chinese culture is still a form of "local knowledge" and a huge effort is needed before it becomes a true 'global knowledge', and in this linguistic inhibitors are great (even within China).

As soft power measures nonetheless, China has established a considerable number of Confucius Institutes in Western countries, providing Chinese-language classes. Naming the institutes after Confucius is significant, not least a testimony to this internationally recognised ancient aspect of pre-communist China. The Confucius Institute programme is initiated by the Office of Chinese Language Council International (Han ban), influenced

[14] For example, London's Trafalgar Square hosts one of the biggest Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations in Europe, involving nearly half a million visitors each year.

[15] President Xi has attended academic conferences on Confucianism, visited the Confucian Shrine, and often makes quotations from Confucius in his speeches.

[16] For example, Confucian works and Taoist works were widely translated into Western languages after the First World War, and Confucian scholars (such as Gu Hong Ming) was welcomed in the West during the 1920s.

by the mission and programs of Germany's Goethe Institute, France's Alliance Française, Spain's Cervantes Institutes, and the British Council. With a mission to promote the Chinese language education and increase mutual understanding, the state-sponsored Confucius Institutes are regarded as an important vehicle to transport China's soft power. The Ministry of Education provides massive financial support to cover CI expenditures worldwide, including US$150,000 in start-up funds for each CI and 50 percent of their operation and development costs. The number of European and American students of the Chinese language has been on the rise for many years and is now a widespread option. However, even in its most optimistic anticipation, it will take many decades to approach the demand for English. In addition, because the Confucius Institutes are state-sponsored, "political concerns have been raised over the presence of a Chinese government-backed institution on Western university campuses" (Starr 2009: 79). It is also noticed that individual admiration for Chinese culture and interest in learning the Chinese language will not causally generate support for, or acceptance of, the Chinese communist government's foreign or domestic policies.

It is important to be equally cautious about appropriating modern culture as a soft-power resource. The Chinese government has elaborated strategies to promote China's cultural sector as the Report to the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China (Chapter VI):

"We should promote rapid development and all-around flourishing of the cultural industry and cultural services, and ensure both social impacts and economic benefits, with a priority on the former.

"We should invigorate state-owned non-profit cultural institutions, improve corporate governance of profit-oriented cultural entities, and create a thriving cultural market.

"We should foster a fine environment that enables a large number of talented cultural figures, particularly eminent cultural figures and representatives of Chinese culture, to distinguish themselves in artistic pursuits.

"We should develop a modern communication network to improve our capacity for communications.

"We should deepen reform of the cultural sector, release and develop cultural productive forces, foster a democratic atmosphere in both academic research and artistic pursuit, create a vast cultural arena for the people and encourage the free flow of cultural inspiration from all sources."

The report indicates that the Chinese government has developed coordinated, consistent, coherent and comprehensive soft-power strategies of promoting modern Chinese culture. The government has recognised the importance of cultural markets, the talents of its people, and modern communication network. To enhance competitiveness in the international trade of cultural products, the cultural industries must be developed in accordance with the logic of cultural market; to foster mutual understanding and free cross-national information flows should be guaranteed and protected; to extend its mass communications and media outreach, person-to-person communications should be encouraged, non-governmental actors should be allowed to participate in the global circulation of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture.

However, in practice, the state-centred hierarchical model is still shaping China's cultural management. State actors possess huge advantages and resources, but often suffer disadvantages. For example, state actors sometimes lack flexibility, and are easily to be viewed with suspicion concerning their motives for hegemony in this area, or even their engaging in espionage. The consequence is that whatever China does will be associated with China's internal central government politics, which remains controversial in the West. When soft power is seen as issuing from the ideological campaign of the State apparatus, it will more often than not undermine rather than increase China's reputational capital. Centralised soft power operations and the direct state intervention into cultural activities, can expect resistance from audiences in the West, particularly in Europe, where 'culture' exceeds the sphere of the state; for despite the generous public funding of culture in the West, cultural actors themselves widely associate with 'civil society' and are resolutely independent of the apparatus of the state. Soft power is in danger of generating suspicion internationally, that what the Chinese government is export is an inauthentic official version of 'Chinese culture' – in reality, a government-sanctioned image of itself.

Many of the Chinese cultural events that successfully reach large audiences in the West, such as Chinese New Year celebration, are not in fact

promoted by the Government (or, of which, the government is not the most important suporter). Many eminent translators and promoters of Chinese art, philosophy and literature, are not Chinese Government officials but Western sinologists. In global cultural dialogue, non-state actors – such as artists, writers, tourists, visiting scholars and students, immigrates, business communities, universities, research institutions, creative enterprises – routinely contribute more to the promotion of Chinese culture in the West than official Government channels.

The digital media or information revolution over the last two decades has also diminished the traditional borders of nation-states, facilitating a global circulation of discourses, ideas, values and cultural practices, creating virtual communities and global networks that exceed any one 'tradition'. On one hand, a country's cultural impact does not always match the size of its economy (see the modern influence of English culture), and the growth in its soft power is not necessarily in direct proportion to the increase in its hard power (see Denmark or Switzerland's international reach). On the other hand, there is a new phenomenon of power diffusion from nation-states to non-state actors, like NGOs. The Chinese government issues white papers explaining China's positions and policies on such critical issues as human rights, national defence, and educational and cultural exchanges, to create a more favourable image, or more understanding of China in world opinion. Yet so far the Chinese government's soft-power strategies seem to have a vital flaw: there has been limited emphasis on how to fulfill its policy aims through mobilising Chinese non-state organisations and, for example, maximise the power of international cultural and social communications, of which the Internet is central. China needs to consider the intimate relation of public diplomacy to soft power capability.

Kurlantzick (2006) classifies soft power into 'high' (targeted at political elites) and 'low' (targeted at the broader public) (p.1). China's soft power should, given the range of its aims, target at both elites and the broader public. It is often believed that 'high soft power' is more direct than 'low soft power' because political elites can exert more impact on policy making than general public can. But even if the benefits of 'high soft power' are more immediate, it is the broader public and its organisations (call them civil society organisations, though in China this category is not a stable one) that can shapes cross-national relationship in a more pervasive, authentic and more decisive context over the long term (in a sustainable way). Specification of the audience is essential to evaluating effectiveness. It has been criticised that China has focused on 'high' and relatively ignores the 'low'. China should direct its initiatives at multiple audiences, distinguishing between target countries and target groups, and relocating the resources to make for a more balanced and diverse range of organisations involved.

It is therefore necessary for China to deliberate on its public diplomacy including long-term national policy, specific strategies, and multi-level programmes. China's public diplomacy should show the world its tolerance and multi-cultures, its responsibilities for and contributions to the international community, its determination to insist on peaceful development and common prosperity. Public diplomacy must never seem to be nationalistic propaganda, must not be narrowed down to government PR. And indeed, China does possess public-diplomacy instruments: The State Council Information Office, Foreign Publicity Office, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs are three major governmental players in the field of public diplomacy. Policies are explained in white papers, on governmental websites and during press conferences. Celebrations such as the Beijing Olympic Games and the Shanghai World Expo 2010 were held with public funds, and publications introducing China are exported with governmental subsidiaries. The Chinese government has promised to increase the government budget to finance more international students to visit China, and support foreign educational institutions in launching cooperative programs with Chinese universities. To target at Western audiences, CCTV (China Central Television: the state broadcaster) has launched international channels in English, and broadcasts programmes in almost all the major European languages. Xinhua, the state news agency, has also launched its twenty-four-hour English language channel to launch an international presence. Other state-owned media – China Radio International and the China Daily newspaper – participate in the promotion of China's international image also. Meanwhile, China's public diplomacy has acknowledged the role of Western media. Chinese leaders have begun to invite Western

correspondents to press conferences, and a new generation of Chinese diplomats have started to address the Western media. For example, the China's Ambassador to the UK, Mr Liu Xiaoming, received interview in BBC programme Newsnight, explaining China's position on maritime disputes. The State Council Information Office commissioned Lowe and Partners, international advertising agency, to help produce a series of "China image films". But the outside world obtains information about China not just via Chinese official media or China's friends in the West. There are newspapers and magazines not state-owned or controlled bringing their own messages; there are independent reports, writers and bloggers who enrich the image of China without being influenced by the Chinese government. In order to reach to a wider audience more than the diplomatic community, China needs to makes more effective use of the possibilities of the internet and mobilise its netizens. Unfortunately, China is deficient in this area.

There are political and structural obstacles which make it more difficult for China (more than Western governments) to push its soft power agenda over the Internet. The Chinese government is convinced that it is in the national interest to control the flow of information between China and the outside world. And there are consequent criticisms that accuse the State's cultural management bureaucracies of inadvertently constraining China's soft power through their conservative attitudes towards artistic innovation and creation (Zheng, 2008). The governmental censorship and the controversial Great Firewall mechanism, if abused, are supposed to supress the talents and creativeness of its citizens, potentially depriving China of a significant soft-power asset in the global networked cyberspace, which can directly engage with Western publics and civil societies in a much wider spectrum.

The 18th CCP Congress report (2012) claims that "the strength and international competitiveness of Chinese culture are an important indicator of China's power and prosperity and the renewal of the Chinese nation" (Chapter VI). It is understandable that China considers the cultivation of soft power as part of the international political competition. But the term "cultural competitiveness" is somehow ambiguous and unclear; cultural competition is not zero-sum game, culture is not something that can be controlled, regulated or quantified to directly serve the political interests of parties and states. Culture must be allowed and enabled to flourish freely according to its own laws. The government should accept the position that cultural communication doesn't exist solely to serve the nation's international political interests or image-building. It exists historically, independently, and socially, and not equivalent to mechanisms that serve solely for making economic profits or even enhancing personal friendship. More fundamentally, culture exists for the sake of improving humankind's understanding and enriching the diversity of culture – and the cosmopolitan cooperation and cultivation of diversity. Cultural exchanges for the purpose of diversification require diverse participants. It is artists, intellectuals, performance companies, artistic organisations, creative enterprises, ordinary citizens, and civil society organisations, who decide what is Chinese culture and how to market it abroad. The government needs therefore to find its own approach to the British principle of 'arm's length' when supporting and promoting culture, letting the creative minds and innovative non-governmental bodies in and outside China use their expertise and manage their own production. China's soft-power strategies would be more effective in the West if the Chinese government could understand how so much of culture is not simply a form of power; encouraging the talents of its citizens and cultural industries through a non-competitice and gradual movement towards greater openness and more tolerance, would provide a vital condition for Chinese culture to extend into the world around it. In other words, the Chinese Dream could embrace cultural variety and cultural diversity and benefit from the power of culture's autonomous capacity for development.

Conclusion

Henry Kissinger, in his now well-known account on the rise of China observes that "China does not see itself as a rising, but a returning power.[17] It does not view the prospect of a strong China exercising influence in economic, cultural, political, and military affairs as an unnatural challenge to world order – but rather as a return to a normal state of affairs." (p. 546) As China has emerged as a global power, its range of national interests is expanding, and soft

[17] Kissinger, H (2011) *On China*, New York and London: Penguin.

power has become an important component of the Chinese Dream, promising a fully integrated national revival. Both political leaders and academic elites are nonetheless concerned about China's image worldwide, and devote much attention to shaping China's influence. Yet polling shows that China's soft-power efforts have so far encountered obstacles. In this paper I have suggested that China needs to deepen and broaden its knowledge of (and therefore research of) the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power both at home and in the West. While reviewing the assets and liabilities of China's soft power, I have observed that China possesses huge soft power resources – its political weight, its pacifist foreign policies, its economic success, and its richly diverse traditions. Yet, the most crucial components of Chinese soft power are its versatile people.[18] All soft power efforts are, however, diminished if China fails to extend the capabilities of its people, and, for example, grasp opportunities in the global information age, when soft-power strategies are more and more overlapping with public diplomacy, where cultural communication has moved from straight lines and clear hierarchies to networked forms of organisation, and where it is not central government but civil society, institutions and markets that decide what shape a country's output takes. Soft power, in its most clear and direct form, is derived from synergies between state and civil society. Collaboration with non-governmental bodies in public diplomacy is passivity in the face of globalisation, but an effective way of implementing soft power strategy. It is hoped that President Xi's Chinese Dream will deliberate on how to grant non-governmental bodies and a range of cultural actors more space so that soft power is not simply a form of promotion or political PR, but a form of development and expression of a growing, creative, expansive cultural life.

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[18] D'Hooghe (2010) observes that Westerners hold a more favourable view of Chinese *people* than the nation state of China (p.14).

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The Invisible City of Alternative Theatre: Tactics, Collective Actions and Micro-Publics in Istanbul's Cultural Economy

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to gain a better understanding of the ways in which cultural networks shape the urban spaces in which they operate, how this in turn is regulated by local government regimes, and the extent to which these cultural networks contribute to the city as a site of democracy. Focusing on the case of alternative theatre in Istanbul, Turkey, we show that these theatre spaces in the era of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – AKP) are characterised by an 'alternative' position to a neoliberal project. This neoliberal project that is organized around the cultural economy imaginary of the AKP government, and which tends to make invisible these theatre spaces in the city. It is this very invisibility, we argue, that allows these alternative theatre networks to develop particular tactics, collective actions and micro-publics in the city, and to shape and democratise urban space.

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Introduction

In general terms, the contribution of culture in maintaining the symbolic legitimacy of the political order is a significant issue for scholarly research (Ahearne, 2009). In more concrete terms, it can lead us to an investigation not only of government-initiated cultural policy and planning, but also an assessment of a much more diverse set of agents and agencies (Bennett, 2009) that together produce the spaces of culture in which they operate. In urban contexts, with a high density of interacting actors, this leads to political questions concerning the role of these actors in the ordering of these urban spaces, and the ways in which their actions contribute to the control or even censorship of particular cultural expressions and the exclusion, banning, suppression, or simple ignoring of cultural actors (Evans, 2001: 8).

Considering this context, in this paper we present an empirical analysis of alternative theatres in Istanbul, Turkey. The aim is to gain a better understanding of the ways in which these cultural networks shape the urban spaces in which they operate, how this in turn is regulated by local government regimes, and the extent to which these cultural networks contribute to the city as a site of democracy. Turkey is an interesting case in this respect. The post-2002 political dominance in Turkish politics of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – AKP) has had particular consequences for cultural politics on the urban level. Istanbul is seen by the AKP both as a neoliberal growth machine and as perhaps the prime site for the implementation of its conservative socio-cultural beliefs. This produces various tensions between government actors and cultural actors that demand further investigation. These tensions emerge particularly vividly in the domain of alternative theatre, since these spaces are characterized by an 'alternative' position to a neoliberal project that is organized around the cultural economy imaginary of the AKP government, and which tends to make invisible these theatre spaces in the city. It is this very invisibility, we argue, that allows these alternative theatre networks to shape and democratize urban space through the following: (i) their relations with the local governments; (ii) their collective movement which bypasses traditional forms of organisation (Göle, 2013; Fırat and Bakçay, 2012) and emphasises the role of urban cooperation instead of competition (Sennett, 2013); and (iii) the creation of a micro-public (Valentine, 2008; Fine, 2010).

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The following section offers a succinct discussion of Istanbul's cultural landscape, to set the scene and to better understand the position of theatre within the wider cultural economy. This is followed by a section in which we briefly sketch the main political effects of the rise of the AKP, focusing on the state regulation of cultural expression through shifts in cultural governance, and on the ways in which state-driven urban transformation projects shape cultural practices on the urban neighbourhood level. We then briefly introduce our methodology before discussing in more detail the case of alternative theatre in Istanbul, focusing on two key dimensions: (a) the relations between alternative theatres and local governments and (b) the organization of alternative theatre spaces and networks. Finally, in the conclusion we summarize the key points in our article and critically reflect on the contribution of alternative theatre to the city as a site of democracy.

Figure 1: Kumbaraci 50, located in one of the backstreets of Istiklal Avenue (Kumbaraci Hill): © Sanul & van Heur

Figure 2: D22, located in the back streets of the Galata Neighbourhood.): © Sanul & van Heur

Figure 3: A street towards Ikinci Kat, located in the Karakoy Neighbourhood.): © Sanul & van Heur

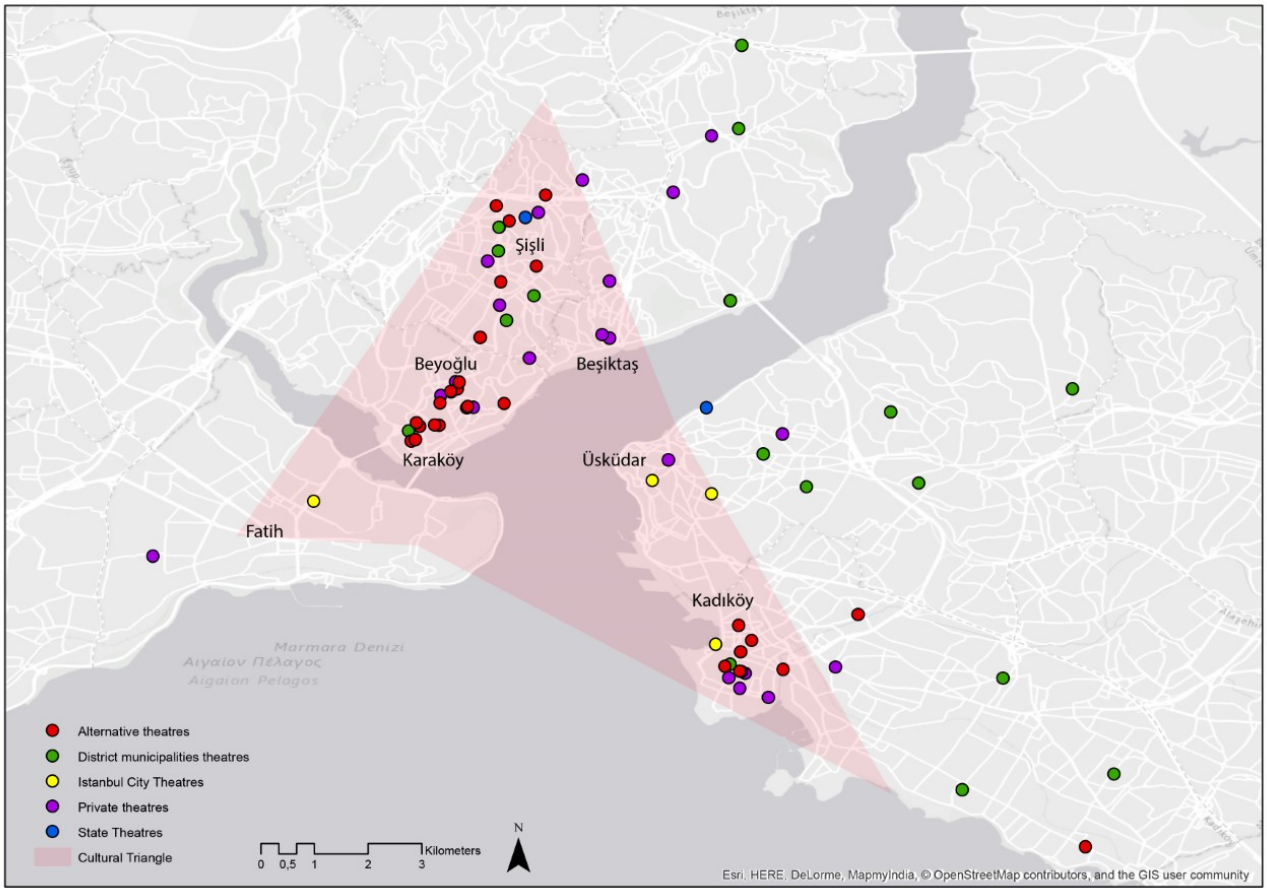
The cultural economy of Istanbul

Istanbul is at the heart of Turkey's cultural economy regarding its number of enterprises, employment and consumer expenditures. According to national statistics, 40% of all cultural industries in Turkey are based in Istanbul. Similarly, 20% of household expenditure on cultural and entertainment services take place in Istanbul and its share in the entire country with regard to the number of theatres, cinemas, performances and their visitors is almost 30% (Aksoy and Enlil, 2011).

In terms of theatre infrastructure, there are two major types of public institution, namely Istanbul State Theatres (IST) and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Theatres. IST occupies a key position in the field of theatre with a 20 million Turkish Lira (approx. 6 million Euro) yearly budget, more than 250 staff members and 13 theatres in various districts of Istanbul. Other important actors are the private theatres that are autonomous companies with a seating capacity of 150 people or more (Langerova and Seyben, 2013). The most recent statistics point to a total of 189 theatres in Istanbul (Turkstat, 2013), with an increase of 18% between 2010 and 2013. While several theatre spaces have closed as a result of the urban renewal process of Istanbul, it is possible to trace the causes of an increase in spaces to the newly opened cultural centres by AKP municipalities and/or to the number of private theatres.

In the current AKP era, with its marriage between neoliberal economic policies and conservative political and socio-cultural principles, Istanbul is seen both as a growth machine and as a terrain for socio-political transformation (Aksoy, 2014; Eraydın and Kök, 2014). Considering governance and the organization of the state, this has led to a process of policy devolution to local government very much in line with similar experiments by neoliberal forms of governance in other countries (Gualini, 2006; Jonas and Pincetl, 2006). At the same time, research shows that there is a coherent multiscalar regime in place with the central government and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) – both governed by the AKP – working closely together with AKP-governed district municipalities in Istanbul to promote the image of the city through mega-events and to invest in cultural infrastructure (Ince, 2010; Aksoy and Robins, 2011).

With the cultural economy, the main trend has



been to look towards the private sector for the funding (and cultural management) of cultural organizations through the incentive of generous tax breaks (Aksoy and Enlil, 2011). This has led to significant private sector as well as NGO involvement in funding the contemporary arts; the arts are not considered for structural funding by central or local governments in Turkey. The opening of the new Istanbul Modern art museum (inaugurated in 2004) was funded by the Eczacıbaşı Family; SALT, a research-based contemporary art institution, is funded by Garanti Bank; and ARTER, a contemporary art gallery, is funded by Koç Holding, to name some of the more important venues that have created a lively contemporary art scene in Istanbul in the last fifteen years. Despite this prosperous environment for the contemporary arts, the position of independent, small-scale actors within the cultural economy is much more difficult: they are not an object of the policies and funding schemes of local governments, nor do they manage to gain long-term support from private funders. Private funders seem to find it more attractive to be associated with prestigious and highly visible contemporary arts organizations, whereas AKP municipalities have introduced the notion of 'neo-Ottomanism' and now prioritize the traditional arts (as a source for funding and as a legitimate part of cultural tourism and the cultural industries).

Shifts in cultural governance: state regulation and urban neighbourhoods

In the Turkish context, theatre has for a long time been attributed with the task of spreading Westernization in the context of Turkish patriotism, with the aim of transforming an Eastern, Ottoman, traditional and patriarchal society, into a modern, secular and 'civilised' one (And, 1992; Buttanrı, 2010). In the era of one-party rule, 1923-1950, during which the foundations of the newly founded Turkish state and its project of Westernization was strengthened, many plays were banned as they praised the old Ottoman Empire (Ünlü, 1995). Censorship continued during the multi-party era that commenced in the 1950s, but the 1960 Constitution was the first and only Turkish constitution that promoted freedom of expression. Enabled by this

newfound freedom and in particular in the 1970s, many private theatres flourished by introducing epic theatre to Turkish audiences. The 1980 Military Coup, however, changed all this, putting several censorship mechanisms in place. Left-wing thought in particular was excluded from publicly-funded theatres, and self-censorship became an identifible norm in private theatres. At the same time, the actors that were fired from the State theatres, laid the foundations for the rise of the alternative theatres of the 1990s (Başar, 2014).

Following the first election success of the AKP in 2002, the AKP has emphasized a more conservative social agenda. This has led to various interventions in individual freedoms and lifestyles, with Birkiye (2009) even arguing that "criticism of the AKP government, its record and world view as well as ethically questioned themes or even words are all subject to censorship" (p. 270). In the context of culture and theatre, however, many interventions are less explicit than censorship and mainly revolve around changing government regulations. Thus, one of the first initiatives of the AKP government was to change the legal status of municipal theatres in order to be able to include state bureaucrats in the administrative boards of these theatres. Also, attempts were undertaken to privatize state theatres, which is understood by Aksoy and Seyben (2015) as a shift to a conservative position and a shift against a secular cultural industry. As former Prime Minister Erdoğan declared:

> "There is now a debate about theatre. In fact, the issue is not about theatre. It is about a different matter altogether – it is about an elite that has created a sequestered realm of influence for itself, from which it then looks down on people... But, I am sorry to say, the period of haughtily looking down on people and on the people's government is over…But no longer through the old approach...Be private, be independent and be free. The state is withdrawing from the theatre scene. Please, the floor is yours." (Erdoğan, 2012; translated by Aksoy and Seyben, 2015).

Finally, the regulation concerning the 'public support for private theatres' has changed, through the inclusion of a 'public morals' criterion by Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT). The regulation provides for the withdrawal of funds in case a theatre performance is not in line with 'public morals' orientation, or insults certain segments of Turkish society. Siyah Bant, a research platform investigating censorship in the arts, argues in a report that "vague conceptions of societal sensitivities along with that of 'public morals' have been elevated above the state's mandate and legally stipulated duty of supporting and protecting the arts as well as the artist" (2013: 1).

On the urban level, the aim to transform Istanbul into a 'global city' has involved a top-down governmental approach that is defined by many as "an authoritarian and undemocratic way of policy making," which also gives no room for participation of civil society (Elicin, 2014) and which has resulted in the destruction of local cultures with inhabitants being evicted from their neighbourhoods as part of state-led urban regeneration projects (Dinçer, 2011). Within Istanbul, the Beyoğlu district plays a key role in this urban transformation, both for revealing the impact of the AKP government's neoliberal urban policies (combined with the dream of neo-Ottomanism) and for observing the tensions between civil society, including cultural actors, and the state. 'Cosmopolitan Beyoğlu' was the location of the first theatres, cinemas and concert halls opened by European as well as non-Muslim citizens (Greek, Armenian, Jews) of the Ottoman Empire (Aksoy and Robins, 2011). Following the founding of the Republic and the related spread of nationalist ideas, Beyoğlu slowly became more monocultural, but it has kept its importance through its symbolic places – Taksim Square, Atatürk Cultural Centre (AKM) as well as Gezi Park (which replaced the Ottoman Artillery Barracks) – in which a Westernized, secular lifestyle could reveal itself. It is therefore easy to understand why the attempt to build a mosque in Taksim, an area known as and representing the 'modern' side of Istanbul, has become such a major battlefield. It is understood as a prime expression of the 're-conquerisation' of the city following the success of the Islamist Welfare Party in the 1994 municipal elections (Bora, 1999; Bartu, 1999).

Many of the AKP government's neoliberal urban policies are also focused on Beyoğlu; the area has undergone various gentrification projects over the last decade. Among them, İstiklal Avenue became a showcase with a rapid increase in multinational firms and national brands (Adanalı, 2011). Slowly transforming into a shopping street, İstiklal Street started to lose its veteran movie theatres such as

Alkazar, Emek, Rüya, as well as other unique spaces of everyday cultural life and which are still very much present in the individual and collective memories of their local users. The closure of Emek Movie led to the gathering of many activists, for the first time in 2011, in order to emphasize the cultural and historical value of this place and to demand its collective ownership instead of its privatization (Fırat, 2011: 109). Similarly, the Gezi Uprising in 2013 primarily started as a reaction against the destruction of Gezi Park and its replacement by an artificial reconstruction of the Ottoman-era artillery barracks intended to function as a shopping mall. Initiated by a group of environmental activists in the form of a 'modest Occupy style' initiative, Gezi Movement reunited for a very limited period of time parts of society that usually remain divided, ranging from secular to Muslim, Alevi and Kurdish citizens. By denying traditional organisational structures and focusing on horizontal relations of cooperation, the Gezi Uprising rejected the politics of polarisation by demonstrating that Turkey is a lively democracy that defends democratic freedoms and rights for all its citizens (Göle, 2013).

Researching alternative theatre: methodological reflections

Alternative theatre in Istanbul needs to be placed within this wider environment of the restructuring of Istanbul along neoliberal-conservative lines and the various contestations over the direction of this urban transformation. The first author of this article conducted the fieldwork and empirical research underlying the analysis presented here. Following a few years (2010-2013) of observation and participation in the alternative theatre scene as 'cultural consumer', alternative theatre became a research object in the context of her PhD thesis. On the basis of this preliminary knowledge, a decision was made to specifically focus on the Alternative Theatre Spaces Joint Initiative, where the similar spatial and locational aspects of the constituents play a specific role in shaping the network relations and the tensions with the Municipality.

Using a case study approach involving participant observation, in-depth interviews and content analysis, the first author focused specifically on the organizational dynamics of alternative theatre spaces and the ways in which these spaces are regulated by local government regimes. A first step was to take fieldwork notes following the observation of and informal talks with the audience of alternative theatres. In parallel, extensive content analysis of various written sources – ranging from printed and online newspapers, brochures, Facebook and Twitter posts – was conducted. This step helped to develop interview questions to conduct expert interviews (with an average length of two hours) with twenty people in the field of alternative theatre and mainly being members of the Joint Initiative. Most of the interviewees were between 25 and 45 years old and by and large were either recent graduates of the public or private university conservatories or people who had started their theatre groups during their university education. The interviews mostly took place in the theatre spaces in order to create a familiar environment for the interviewees and to allow the first author to simultaneously observe their daily working environment and relations with other team members.

The interview questions were structured around a number of specific topics. The first part of the interview was dedicated to getting to know the interviewee, their education, the places they visited during their university years, their attachment to symbolic cultural places in Istanbul (Emek Movie, Atatürk Cultural Centre (AKM), Istiklal Street). This was followed by a part revolving around their theatre space, the process of establishing this space, the relations with the surrounding locality and its inhabitants, relations to the theatre audience, and the contacts with public authorities, in particular local governments and the Ministry of Culture. In the final part of the interview, discussion moved to their perception of the Alternative Theatre Spaces Joint Initiative and the ways in which this network functions. Although the main geographical focus is the Beyoğlu district, interviews also took place in the Kadıköy district with the founders of Kadıköy Theatre Platform, founded by the old and rooted theatres of Kadikoy district and one member of the Joint Initiative based in Kadıköy in order to allow for a preliminary comparative perspective that could help to identify the specificity of the Beyoğlu district.

Alternative Theatres in Istanbul

Alternative theatres are defined as independent groups who use experimental approaches for dramaturgy, playwriting and staging strategies. By

transforming nonconventional theatre spaces such as apartments, pool halls, textile ateliers or garages, they form 'blackbox' stages (simple performance spaces with a large square room with black walls and a flat floor) that are moveable, with unnumbered seats and without changing decors.

What makes the plays of the alternative theatres specific is their articulation of the stories of a wider range of urban population than are usually visible in the public theatres or in the commercial private theatres, including the stories of Kurds, LGBT, and Muslim women with headscarves (Başar, 2014: 180). The pioneers of the alternative theatres are from a generation of the 1980s who had suffered from the oppression during the Military Coup period and established their independent theatre groups in the 1990s, settling in the Beyoğlu district in the 2000s. Understood as the cultural centre, Beyoğlu is part of the so-called 'cultural triangle' of Istanbul, which is a symbolic region consisting of six districts (Fatih, Beyoğlu, Şişli, Beşiktaş, Üsküdar and Kadıköy); it is a point of concentration for the city's cultural infrastructure (Aksoy and Enlil, 2011). Within this triangle, Beyoğlu has a relative specialisation in contemporary arts. Whereas many of the contemporary cultural centres and art galleries of the private sector are located on İstiklal Avenue, alternative theatre spaces are mostly located on the backstreets of İstiklal Avenue, in the Galata, Tünel and Karaköy neighbourhoods, in the Şişli district which is in close proximity to Beyoğlu, or in the Kadıköy district which has been the location for many older and locally rooted theatres for a longer time (MAP A).

Regulating theatre

Formal and informal state regulation has a number of effects on alternative theatre in Istanbul. In this section, we discuss three kinds of regulation.

Licensing

In the case of licensing, the status of alternative theatres constitutes a difficulty for municipalities. The theatre license has been designed for conventional theatre stages with more than 150 seats and definite construction features, but alternative theatres that convert nonconventional spaces into theatres spaces usually do not fulfil the licensing requirements. As a result, many alternative theatres in Istanbul face a problem of gaining a license and so are, in effect, condoned by most local governments.

Although this problem applies to all municipal districts and is largely the result of a lack of cultural policy and an administration that translates these policies in the necessary regulation, our research shows that this problem is tackled in the districts of Kadıköy and Şişli. Whereas in Şişli, the personal interest of the Mayor plays a role in supporting alternative theatres (Langerova and Seyben, 2013), in Kadıköy a platform founded by the old and locally more embedded private theatres, namely Kadıköy Theatres Platform, undertakes the responsibility of contact with the Municipality by providing an intermediary role through which alternative theatres can convey their needs and problems to the Municipality.

In Beyoğlu, in contrast, the Alternative Theatres Joint Initiative currently does not produce such a collective form of action to communicate with Beyoğlu Municipality. As Langerova and Seyben (2013) note: "they don't get any fiscal or other contribution from the Beyoglu Municipality" (p.6). This is perhaps surprising considering that the very foundational aim of the Joint Initiative has been to establish contact with the Municipality for licensing requirements (needed for opening and running a theatre) and public funding through 'in kind' aids, tax reductions or promotional needs (allowance to put up a signboard or orientation sign). However, an interviewee who was responsible for the communication with the Municipality in the early days of the Initiative expresses that none of the meetings with the Municipality led to any results.

Voice

Relate to the problem of licensing, a second mode of state regulation revolves around the problem of an explicit mobilization of censorship laws, by rendering the municipalities as competent

actors in shaping what is and can be said and expressed by these alternative theatres through the power of closure. Knowing that the problem of censorship is ever present throughout Turkish theatre history, either hindering the promotion of conservative and religious forms during the authoritarian secular period of the 1930s, or excluding left wing ideas during the 1980 Military Coup Period; today, the promotion of conservative

and authoritarian values by the AKP government rearticulates censorship mechanisms in such a way that they pose a threat to freedom of expression in the case of alternative theatres. This seems at least partially related to the impact of the Gezi demonstrations: in line with the overall negative attitude of the AKP government towards those artists that supported the Gezi demonstrations, all interviewees from the alternative theatres indicated that after their presence in the Gezi events, they can no longer be supported by the Ministry grants and Beyoğlu Municipality.

The closing down of Kumbaracı 50 in 2010 for not having fire stairs, is a clear case in this context and one that has been widely discussed in the mainstream media. Kumbaracı 50 was closed shortly after submitting their license application to the municipality, which shows the important role of licensing as a source of power. Kumbaracı 50, in proximity to the Tophane neighbourhood where a devout Muslim community lives, was at the time preparing a play called *Yala ama Yutma* (*Lick but Don't Swallow*) that received severe criticism from a national conservative newspaper for insulting the values of Islam. Agreeing with all interviewees that perceive this closure as a form of censorship, with the issue of fire stairs used as an excuse, one interviewee from Kumbaracı 50 links this closure to wider questions concerning the relation between municipalities and alternative theatres:

"*Indeed the problem is deep-seated. I mean why we are obliged to squeeze in those spaces, or why we can't go to the municipality and ask a space for performing our theatre. This is the way it has to be, however, as we are not civilised enough so everybody tries to take care only of themselves. The moment that they want to close down our spaces because we have no fire stairs, they are right. However the problem is that they don't make any effort for solving the situation. So, there is no relation between us and them and no path forward.*

Her reflection on the limited interest of the municipality in finding a solution for alternative theatres leads her to further thoughts on the limits set to freedom of expression. In her opinion, she expresses the basis of these limitations by saying "[...] *however if they want to keep the boundaries – and if it is difficult to keep these boundaries in art – then yes, try to solve the situation; they have already created this economy through other means, so here it's difficult to keep the boundaries they define"* and she continues *"when I say 'boundaries' I talk over the questions about the control of public morals. Whose public morals? Who will control it? Then you can understand why they try to put down these boundaries".*

Invisibility

This combined impact of licensing and censorship mechanisms within the urban environment of Istanbul leads to a third moment of regulation, namely the structured invisibility of alternative theatres in Istanbul. On a basic level, this is the result of alternative theatres locating in back streets, where they can afford the rents, and off the main roads or public highways. Related to the problem of limited opportunity to put up orientation signs or larger signboards – a combination of lack of funds to do so and municipal licensing – this means that alternative theatres for most people are simply invisible (see photograph). One of our interviewees highlights this as follows: "*indeed, you should not try and seek after a theatre hall, just as you don't search for a public office or a car gallery, all of which have frightfully big signboards. You saw that we have a teeny signboard, just as other alternative spaces do. Our only way of obtaining a big signboard from the Municipality is to spend an enormous amount of money […] otherwise they don't care about us*". Similarly, another interviewee described the problem of licensing and invisibility through further thoughts: "*First of all, we want work permits from municipalities. Nobody wants to do something illegal. We don't do anything bad or concealed. We are asking for licences from the municipalities; however, among their thousands of responsibilities, young people who want to do theatre have no importance*".

What we see here is that besides the visual invisibility of alternative theatres in the city, they also perceive themselves invisible from the point of municipalities. Therefore, this type of regulation creating a structured invisibility that leads to a non-relation in the sense that relations between alternative theatres and Beyoğlu Municipality are often based on avoiding contact. It is clear that earlier attempts to communicate with the Muncipality to request licensing or to fulfil promotional needs, developed in the context of the start of the Joint Initiative in 2011, have not been continued until today. This lack of trust and limited to

no encounter between different publics clearly shows in the interviews:
"For my future projects in public space, I don't think I wil stay in Beyoğlu. I made a clean break; I am not considering Beyoğlu. Our third public space project can take place in Beşiktaş or in Kadıköy[...] I mean, it's clear that the ranks are divided [...] now is not the time for a Jean d'Arc kind of heroism, by entering into a state of conflict. Okay, I will fight for my thoughts as an opponent through other media, but I won't right now for performing my art."

"I think as much as we complain about how they don't do us any favours, it won't work. I always say that I should find another solution, because I didn't do anything when relying on the Municipality. I don't know what my friends will think about that, but neither does the Municipality trust me nor do I trust them."

It should also be noted that the shared feeling among all interviewees was one of frustrated efforts to communicate with the Municipality in the past and a lack of energy or will to try again: expressions such as "we feel tired now" or "we lost the motivation" were recurring phrases in the interviews. However, as we will argue in the next section, it is this very invisibility and sense of frustration towards the Municipality that also impacts the formation of network relations between alternative theatres and that constitutes a promise for democratising urban spaces.

Organizing theatre spaces and networks

It is within this urban landscape of formal and informal state regulation that alternative theatre networks try to find spaces for theatre performance and, in doing so, shape the urban neighbourhoods in which they operate. In this section we discuss the organizational dynamics of these theatre spaces and networks, focusing on three elements: First, the main survival *tactics* pursued by alternative theatres; second, the ways in which these tactics involve *collective actions* that bypass more traditional, hierarchical modes of organisation; and third, the extent to which this leads to the creation of *micro-publics* that contribute to the city as a site of democracy.

Tactics

In order to understand the survival tactics of the 'second generation' of theatre makers, we need to look first at the tactics adopted by some the 'first generation' pioneers: DOT, Garaj İstanbul and Kumbaracı 50.

DOT (http://www.go-dot.org/) was the first theatre group that brought the in-your-face wave to Istanbul in 2005, adopted a revolutionary way of communication by developing different publicity tactics and by attracting remarkable attention from the media. However, as Başar (2014) argues their ticket price policy and location choice for shopping malls that mostly target white collar workers has limited the creation of a diverse audience. Secondly, Garaj Istanbul started in 2007 and was a pioneer example of using individual support mechanisms and sponsorships to fund a theatre space independent from state funding. They collected 500.000 Turkish Lira from 100 contributors, with that they succeeded to convince the Ministry of Culture to provide support through one state bank and a state controlled lottery service. As a result, for the first time in the Turkish history an independent theatre space opened with the support of both public and private sectors (Dervişoğlu and Aysun 2008). Finally, Kumbaracı 50 (http://kumbaraci50.com/) was founded in 2009 and followed the same tactic as Garaj Istanbul in terms of gaining individual support from various contributors. In contrast to Garaj İstanbul, however, Kumbaracı 50 was an initiative of an independent theatre group called Altıdan Sonra Tiyatro (Theatre after 6 p.m.), whose members had started as amateurs during their university education at Istanbul Technical University in the 1990s. While performing for 10 years on different stages, they continued to have other jobs such as academic, engineer or architect and they used parts of their income to open their own theatre space. Kumbaracı 50 has thus introduced another model that makes it possible to open small scale alternative theatre spaces with the support of small amounts of individual contributions as well as investing money from other jobs. We would argue that this 'mixed funding' tactic was a key contributing factor to the spread of alternative spaces across Istanbul in the 2010s, since the success of the pioneers encouraged many other young people to start their own theatre spaces.

Collective actions

Building on these tactics and learning from each other's initiatives, alternative theatres started developing collective actions in order to support each other, find solutions for common problems and increase their visibility. This was formalized through the formation of the Alternative Theatres Joint Initiative in 2011. Mainly consisting of alternative theatres located in the Beyoğlu district, it operated from the very beginning in a context of urban renewal and gentrification processes that threaten the existence of alternative theatre spaces. Relying on rented spaces, the theatres are always in danger of losing their location when a landlord finds a more profitable tenant. The theatres also share the same spatial characteristics in the sense that they are blackbox stages and locate in the back streets of the main avenues. This 'forced' settlement in the back streets with lower rents gives these spaces a collective interest in terms of self-definition, visibility and survival in Istanbul.

By dealing with very concrete aims such as sharing costs for promotion, the Joint Initiative addresses practical concerns and ties in with the daily working practices of the theatre makers. This has the effect that different theatres start developing similar and collective modes of working: ranging from opening new theatre spaces and working together in different phases of the renovation and management of the spaces to collectively managing the Joint Initiative. The following interview quotes give an indication of this process:

"While we were having breakfast, we and our friends from Ikinci Kat, just realized that we could get a leaflet printed for 400 TL; so we said let's share the cost 200 TL each and print a leaflet for all of us. So, we decided to share this idea with other alternative stages, and this is how the collective has emerged […] I mean, it did not appear as a conscious attempt at organisation, but it served that purpose."

Similarly, other interviewees emphasize the role of friendly meetings in enabling the continuation of collective activities and, in doing so, revealed the importance of collective reflection and spontaneous support in the face of challenges:

"Sometimes they ask if we 'organise' meetings. Sure, we are meeting, but it is not a desk bound organisation: we go to a café, laugh together... The most important thing here for me lies in the process of thinking together […] as we have no formal agreement or a contract that obliges us to get together like other associations."

"I think this is a kind of group that achieves a way of standing together, different than the many other people over the years doing theatre here in Turkey. None of them supported each other like this. I mean it's not easy to stand together, to share problems, and search for solutions for these 10 theatre spaces; I found their attempt very valuable. We are so similar to each other; if one of us has some technical problems we can call another in the next street and ask them to bring some equipment, for example. I think this is nice; this is cooperation; it brings our all our wishes for producing together. In that way, you feel stronger."

The fact that cooperation is associated with 'strength' by all of our informants points to another fact that each theatre space of the Joint Initiative perceives themselves as collaborator instead of competitor of the same field. In this context, many activities that they prepared together like AltFest, being the first alternative theatre festival during which they play on each other's stage, the organisation of seminars about conceptual discussions on alternative theatres are part of their efforts to increase their visibility by supporting each other. For instance, the concert organisation called 'Songs from Backstage' carries the aim of supporting Şermola Performans (www.sermolaperformans.com) who faced severe financial problems in 2015. Beyond these activities aimed at sharing their audience and creating financial support mechanisms to enable survival, the theatres also organize social responsibility projects to direct the attention of their audience to socio-political problems. For instance, they played for the benefit of Tiyatro Medresesi (http://www.pam.org.tr/WPEng/), or for helping Van, a city in south-eastern Turkey, after the earthquake.

At this point, it should be noted that the use of social media appears an important aspect for providing both the spontaneity and the cooperation among themselves. As one interviewee states "*Many of us has minimum 10.000 followers, it can reach also 20.000 or 30.000 and within our followers there are*

many celebrities known from film and television series, so our campaigns which start in Twitter can spread to a wider audience. So when we just started small scale Twitter actions and then it gets bigger." Besides using social media for their visibility, in their daily lives they are regularly in contact through their mobile phone applications. Although they can't meet regularly due to their workload, the use of these kinds of applications keep continuous their contact and enable them to be aware of their problems, to think and to find solutions about the problems in a spontaneous way. A very concrete statement below expresses how their use of social media forms a basis for their spontaneity and cooperation that resulted in a feeling of strength:

"Last year, one of our artists was taken into custody. During this process, we really felt the support of alternative theatres. Due to the Twitter hashtag, this issue can create a significant impact on media […] Now, I am very happy to be part of them. For our generation, we believe that we'll be more powerful if we stand together. We think over our problems together, and we talk together about our coexistence. This is why this collective makes me feel good.

Micro-publics

Although in general terms the audience of alternative theatres could be defined as the young, educated, urban population of Istanbul from the middle and upper middle class, this very small proportion of the Istanbulites leads us to scrutinize the role of alternative theatres in creating a loyal audience that constantly comes to these spaces. On the level of content, these spaces stage plays on, for example, LGBT individuals, women with headscarves or Kurdish people -- stories usually not seen in either publicly funded theatres or the commercial private theatres. In addition, due to the characteristics of blackbox stages, the experience of watching transforms from 'theatrical' into 'real' modes (Başar 2014: 170). Herein, the cooperative aspect seen in Joint Initiative manifests itself in the target of creating a loyal audience who have a similar world view with them as stated below:

"We aimed to put our spaces on the map. For instance, you know Kumbaracı 50 and you can know other stages through Kumbaracı 50; and anyone who comes to Şermola can go to Mekan Artı, and when he goes to Mekan Artı he becomes aware of a play in Tiyatro Hal. Besides increasing the visibility of our places, we also want to show the audience that there are even more spaces in which they can find plays made in a similar language and with a similar world-view.

Moreover, these spaces enable to meet people having a common sense of cultural taste in terms of loyalty to the same bookstores, cultural centres or theatres and meanwhile who are suffering from the same problems about their city and country like injustice, freedom of expression, intervention into the lifestyles, or closing down of their favourite cultural spaces due to neoliberal urban policies. The expression of one interviewee as "*our spaces become meeting points after the closure of the important spaces like AKM*" underlines the meaning of these spaces for their loyal audience who wants to preserve their lifestyle in the city through their cultural habits. Another interviewee emphasizes the significance of these alternative theatre spaces for the audience by saying "*people who think like us think that they are in a 'safe place'. From the moment he enters in this space he faces the things that he can't confess or that he wants to shout out*". The descriptions such as 'meeting point', 'safe place' find meaning more clearly in the statement below by showing how these spaces create a life space for people who are discontent with the government's policies:

"If our spaces exist, they become a 'living space' for the audience. They come to your theatre, and then on to the next bookstore, or the exhibition on the next corner. By doing this, you contribute to the forming of a space that people who have alternative views can breathe and live […] When people come to our space, they say "I am not alone, 50 other people are also here tonight with me. Something is going wrong in this country, but there are also tens of hundreds of other people who, like me, feel uncomfortable with this situation". So, this feeling gives you the power of survival. In that sense, our spaces feed an alternative view of life.."

At this point, we want to switch from the term audience to the concept of 'public' for defining people who display loyalty by coming regularly to these alternative theatre spaces and following consciously their performances with a hidden appetence to meet people who think like themselves and to feel safe while complaining about the actual problems in their city or country. In other words, the

life spaces created by the alternative theatres result also in the emergence of a specific public. The micro-publics created in and through these alternative theatre spaces is similar to Başar's understanding of 'performative publicness', which refers to people that "watch a play together, share the story and talk about the ethical processes of the singular events of the story" and, in doing so, relate this story to "the publicness of Gezi Park resistance which had key terms of physically staying together and sharing" (Başar, 2014: 208). It also resonates with the argument of Fırat and Bakçay that public space is not simply a given space but a bundle of network relations produced at any moment through collective actions. They put forward the term 'aesthetic-political actions' in order to link these collective actions with the new publicness formed by 'bodily emotions' during the Emek Movie protests in Istanbul (p.10). Herein the 'emotional publicness' appears as a key term that addresses a public created during the protests through the collectiveness of individual memories and longings about Emek Movie which represents a 'first movie watched during childhood' or 'first kiss in a cinema' (Fırat and Bakçay, 2012: 13).

Conclusion

The main aim of this paper has been to investigate the ways in which alternative theatres shape the urban spaces in which they operate, how this in turn is regulated by local government regimes, and the extent to which these theatre spaces contribute to the city as a site of democracy. We observed two types of relationships that are in turn interdependent. First, starting from governance actions of the local municipalities, it becomes clear that the relations between alternative theatres and (Beyoğlu) Municipality are primarily shaped through two aspects of regulation, namely licensing and censorship, which leads to a very critical third one: a structured invisibility. This invisibility, having a critical role in the formation of the Joint Initiative in 2011, on the one hand resulted in actual non-relations between theatres and the Municipality, even to the extent of avoiding contact with the Municipality. On the other hand, this same invisibility plays an important role in shaping the network of alternative theatres – under the Joint Initiative – which connects them through collective actions.

The collectiveness, argued in this paper as a source of strength in the face of the dominant urban order draws its power from two dimensions: spontaneity and cooperation. Spontaneity, underlying the very foundation of the Joint Initiative is also seen in the collective actions where they gather by creating a visibility in the social and mainstream media. In that sense, it should be emphasized that through these spontaneous actions they actively take place in the urban social movements like Emek Movie protests, Gezi Events and We're at AKM Initiative; and perpetually create awareness about the closure of the veteran art spaces or about the censorship cases. Accordingly, we would argue that they are democratizing urban spaces by being articulated in the urban social movements.

The second dimension is the horizontal relations through which each constituent perceives each other as collaborator for increasing their visibility in the city. By suffering from the similar spatial and locational problems, the alternative theatres believe that they can increase their visibility and they can survive in the neoliberal city only if they cooperate. Therefore, instead of seeing each other as competitors of the same field, they develop activities based on cooperation for putting their spaces on the map. Hence, it leads to a second breaking point for democratizing urban spaces: the production of a micro-public. More clearly, these alternative theatre spaces emerge as the new 'meeting points' within the neoliberal city which takes the life spaces of this micro public out of their hands; the new 'safe places' where this public can share freely their dissatisfaction about the regulations of the State.

Therefore, in terms of extending the limits of the democracy, the fact that The Joint Initiative disagrees with creating any contact with the Municipality leads to an essential problem: The efforts for avoiding contact and the state of non-relation, which close the doors on the confrontation between two opponent actors of the city, jeopardises the legitimacy of the alternative theatres in the eyes of Municipality and meanwhile the chance of being defined and visible in the city. However, this kind of relation keeps alive the struggle of the alternative theatres for their survival, by making the Joint Initiative an active agent within the neoliberal city.

Finally, this research which reveals an empirical output aimed to position alternative theatre – through the Joint Initiative – as a promising agent within the neoliberal city based on their common

struggles not only originating from their concerns about censorships but mainly stemming from the concerns about their spaces. Accordingly, a dichotomy is presented between the very invisibility of these alternative theatres and the hidden strength that they possess as an active urban agent by implying a space of hope. This finding requires us to examine, in further research, the relations between alternative theatre and the urban space from a theoretical perspective which will lead to a more advanced conceptualization of these relations.

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Challenging the Narratives: Higher Education Institutions and agency in the Creative Economy

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ABSTRACT

This article is based on empirical research of both young people (Higher Education students in London) and representatives of industry. It attempts to assess the means by which current higher education institutions [HEIs] can work to challenge current conditions of employment in the so-called 'creative economy'. The article will first examine the background to this subject -- the current perceptions of labour and employment in the creative economy (this study is UK based, but its findings are relevant internationally). It will then briefly examine the role HEIs play as 'producer' of talent for this 'economy, and by drawing upon two projects that examine work placements and curriculum development for young graduates, the article will attempt to define how employment opportunities might provide agency for young graduates as they seek to develop a career in the creative economy. While the context and examples in this article are drawn from the UK, this article will conclude by highlighting how, given how 'creative economy' as a policy concept is becoming globally influential, these issues are relevant to HEIs internationally. In conclusion, the article will assert that we (education professionals) need to consider more reflexive and critical ways of preparing students for work in the creative economy, in the cause of social justice, development, as well as careers.

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Challenging the Narratives: The Role of Higher Education as agents in the Creative Economy
Lorraine Lim

Introduction

This article seeks to assess the possibility for contemporary higher education institutions (HEIs) to challenge current working practices in the creative economy. The article will first examine the current state and perception of work within the creative economy in the UK, before examining the role HEIs play as a 'producer' of talent for this sector, which is relevant globally. By drawing upon two projects that examine work placements and curriculum development for young graduates, the article will then show how there are opportunities to provide some form of power and agency for young graduates as they seek to develop their career in the creative economy. While the context and examples in this article are drawn from the UK, this article will conclude by highlighting how these issues are prevalent in the creative economies accross the world, and will assert that we (education professionals) need to consider alternative ways of preparing students for work in the creative economy, in the cause of social justice, development, as well as careers.

Introduction: work in the Creative Economy within the UK

In recent years, culture has been understood and used by governments around the world as a tool both to bolster economic growth and advance social development. The potential for culture via the creative economy was formally recognised back in 2008 by major the United Nations agencies, for example where the *Creative Economy Report* 2008 (UNCTAD, 2008) stated that "the creative economy has the potential to generate income, jobs…while… promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development" (p. iii). This belief has been reiterated in 2013 with a special edition of its *Creative Economy Report* (now jointly published by the UNDP and UNESCO), and which highlights how the creative economy is not only "highly transformative…in terms of income-generation, job creation and export earnings", but investment in this sector can also contribute to the "overall wellbeing of communities, individual self-esteem and quality of life, dialogue and cohesion" (p.10). The financial support of large-scale cultural projects around the world – from cities such as Abu Dhabi and Singapore, to policy developments to allow for the creation of creative clusters in Shanghai and London – is testament to how this policy belief (without a huge amount of empirical evidence to back it up) stands as a firm political principle, where a "creative economy" is understood to be an engine of growth, and must be adopted at all levels of governance as a form of strategic development, particularly in the cause of reversing the decline of economies built on agriculture and manufacturing.

The rise of this "creative economy" has thus occurred alongside a positive notion of the type of work that this economy demands, or is available for would-be-creative workers, along with a positive notion of the way such work is structured, organised and managed in this new creative sector (or series of sectors – there is little consensus on how the creative "economy" is structured, whether in a city, or country, a region, or globally). Work in the creative economy is routinely understood to be 'creative' (again, another largely undefined term) and by this virtue is understood as particularly rewarding for the worker. Creative labour is where workers are to some degree autonomous and independent; they are more able to set their own working hours or indeed work in a variety of locations. In other words, the creative economy promises the opposite (an antidote to?) the alienated labour of industrial modernity. This comes with the irony that the above UNDP/UNESCO report is largely aimed at BRIC or emerging industral countries, whose stage of development one could describe as 'modernisation'. Most importantly for us, however, is that the forms of work that are being generated and produced within this new creative economy are routinely portrayed as fun as much as personally fulfilling – they are attractive to a wide range of people, and particularly young people.

The positive image of what constitutes work in the creative economy has not gone unnoticed by young people globally, in part as the creative economy notionally includes a range of consumer goods, cultural products, design and entertainment, that typically appeal to younger people (from video games to fashion to magazines, and so on). What has ensued in recent years (particularly within higher education in the UK) is

a growing number of young people positively inspired and motivated to develop a career in the creative economy (dominated, it must be observed by the media and communications industries, including marketing, PR and advertising). In the UK, recent figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency demonstrate that there has been a 5% increase in the number of undergraduate students who have applied for courses in the subject area of 'creative arts and design' (HESA, 2015). For graduates, it seems, being able to determine the very nature of work seems to outweigh more traditional concerns over the established professions and identities, security, pay and working conditions. However, the initial interest in developing a career in the creative economy might also demonstrate a lack of awareness of the actual, material working conditions that exist, where, for example, in many sectors of the creative economy there is a chronic shortage of stable employment opportunities, or where (in particular the publicly-funded arts and cultural institutions), there remains a state of severe budgetary pressures, particularly in their publicly-sourced revenues, and where the rise of private sponsorship or investment means that new pressures and limits are being continually introduced in relation to the opportunities for career development and progression. This paper will consider this current ensuing scenario – the seeming attractiveness and popularity of the new creative economy, whose actual conditions of labour are always partially (if not wholly) concealed from newcomers, are making young job seekers particularly vulnerable.

Higher Education and the Creative Economy

The often precarious and insecure working conditions within the creative economy has not gone unnoticed by scholars. One of the key areas of interdisciplinary research that has developed since the late 1990s in Western Europe has been the working conditions, expected behaviours, values, contractual terms as well as environmental conditions of workers within this new creative economy (see Ball, 2003; Gill and Pratt, 2008; Gill 2010; Bridgstock, 2011). The struggles of the new creative workers are being documented and recorded and a number of publications addressing issues such as inequality of access, lack of diversity, exploitation and working hours, has steadily risen in the last five years – and can be seen as a manifestation of a growing 'social conscience' in the new economy as a whole (see Allen et al 2010; McGuigan, 2010; Social Market Foundation 2010; Ashton, 2011). What, however, has been less discussed across the emerging schoolarly currents is the role that higher education (particularly the large, wealthy, and established HEI institutions) play within the creative economy scenarios outlined above, though this is gradually changing with recent publications (see Ashton and Noonan, 2013; Gilmore and Comunian, 2016) as well as conferences such as the Higher Education & the Creative Economy conference held at King's College, London in 2015 (see Comunian and Gilmore, 2015). The HEI's, we may safely say, are part of the production process through which the creative economy develops. They are not marginal in their impact or role, and not somehow sealed within a hermetic sphere of social life called the 'public' sector: quite the contrary, in recent years their behaviour, values and operations of HEI's have taken after the pattern of American corporate strategic management, and their subsequent corporate interventions in industry and the careers' marketplace have been highly strategic and part of their overall delivery on their educational aims. The creative economy largely functions through a supply of suitable labour (labourers who are suitably already inculcated with the behaviours and values required for such labour – flexibility, adaptability, the acceptance of non-monetary rewards, individual 'trade-offs' of monetary reward for personal reward, and of course the availability of 'creativity', and so on).

These young creative workers are almost always educated at college of HE level, and are students when they encounter the creative economy 'imaginary'. The HEIs provide the training and qualifications of such graduates, but perhaps more importantly, it is within the education system that the notion of 'creative economy' as a desirable career destination is inculcated – even to the extent that other, potentially, rewarding careers (in Law, Medecine, and so on) are turned down in favour of it. To the extent that the HEIs, therefore, support the creative economy, what are their roles and responsibilities as they produce the

next batch of eager graduates keen to develop a career in this sector?

A critical reflection of the responsibilities of HEIs within this creative economy is a crucial step for scholars to undertake, for two reasons. Firstly, it is clear that young creative workers are reliant on a formal qualification to set themselves apart within a highly competitive sector, where employment opportunities are scarce. Statistics released by the UK Government Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in 2014, state that "more than half (57.7%) of jobs in the creative economy were filled by people who have a degree or higher qualification in 2013 compared to 31.1 per cent of all jobs in the UK" (2014: 13). This figure, it seems, has only risen within a year where the Creative Industries Federation (CIF) writes that "60.5% of creative industry workers are graduates compared to a UK average of 31.8%" (2015: 25). It is obvious that HEIs play a key role in providing what seems to be an endless resource for the creative economy in the form of a large number of young graduates "whose skills are generic and in constant oversupply" and who are therefore "forced to accept low pay" or no pay when they seek to develop a career in the creative economy (Arvidsson et al, 2010: 296). How then should HEIs think about their complicity in perpetuating to some extent the precarious working conditions in the creative economy itself?

Secondly, with the number of graduates greatly outnumbering available paid employment within the creative economy, an increasing number of unpaid internships or 'work placements' have emerged and are being assertively promoted by firms and public institutions alike, as well as NGO, development organisations and universities themselves. The rationale is (even) often charitable – as a means of a potential entry route into paid work. Within the UK, there is tacit acknowledgment among young graduates that unpaid work via these internships or work placements is one of the main ways, if not the only way, to securing future paid employment. It is often a standard requirement on a CV, and for many cultural institutions (or small creative agencies who operate on lean revenues) it consistently helps their lack of organisational capacity. Official guidance on how arts organisations should offer and offer internships, from Arts Council England and Creative and Cultural Skills, is no doubt a sign of the widespread nature of this practice (see Arts Council England and Creative and Cultural Skills, 2011). Being able to 'work for free' thus privileges particular students and graduates, which, this paper contends, has resulted in inequality of access and a lack of diversity in the workforce in the creative economy. CIF highlights that while

> Public investment supports the identification, diversification and training of creative talent…92.1% of workers (in the creative economy) were from advantaged social and economic backgrounds compared to a UK average of 66.0%. In the creative media sector alone 14% of workers were educated in independent schools which represent only 7% of the population (2015: 25).

This lack of diversity is predictable, and furthermore it is not limited to the economic background of the worker but also to their social background. In their research on work placements in the arts and cultural sector, Allen et al (2010) would highlight how gender, ethnicity and disability play a role too in how students are able to access, obtain and conduct their work placements. The difficulties they face are reflected in the percentage of women and black and minority ethnic workers within the creative economy. Here women hold "36.7% of jobs compared with 47.2% in the whole UK economy" and the percentage of black and minority ethnic workers only represent only "11.0% of the creative industries workforce, compared to 14.1% of the overall population of England and Wales and 40% in London where there is a high concentration of creative industries" (CIF, 2015: 25). What is clear is that there are structural inequalities with regards to work in the creative economy. There is a need to combat the effects of the 'neo-liberalisation of work' where young workers now believe that success is predicated on what they do and that they are therefore "personally culpable for their own failures" (McGuigan, 2010: 328). Is there scope within the curricula of HEI courses that address these issues – or should students be left to think that success in the creative economy is predicated simply on their own personal self-sacrifice, on hard work and passion,

which (they are told) will overcome any barrier? This is a central research – as much as a policy – question. And it is a question, which openly discussed, will have political as much as economic implications for the growing dominance of Western HEIs in the global landscape of education provision for young aspiring professionals.

This paper's current parameters are, however, more limited. The issues above are not easy ones to consider outside the large survey-derived economic and employment data, of the kind only large (and often government-sponsored) research agencies provide. What then is possible for the individual cultural policy or development researcher? When viewed, partially, within the current state of higher education in the UK today, it is not difficult to observe that HEIs are under increasing pressure, as such 'pressure' tangibly impacts HEI employees themselves. The changing spectrum of responsibilities now required of the 'scholar' or 'university academic' would attest to this. As would the appearance of careers centres in every university, and the uses of careers 'rhetoric' as a means of advertising a given course (indeed, a few decades ago, that courses would need to be 'advertised' would seem bizarre; that education would need always to be justified, and evaluated, by and within the context of prospective careers, would also seem ridiculous). Research evidence – albeit again of a general observational kinds – can also be derived from government reports (such as the Review of Business-University Collaboration published in 2012, henceforth referred to as the Wilson Review) to produce 'employable' graduates through working with businesses to provide appropriate work experience for their students. This 'skills' agenda has now become a global trend among HEI providers – it is a part of the 'export' factor of UK (and European) domestic policies. The introduction of tuition fees by UK universities, of up to £9000 a year (and double or triple for international students), has also entailed a political mandate for institutions to demonstrate that the courses they offer not only justify the cost of this tuition but that the course itself is calculated as an investment that can and will lead to individual monetary gain through future employment. The introduction of Key Information Sets (KIS), where universities routinely tabulate the number of students in employment six months after completing their studies (including data on how much their graduates are earning), are directed at potential applicants and envisage opportunities in the labour market. Investment-style information for potential students is becoming a routine way in which HEIs are engaging with the wider employability agenda, and justifying the public funding of education.

It is thus important here to think about how HEIs can challenge both the current narrative of work in the creative economy, as well as the wider employability agenda and its set of political madates. Is it possible for HEIs to nurture their students' interests of work in the creative economy while also preparing them for the realities of this work (and its ideological significance in the HEI sector itself)? Is it also possible for HEIs to challenge and problematise the 'employability agenda' where students are expected to be able to find work as quickly as possible after graduation? Is there space within HEIs to think about what other skills and knowledge are needed by young graduates that will allow them to develop a long-term sustainable career? My study below seeks to examine if HEIs could, firstly, potentially disrupt or change their role within the creative economy by challenging what skills and knowledge its graduates should possess, and secondly, by problematising the employability agenda. In what follows, I will draw upon reflections of two projects in which I was involved in as a tutor and researcher. The projects sought to determine what the gaps were within the the ways that work placements were being offered and organised, and in the syllabus that was currently being provided within the courses of HEI departments. I was able to develop a curriculum framework that would address the issues articulated above. These two projects involved working with students, industry professionals and arts organisations, and my account below will aspire to reveal how it is possible to open up avenues for challenging the current narrative of work in the creative economy as well as the employability agenda, and do so through the creation and provision of a space that allows for reflection and discussion so as to enable all participants to think about the state of the creative economy today and their role within it.

Challenging the Narrative of Work Placements

In an attempt to understand how 'work' is perceived and understood from various perspectives within the creative economy, I presided over the organisation of a roundtable and a workshop session, where students and industry professionals were invited to discuss and share their thoughts concerning the prospect, nature and meanings of 'work' in the creative economy. This was structured with a focus on three themes: recruitment, skills and knowledge and expectations. It was clear from both discussions that the reason why work within the creative economy is precarious, low paid and exploitative, can be identified in the way the creative economy is structured – in terms of how people access work in its sectors, and how successful people working in these sectors perpetuate structural inequalities, and perpetuate a professional rhetoric that conceals the nature of structural inequalities (sometimes by way of representing those inequalities as themselves professional challenges).

One of the many of structural inequalities identified is the plethora of recruitment processes across the creative economy's various sectors. While it is acknowledged that work placements and internships form a part of an identifiable problem, other issues point to less visible phenomenon, like the lack of 'standard' recruitment processes and the tendency for networks to act as intermediaries of recruitment forming a kind of 'hidden jobs market'. The existence of networks was not so much an issue of social justice. It was occasion for advice provided by industry professionals on how students could attempt to access such networks, ranging from the setting up of their own networks, or volunteering and undertaking various kinds of work placements that in turn allowed them to access certain networks. A deeply uncomfortable dimension of such advice was the range of established assumptions on students and graduates, that they would possess not only the financial means but also the time to seek out such opportunities, notwithstanding their social ability to negotiate closed professional networks. Evident also in the ensuing discussions was a critical lack of reflection from industry professionals of the interconnection between the current lack of diversity in the workforce and the potentially exclusionary practices endemic in the networks themselves. Why is a 'network' a natural or acceptible phenomenon in the creative economy? What was even more troubling was the evident lack of understanding between the participants – between the young graduate working for free in order to develop their career and a well-established company board member who was, at this stage in their career, able to volunteer their time routinely for a variety of activities. As one participant, a former industry professional, stated "Unpaid work will happen throughout your career…there are people at the top of their profession who are doing things for free" (Industry Professional, 2014).[1] What this participant failed to take into account was how they belonged to a "small elite that can command high levels of market power" and thus enjoys a position where he or she is already well-remunerated for other work that they do" (Arvidsson et al, 2010: 296). This points to another structural inequality, where the working patterns of a small group (of mature and well-established professionals) set up and establish as norm an horizon of expectations, in turn which is imposed on large numbers of young workers, most who do not enjoy the financial security or privileges that enable them to participate at all. At the crux of these two issues is the lack of power, and the form of agency young graduates possess when it comes to forging a career in the creative economy.

One small way in which my colleagues and I have sought to address the question of power, agency and the structural inequalities that are so embedded in the discourses and professional thought-processes that determine life in the creative economy is the offering of work placements within our own HEI courses. By bringing together organisations and universities that offer work placements, along with students who had undertaken them, a series of 'ethical' work placement contracts were drawn up (see Hope and Lim, 2014), and they were drawn up in a way that attempted to address exclusionary and exploitative dynamics that so

[1] Participants in the project chose to remain anonymous. The industry professionals that took part included a HR and Recruitment Consultant in the film and media Industries, a former Arts Council England employee and Freelance Arts Consultant, a TV and Film Journalist, an employee within an arts organisation, and a founder and owner of a non-profit arts venue.

often emerge when unpaid labour is involved, and to provide a cognitive context for understanding such dynamics.

Within this new improvised contractual framework, students were encouraged to think about what they hope to achieve while undertaking the work placement, and how the work placement would help develop or address a gap in their current skills and knowledge. In addition, students were asked to think on what they can reasonably expect of a work placement with regards to supervision, training and learning, and how the dynamics of power impacted upon them. It became apparent how, for many organisations, an immediate question arises, concerning that if what is being offered is a genuine work placement, where there are specific learning outcomes and proper training and supervision provided, or not. In fact, what is a genuine work placement? And where are the lines between instruction, valuable work experience, and exploitation?

Most importantly, how can HEIs play a role in mapping this terrain, defining these lines, and challenging the way the recruitment of its students into the creative sectors currently takes place? HEIs are asked, in our contractual framework, to ensure that students are conscious that the aim of their work placement is to extend their academic development – and is not a 'magic ticket' or simply way into future paid work in the creative economy. As currently constructed by the creative economy, the very concept of a 'work placement' is inherently exclusionary and exploitative (it is free labour and only admits certain types of person), we have sought to mitigate against this to some degree through the mechanism of the contract – addressing a source of exploitation. This source is the learning outcomes of the placement (where often there is a complete lack of genuine learning outcomes, as the work placement role is often itself motivated by the operational avoidance of hiring a paid worker or member of staff to fill a gap within the organisation's operations). By therefore making 'learning' the contractual aim of the very offering or undertaking of a work placement, we seek to locate the conditions of agency in the free labourer. We ensure that the student is able to locate themselves in a situation of relative power, by ensuring that they are aware of the reasons why they are providing their labour for free, and they assess their own expectations of what the work placement will provide by way of adding to what they have gained in their studies. The contracts sought to challenge the current narrative of work placements as a form of free labour for organisations and recast the work placement as a process of critical reflection on the intellectual conditions of labour in the creative economy. Gaining work experience beneficial to their own personal circumstances, and enabling the student to develop their career, is freed from the instrumental conditions that require the student to undertake work of no benefit to themselves and at their own expense.

In other words, the balance of benefits are contractually weighed in favour of the student: where the organisation is taking on a worker without sector-specific skills and is required to invest time and money in that worker's training, the worker in turn delivers work that is both of benefit to the organisation yet also instrincially developmental. The critical component is therefore development – the contractual negotiation of the exploitative work placement mechanism is by way of an investment in human development. The student is awarded a sense of agency through the way the work placement opportunity extends their capabilities (Cf., Sen, 2004).

Challenging the Employability Agenda

Another outcome from the roundtable and workshop discussions were our identifying the forms of skills and knowledge students should possess when they graduate. The outcomes of this discussion is critically engaged with the highly politicised 'employability' agenda, typified in the Wilson Review. The Review states that one of the ways in which universities can 'contribute' to society is (not only through their research, but) ensuring that "the enterprise and entrepreneurial culture…is developed amongst its students.[…]. and the applicability of the knowledge and skills of all its graduates" (Wilson, 2012: 13). The Review is a conduit for a predictable political rhetoric, where the central task of public universities is the production of graduates able to secure jobs upon graduation as they have the appropriate skills that

businesses or organisations at that particular time require. Or, if they are unable to find such jobs or roles in industry, that will are able to be "enterprising" and create their own jobs or role in the marketplace.

While this neoliberal logic seems (in the contexts in which many of us work) so fair and reasonable, among the many things it misrepresents and fails to acknowledge is the basic working conditions within industry (particularly in the creative economy), which not only differ widely (and sector by sector), but are changing rapidly, and that often lack recognised and stable lines of progression into work. Many sectors even lack fair regulation of access and equality through an application process and an interview assessment. The Review also fails to acknowledge that given the lack of regulation, most workers in the creative economy already are or have to be entrepreneurial by default, given the precarious nature of creative work itself and the exemption of so much of the creative economy from unionisation and standard labour laws. I would suggest that the very concept of 'employability' needs to be reconsidered in this context, and a properly critical consideration could begin with the joint report *Working Towards your Future: Making the Most of your Time in Higher Education* produced by the National Union of Students (NUS) and Confederation of Business Industry (CBI).

In this report, employability is defined as "a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure that they have the capability of being effective in the workplace" (NUS and CBI, 2011: 12). The inclusion of the word "attributes" not only, sensibly, highlights that different types of work would require different qualities in a person, but that it points a critical failing in the politically motivated rhetoric around he discourse on employability in education. It also allows for a broader theoretical integration of education aims with the Human Development 'capabilities' discourse. It widens the understanding of what 'employability' could entail – and this is centrally concerned with the agency of the student. What 'attributes' are needed to successfully negotiate and develop a career (in the creative economy or elsewhere) must concern the specific requirements a student must possess in facing an industry or marketplace of complexity, structural inequality, closed or concealed networks, lack of legal scrutiny and regulation, and where the line of progression is not clear. In other words, the student faces the conditions for disempowerment and a self-de-valuation. The first stage in developing attributes suitable to a neoliberal economy should therefore be – as noted in our project exercise above – a critical self-understanding of one's motives, position, resources and abilities in relation to the uncompromising systemic frameworks of work and the work place. It needs to proceed to a developing of an understanding of the processes of work, (which refers to the HR dimension of work as related to values, as much as the commodification of 'creativity' itself as related to the cognitive implications for the worker) and what the organisation may demand in terms of individual commitment or expenditure of personal welfare. They then, and only then, progress to developing an explicit understanding of the modes of intelligence, thought and practical application suited to a specific industrial field, or sector.

Such industry-specific attributes required for young graduates (specifically to develop a career in the creative economy) were identified in the above discussion with industry professionals. While the participants acknowledged that cognitive skills (reading and writing well, analytical skills, and so on) were taken for granted, young graduates needed particularly to learn how to deal with professional rejection and failure. This apparently psychological phenomenon, it was noted, possesses a profound socio-economic dimension, where in the creative economy the potential of failure is high, and where rejection can often feel deeply personal (almost penetrating a person's sense of identity) due to the extensive subjective investment that creative labour involves. Here industry professionals wanted universities to be places where students could experiment and fail, outside of the pressures of the industry – where failure would not obviously mean a huge loss of income or the breakdown of professional networks and relationships. Universities should be a place where failure could be explored, and where failure could become learning opportunities in an industry where second chances are few and far between.

Interestingly, that despite the specific demands of

the various creative sectors for specific skills, the student participants too were not centrally concerned with the 'tool-kit' approach to learning and 'being equipped' for industry. There was scepticism all round at the assumption that being in possession of the supposed necessary skills on an arbitrary careers 'skills list' entailed success in obtaining a job in the creative economy. Rather, their interest was stimulated foremost in information (where they can find access information on the inner workings of a particular industry or field) and secondly, the need for a space to develop the facility of self-reflexivity and self-evaluation – so as to become more aware of how they presented themselves, their communication styles or body language, for example. Students articulated a need for opportunities in role-play, (presenting a pitch to a potential producer, or how to network, or how to engage in conversation socially), and other issues to do with the internal dynamics of self-presentation within the job process. Students were interested in being provided opportunities where they could think through potential responses from a variety of situations, and their suggestions articulated what in effect needs to be challenged within the politicised employability agenda and its focus on skills and knowledge. The issue of "attributes", central to a person's sense and activation of their own agency, is something that requires further research investigation (and integration into our conception of skills and knowledge). We surely require a broader notion of what kind of experiences, qualities and individual characteristics, young graduates could cultivate that would allow them to confidently face the uneven landscape of the creative economy and maintain a stable sense of self and potential development.

To achieve this, my students and I developed a curriculum that would provide them with opportunities for 'Reflection', 'Expression' and 'Experience'. Here students devised topics and tasks that they felt would feed into these three themes. Some of these involved reflecting on the way their personal and professional identities were interconnected, and also questioning the notion of 'work' and what 'success' means within the creative economy. Tasks included developing a personal pitch and practising this pitch with their fellow students, and conducting interviews with industry professionals to find out more about their career trajectories. This again is a small step in challenging the current rhetoric dominating how students need to be in employment within six months of graduation – in a sector where the notion of 'employment' is fraught with ideological complexities and assumptions on the nature on the global economy and its trajectory. What this curriculum frames is skills development process in which knowledge as self-knowledge is embedded and empowering. A sense of agency is afforded the students through establish them in the understanding that the embedded social inequities of the economy does not reflect negatively on them – the system's unequality should not inculcate a value judgement on their individual sense of worth and potential capability. In helping them develop the capability for specific tasks and activities that allow them to address the particularities and dilemmas embedded in the creative economy, we develop a social consciousness of the dysfunctional dimensions of that economy. It is clear from how this curriculum developed, that students wanted an opportunity to examine issues of employability within the wider framework of what it means to make a living within the creative economy, as well as the nature of 'success'. Being able to 'make a living' would thus encompass more than just being employable, but also include other aspects of 'work', which in turn would require a critical engagement with issues on cultural labour, managing the different aspects of one's professional and personal life when they became increasingly merged, and of learning different coping mechanisms when things go wrong or remain precarious. Being able to provide a space for students to engage with these issues challenged the rhetoric and assumptions of the employability agenda, but more than that, it allowed the process of constructing employability a creative process of critical thinking and inquiry, building a range of attributes in a student's sense of agency in the face of a success-obsessed labour market.

Further Challenges and Future Directions

Access to work in the creative economy is exclusionary and to a large extent tends to benefit the socially and economically advantaged. The current

composition of workers across the creative sectors is testament to how opportunities for career development are so skewed towards the economically and socially privileged. However, this is not specfic to the creative economy in the UK. Research conducted on creative labour in America, Italy and China, among other countries in the world highlights how these conditions are prevalent globally (see Frenette, 2013; Arvidsson et al, 2010; and Kanngieser, 2012). Such working conditions are consistent with our understanding of the neo-liberal direction of the global economy, which brings into question how these two UK specific projects would be able to challenge current working practices in these sectors in other countries. One must not underestimate the influence and impact of the UK with regards the various policies and strategies undertaken by different countries around the world as they seek to develop their creative economies. The widespread adoption of the UK Government's 1998 Creative Industries Mapping Document (DCMS, 1998) in various countries in Europe and Asia is one such example of the global knowledge flows of policy, strategy ideas, along with their embedded values. In addition, the large number of students from Asia (and other parts of the world) coming to the UK to obtain their higher degrees in areas associated with the creative economy also point at how their understanding of the creative economy has the potential to influence the way they work when they return to their home countries. The increasing mobility of young workers and the ways in which technology allows for international collaboration on multiple levels also continually blurs the lines between the creative economy jurisdictions of nation state labour markets. There are commonalities within the creative economies in various parts of the world that make it possible to see how the projects I have discussed could give young graduates the ability to challenge or disrupt the way these sectors function and are structured, wherever they choose to work in the future.

There are, of course, inherent limitations to these projects and their practical investigations. Firstly, any such project schemes work within current prevailing conditions and practices – cognitive as well as professional – with the creative economy as it is currently constituted; and secondly, they only address one part of the creative economy, largely with regards to the 'production' of talent – not the technical creation and production of cultural goods. Overriding both these issues is the idea that the creative economy is a positive force for good due to the way it is currently measured and quantified by governments: it is 'good' because it is an engine of economic growth, thus all aspects of the economy from production to consumption should be nurtured and supported, be they HEIs producing the students, to the creation of creative clusters to generate cultural products and the liberalisation of trade laws to promote consumption of such.

There is an opportunity here for HEIs to question and open up the notion of what constitutes a 'good' creative economy. Is there another way in which a creative economy could be measure and quantified, which moves beyond the economic as currently defined? What other kind of contributions could a creative economy make if it offered access of opportunity so as to ensure diversity within its workforce? This is important to consider given how the types of products produced by the creative economy provide people with "recurring representations of the world...constitute our inner private lives and our public selves' and 'contribute strongly to our sense of who we are" (Hesmondhalgh, 2007: 3). It is thus vital to ask not only what economic impact this sector has but also what kind of social impact it could have and in what shape and form. Attempting to deal with these issues would mean offering alternative narratives that are currently being presented by governments and institutions. Perhaps the biggest challenge for HEIs would be how to investigate and effect any findings or suggestions within the present pressure of meeting the aims of the employability agenda. Yet, to continue on the existing path runs a risk of forgoing an opportunity where HEIs could do more than just be a 'producer' of talent for the creative economy (and in so doing exacerbate some of the worst aspects of the global neoliberal economy). Instead, we could locate ways of effecting real change, so as to be able to address the structural inequalities of the sector and develop an economy that is genuinely creative.

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Digital Media Activism and Nigeria's Public Sphere

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ABSTRACT

This paper offers an empirical and theoretical overview of the uses of digital media in the development of a national public sphere. It attends to several aspects of the classical Habermasian concept of the public sphere, as well as the cooption of those aspects as features of more recent formulations of a 'digital public sphere'. While this article maintains a certain scepticism with regard the political agency afforded by the use of digital media in a national public sphere, it also expresses optimism in the way that young entrepreneurs in contemporary Nigeria have been able to marshal digital media as a means of generating intelectual debate and accessible information -- on matters central to the kind of deliberations required for a substantive public sphere to emerge. The article thus explores current changes facing the Nigerian political system, locating the place of an emerging digital public sphere within it. The second half of the article accounts for the the evolution of digital media in Nigeria: who is using what platforms and for what purposes? It offer an overview of three case studies, demonstrating how information and communication technologies are being applied by way of demanding openness and transparency from government and public officials, as well as spurring political consciousness from one active citizen to the other. The article concludes with a discussion, largely derived from interviews with other active members of the putative, emerging, Nigerian digital public sphere.

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Introduction

In 2013, the United Nations embarked on a crowdsourcing exercise to develop the next generation of anti-poverty goals. They employed digital media and mobile phone technologies to create an inclusive communication environment for people all over the world to have a say in shaping the new global development agenda. The web platforms for this global conversation were "The World We Want 2015" website, Short Message Service (SMS), and Interactive Voice Response (IVR). In Uganda, through a free SMS-based citizen reporting system, the UN was able to aggregate the views of over seventeen thousand young people on what the development priorities in their respective communities should be (Kjovern, 2013). This global conversation, enabled by digital media technologies, has led the United Nations to this conclusion: "people want to be a part of delivering this new agenda, and to hold governments and businesses accountable for their promises and commitments" UNDP, 2015).

The fast adoption of digital media in Africa (largely, it must be said, mobile phone telephony) delivers for the UN a ready-made platform for the advancement of the Post-2015 agenda. Where people seek to hold their governments accountable for their promises and commitments, digital media has so far been instrumental in meeting these needs (or appearing to meet them) through diverse group initiatives and individual innovative projects. In this article, I explore the idea of digital media activism in Africa (specifically, Nigeria) using three case studies, where through active digital media participation, interaction, and a display of democratic culture, the government is being held to account by a burgeoning public sphere that requests it 'legitimates' itself before the people. The aim of this paper is to examine the idea of social change via digital media in Nigeria, Africa, from the communication platforms employed, to the local-centric techniques and strategies discharged in meeting civic activism goals.

Digital media and public sphere theory

The 'public sphere' is a strong theoretical concept, famously set out by German social philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1962), and subject to revision and critique ever since. It essentially refers to the realm of interaction and communication where citizens deliberate and articulate their views on matters regarding political decision making or considered to be in "public" interest. How this happens, who populates, controls or dominates this 'sphere' (or indeed whether a unified or single or dominant sphere exists at all) is a matter of constant scholarly debate. The issues of concern in our context are not so much the classical matters that are associated with the relationship between the state and civil society, law, order, security, or internal issues regarding procedures in the administration the country. They concern the way that digital media technologies have very rapidly and effectively opened a space we can credibly refer to as a 'digital public sphere'.

Moreover, one of the features of this new public sphere is activism – its dynamism, lack of established protocols, fluidity, routine anonymity, rapid response mechanisms and mass mobilisation impacts, have generated unique opportunities. Of course, scholarly debate remains on the definition of 'activist' and, as Bobel (2007) argues, there is a lacunae between "doing activism" and "being activist". Many actors within new social movements reject the label "social activist", as indeed older concepts of citizenship have become outmoded given the social complexity and diversity of contemporary society. However, as contemporary forms of social protests continue to draw on more easily accessible new media technologies in the communication and amplification of "movement messages/agenda", we can expect a clear-cut identification of the social activist, as much as the occasion of their activism.

Habermas' original perceptions of the historical public sphere was arguably more abstract than empirical, and grounded on historical notions of collective representation as political communication, rather than actual institutions, organisations or related administration. Similarly, the manner of public sphere that is emerging on digital media platforms, can only be defined as a 'space' of representation that is formed through acts of dynamic communication. It is structurally expansive, and constituted by multiple and hybrid flows of communicative interaction (cf. Castles, 2008). In other words, it features social forces that do not make for the standard processes of institutionalisation. Although, of course, socio-physical institutional spaces such as coffee houses and salons were, for Habermas, inextricably bound up with the historical evolution of the public sphere

in Europe, (and the machine of the printing press played a crucial role is facilitating the articulation, amplification and dissemination of deliberations that took place in this public realm), we cannot find a parallel, stable, mechanical infrastructure or apparatus for the digital public sphere. We cannot, as the media infrastructures and 'machines' (or today, 'devices') are multi-purpose, improvised, globally mobile, intangible, of dispersed ownership and administrative control, only partially subject to political jurisdictions, and so on. I will not labour this argument here, as the purposes of this paper lie elsewhere.

The public sphere has, in part, migrated to a multiplicity of platforms, and as Castells points out as a general principle, the contemporary public sphere involves avenues removed from any physical location; it is increasingly global both in its frame of references and values (2008: 79-80). The rise of radio and television, old media, impacted the public sphere, but has now been subject to what Bolter and Grusin (1999) term 'remediation'. This remediation does not simply make sense of the introduction of new media technologies and devices, but also the impact their arrival has on existing media technologies. As they point out, new media, the Internet and the diverse nature of digital media, are not exclusive from 'old' media, but rather, they embody and articulate the function of these old media, while extending that function into regions of society and culture that old media was once absent, or socially had not yet emerged.

The interpenetration of digital media into 'everyday life' makes older scholarly proclamations on the democratising effect of national television, or the reversal of the democratising effect of television by international media corporations and business elites, and the dissolution of the public sphere, all seem quaint. The brave new world of digital media has opened up a 'local-global' synergy, where personal ejaculations can now find a global audience in a way that directly pertains to the formation of social movements (cf. the work of Douglas Kellner). The expansion of the idea of the public sphere to embrace digital media technologies attempts to take this into account. Through digital media, new forms of public communication (where 'forms' also entail scale, reach and impact) are emerging, where remediation ensures that this is not some niche area or social trend that might disappear as fast as it appeared. Even 'traditional' national newspapers now use internet platforms (websites, blogs, social network sites) to ensure their very survival; the very future of old media (of media at all) rests with the new digital media.

Understanding Nigeria's political system

According to the Federal Constitution, Nigeria functions as a democracy. And yet this ideal as is found in many nations, and often only partially manifest in practice. That Nigeria operates as a democracy presupposes the adherence to basic tenets and conditions of democracy that are relatively unanimous in scholarly discourse. They are the tenets of representation, participation, and popular inclusivity, which yield fully informed citizens, who are enabled to contribute to decision-making by the State, regarding their social, cultural, and economic life. These tenets are thus grounded in communication media, alternative spaces for interaction, and the role of the state in ascribing legitimacy to the citizen. Democracy comes with the freedom to express oneself, human participation and rights are guaranteed, and the rule of law is not subverted on any account.

Nigeria as a political entity was created in 1914, when the British colonialists merged the Northern and Southern protectorates. Prior to this development, the regions that make up Nigeria were autonomous in their ruling of one another (Falola & Heaton, 2008: 7). Hence, when Nigeria gained independence from Britain in 1960, the regional arrangement of the Eastern, Western, and Northern region prevailed, albeit that they functioned under one government. Subsequently post-independence, there were coups, a civil war, and the consolidation of a military system of government for most of the 1980s and 1990s. Democracy became reinstated in the country in 1999, when the military finally handed over power to the civilians. To date, there has been no return to the oppressive military system of government. This is the socio-political history that has shaped the character of Nigeria's current political climate.

In practice, Larry Diamond (2013), suggests that Nigeria's political system is best described as an "hybrid" form of democracy, given how its elections are sometimes fraught by corruption. And yet, the State identified with democratic ideals and there is a certain measure of freedom available to civil society.

There remains, as Diamond points out, a certain level of civil pluralism which in turn allows for some degree of representativeness. In this paper, I use the term 'democracy' in relation to Nigeria as a form of political 'culture', as distinct from the firmly established models and practices of government one finds in Europe, for example. Democratic *culture* refers not to systems or structures, but to the dynamics of values, practices, and behaviours through which abstract democratic tenets are wilfully expressed by both the people and their representatives.

Evolution of the digital public sphere in Nigeria

In the classical conception of Habermas' public sphere, *culture* is a significant aspect of society. Culture is a means of provisional solidarity and collective allegiance through values and beliefs concerning the nature of solidarity and collective allegiance and the individual benefits of such. The dynamic of social interaction that generates this provisional collectivity is *communication*. Communication is the animating form of agency that makes a public sphere possible. Here I submit that digital media has become a significant factor in the culture of democracy in Nigeria, and is facilitating the evolution of a new public sphere.

The rise in the adoption of new media technologies – even just the pervasive use of cell phone handsets and the various functionalities they provide – has generated new forms of communication and interaction in Nigerian society. Thus, the potential for solidarity and collective allegiance on matters of public interest, is effectively increased. This new 'culture' of communication, articulates certain democratic traits, for example, the rise of 'special interest communities' that might have otherwise found no means of social interconnection. More so, individual social and professional identities are being consolidated on these platforms, mass trends on discussion topics are formed, an awareness of current affairs and international events is being fostered, thus we find the embryonic conditions (in the form of creative behaviours and communicative responses) of a public sphere as an apprehension of the current state of national democracy.

The use of digital media technologies as political communication – official, governmental – is not new, as the world can witness with US President Barack Obama's own Twitter page, askobama.twitter.com. In Uganda, according to The Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa (CIPESA, 2012), information and communication technologies have been instrumental to fostering government transparency and accountability, as well as increase citizen participation. Email usage, social network sites, eForums, eNewsletters, discussion groups and SMS campaigns are some of the ICT tools identified in this CIPESA study, albeit that traditional media platforms of radio, print, and television remained significantly present in citizens' engagement with media tools.

In Nigeria, information and communication technologies (particularly requiring internet access) is an overwhelmingly urban phenomenon, which make up only sixteen per cent (16%) of the country (Open Society, 2012: 6). According to Internet World Stats (2015), internet users in Nigeria, as at June 2014, exceeded a total of seventy million people (out of a population of 177, 155, 754). This put the penetration per population at 39.7% and in Africa, 23.6%. Mobile chat apps are found to be popular in Nigeria no doubt because they are more adaptable where poor information and communication infrastructure prevail (Africa Practice, 2014). Mobile chat apps for instance, cost significantly less than SMS, yet fulfil the same function of communicating by text messages (Africa Practice, 2014: 6).

In 1996, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Nigeria's telecoms regulator, approved licences for Internet service providers to operate nationally. Linkserve was one of the pioneering internet service companies in the country (Vanguard, 2010), providing dial-up Internet connections for offices and households, albeit not cheap. Preceding powerful internet access that the influx of mobile telephony, which could probably be dated from 2000-1. Prior to this, the provision of phone lines fell under the ambit of the state-owned Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) and a few other private operators (Obadare, 2006: 97). "A decree regulating the activities of the GSM companies was promulgated as far back as 1992", says Obadare (2006: 97), and yet, the policy was not implemented under the then Head of State, General Babangida, nor his predecessor. In 2001, however, "the federal government threw open the auctioning process for four mobile licences in January 2001" (Obadare, 2006: 100) and within a few months, the companies that gained licences had "exceeded their

highest expectation" with the adoption rates. According to live data available on the NCC website, as at August 2015, there were a total of one hundred and forty-eight million, seven hundred and three thousand, one hundred and sixty (148, 703, 160) active GSM lines in Nigeria.

Since the rapid influx of mobile and digital media into Nigerian society, new possibilities have emerged for the mobilisation of public opinion, the dissemination of public information, and the creation of new forms of political scrutiny: new modes of good governance and means of stimulating a culture of democracy have emerged. Where a classical public sphere is represented by debates and deliberations (defined by the strength of their content, not the social, economic, or political rank of the citizen participant), public debate in Nigeria is complex. Even low-level public discussion on everyday issues can become fraught with ethnic strife and overwhelming religious influence, for instance. When these challenges are set against the backdrop of Nigeria's colonial and military history and an unstable political system, the notion of an effective public sphere – where public debates and deliberations maintain a direct claim on political and governmental debates and deliberations – Nigerian democracy is complicated.

The 'pre-digital media' public sphere in Nigeria, as Europe, tended to function as facilitated by opinion articles and 'letters-to-the-editor' published in print newspapers, in tandem with the programming of state regulated broadcast media. The pace of debate was slower, which allowed debates and their topics to be formed within a national hierarchy of issues, monitored and shaped by state or government interjection, and managed by the controllers of the media, who in turn were sensitive if not under orders from state diktat. However, the hybrid character of contemporary digital media now supports a matrix of often simultaneous communications – horizontal communication from citizen to citizen and vertical from the governed to the government, and where each line of communication can cross in multiple ways. The topics, or subjects of debate, can appear and disappear rapidly, and state intervention or the contribution from a government official can generate opposition and anger, not compliance and order. The hierarchies of public issue tend to be determined by intensity and density of communication activity, not by significant representatives or the airtime of an important broadcast channel. Through blogging, tweeting and 'Facebooking', to mention a few, Nigerian citizens have been able to generate content for public debate and insert topics into the public arena that would previously been subject to censorship or media controlled access barriers. Moreover, this in turn has meant that Nigerian citizens can now engender an involvement in social and political activism, where before such a role would be necessarily 'physical' (actual participation in a protest, for example) and often dangerous. The 'costs' of participation and influence in the digital public sphere have dropped significantly, and so have the entry barriers.

By way of overview, here below are some of my main observations, following field research, representing the way digital media is being used as a form of social and political activism – and this, I would argue in a broader study, is stimulating culture of democracy in Nigeria. In other words, digital media is generating conditions for the cultivation of democratic values and behaviours - democracy is being developed through spontaneous activism and digital participation and not by the standard procedures of state regulation or systemic state reform. It is a democratisation 'from below' – *bottom-up democratisation*.

- Immediate attention is drawn to inconsistencies in government policy; for example, *Occupy Nigeria* and the policy on fuel subsidy.
- Public officials responsible for particular public policies are being openly identified, and targeted publicly with petitions and questions.
- Government is continually goaded or beckoned to set up a formal and systematic account of its actions.
- Channels of communication on social or health issues have been diversified – allowing for a more effective targeting of needy or special interest groups.
- The cost of information – whether for personal retail expenses or for journalists doing research on political issues – drops significantly and the availability of factual data is more immediate allowing for more accurate reporting and rapid response of the agents of public scrutiny.

From this, I will cite three case studies by way of exemplifying some of these changes. The initiatives selected for this study are the *Nigerian Constitution for Blackberry app*, *Egunje.info*. and *BudgIT*. My interviewees are anonymised.

Case 1: **Nigerian Constitution for Blackberry**

Proponents of promoting democracy through internet usage have always celebrated its potential – to promote the spread of information, to stimulate active citizenship and participation, to increasing ones awareness of rights to freedom of expression and public opinions, to allow ease of access to the marginalised and disabled, and so on. The internet has opened up realms of possibility for the public realm, social movements and the expansion of political representation. The Nigerian Constitution for Blackberry is an 'app' – a small-scale independent software application – which as an information technology tool exemplifies this potential.

The app has simply condensed the Nigerian Constitution into a mobile-friendly format, whereby users may utilise the search function to access sections of the constitution that may be relevant to them at any point in time. During a research interview, Z & B [interviewees] highlighted that the download rate of the app (which they made freely available) began to increase towards the 2011 national presidential election. Another period that experiencing a spike in the download of the app was the Occupy Nigeria protest – a movement that stood against government's removal of the fuel subsidy, at the same time decrying the state of corruption in public offices.

Z & B convey how they created the Nigerian Constitution app out of a "gut-feelings" that Nigerians would need it. They say they felt people should be more curious and aware of their rights, in order to exercise them. In their words, the app "…got people for some reason to be more patriotic and say, you know, maybe I should actually know my rights - let me go download the constitution." Z & B have created the Blackberry equivalent of the app for other devices such as Nokia and Samsung. The app is useful in that, rather than having to go through the entire constitution for a specific term, that information is more accessible to you through the search feature. Z & B say that the app is a "very simple application", but it's one limitation is that "Even for people who are educated or enlightened, interpretation is still subject to having some sort of legal background." The limitation has to do with the content of the constitution not the app itself. Hence, although the constitution may well be on every citizens' mobile phone, there remain barriers to accessing its content or message. Z & B also point out the barrier of literacy and language. As at the interview date, they explained that they were seeking to update the app to feature local languages, as well as English language. Even then, Z & B expected that the complexity of legal language would be a challenge to the translation process.

Case 2: **Egunje.info**

Egunje Info is the initiative of another interviewee, S.A. Published on the Egunje.info (2014) website, it identifies itself in terms of an "anti-corruption, research and advocacy organisation with the vision of reducing the tolerance to corruption in Nigeria". Hence, through egunje.info, S.A uses research to engage in "constructive dialogue with the government, even during the military [rule]". Egunje is a Nigerian colloquial term for 'bribe'. In terms of application of digital media tools, S.A says the idea behind his initiative is to take the message about corruption from "Blackberry to Blackberry". In introducing his initiative, S.A says, "we've created a site where you can report corruption safely and we would pass on the details to the ICPC, if you are scared…" The ICPC is the corruption monitoring body in Nigeria.

The functionality of the Egunje.Info site is compatible the Blackberry and non-smart phones (feature phones) through SMS (short message service). The Symbian version is available for download; hence, it is accessible to those connected to the Internet and otherwise. S.A says users can "report [cases of corruption] from your phone", or alternatively, walk into their offices to report a case of corruption. The SMS function is easy to use says S.A, "you just have to say the name of the institution or type of complaint upfront, and then free text." S.A and his team then work with the call centre to "make sense of the SMS" and update their data base. Alternatively, people call in to their Egunje office to report cases, which they then also update on their records.

S.A explains that the reason why most people prefer to make phone calls rather than register their complaint on the website, is because "there is still

the fear of retribution." He explains that people are unsure as to whether "they can be traced", hence, they prefer to call in or report. Based on Google Analytics, a web tool that generates detailed statistics on a website's traffic, S.A says the majority of the visitors have been "the more affluent in the society." In his words, "they've been coming [to the site] on Apple, Blackberries and so on. But the people who have been reporting are not the people who can afford Blackberries." This led him to the conclusion that his organisation reaches two separate audiences – "those who are checking 'I hope my name is not there yet' and, those who are reporting 'this is what is affecting my life' says S.A. This corruption monitoring website has been a victim of hackers who tried to breach S.A's security "a few times."

Case 3: ***BudgIT***

BudgIt is a creative enterprise dedicated to re-presenting the Nigerian national government budget and consequent public finances data in more accessible everyday language – for "every literary span", according to the website. The tagline for this organisation is *The Nigerian budget made simple – using creative technology to intersect civic engagement and institutional reform*. BudgIT seeks to enable every Nigerian citizen an immediate access to national budget data and direct ancillary issues, implications, calculations and any other relevant public data. In a research interview with the founder, S.O., he opines that the general public literacy level in Nigerian society is a barrier to understanding the budget, hence, "a lot of people are making misjudgements", and "saying wrong things". This, of course, is heavily compounded by a lack of public dissemination of budget data on behalf of the government and its financial agencies, and so BudgIT acts as a social activism of public information – ensuring that accurate, digested and undigested, information on government spending and budgetary diktat is filtered through to the growing digital public sphere. For S.O., BudgIT centrally aims to present data and so empower the citizen with data – and so "driving institutional reform" through making that data the content of national debate. S.O clarifies that, 'If people don't understand these things so how do you simplify it, how do you make it of common understanding, how do you take it from that niche knowledge of the public finance expert and economists, to something that is of common understanding to all?"

BudgIT's strategy is *simplification*, and they achieve this through the use of info graphics, interactive applications, prints (leaflets etc.), radio broadcast, SMS and "as many tools as could connect to that literacy set of society". By "set", S.O explains that BudgIT users are identified by category, such as "actively literate set" and "grassroots set". He says the active literate set is the target group for BudgIT at the time of interview, and these, he asserts, "are mostly on social media, Facebook, Twitter…[and] strictly interested in [issues pertaining to] governance." S.O is very conscious of BudgIT's role in Nigeria's embryonic digital public sphere, and uses the language of "digital activism'; and yet, "the governance discussion [on social media] is an high-octane one, so we want to be just like the neutral voice in the room." BudgIT's activism is not inflammatory, and not actually politically partisan in its messaging content: while he admits to challenging the government and demanding accountability and transparency, he is not doing so through direct "political" opposition. S.O. deals in factual data – it is information activism. Without facts, S.O says, arguments on online fora would be ill-balanced and debates will not be informed: "government can't…nobody can argue with the facts or the data that is self-revealing".

BudgIT's enterprise strategy as an activist project works through securing public data for dissemination from both "primary and secondary sources". A primary source would be the government budget office, the office of the Account-General, while a secondary source may be the CBN website [Central Bank of Nigeria]. Data from these sources are taken and verified by BudgIT analysts, before being sent to the visualisation and development team "where we say how can we bring a story out of this data", according to S.O. He adds that, "we build graphics to ensure that it is interesting, a bit more appealing and people can connect with it."

On the circulation of the data, S.O says it's all public, on the website, in print, available to "civil society networks", and others "downloaded and printed independently." He continues: "We usually have this non-attribution stance, so you can pick it up and use it for yourself, it's all good…it's not a competitive stuff – the end goal is let's collaborate more, let's amplify the voices and the solutions…" On Twitter, S.O shares data using "small flashcards" that contain budget information as a means of linking up

to his website. Facebook is another tool he uses, combined with civil society groups on social networks, SMS, and "google groups of people." S.O says "more of them use these data to also make their own judgements – those are just the digital tools we use." For SMS, he says, perhaps one can send a text message requesting for some data from the budget, for instance, "you want monthly allocation for Anambra for this period, you just get it." Lastly, BudgIT is working with Maliyo games, an online gaming company to develop a web app. S.O says, "we have apps. We don't have a mobile app yet, but we have a web app. We have a mobile site, but we have a web app. And the web app, we are working with one with Maliyo games. They are building an android budget app for us."

Analysis and Discussion

From these small case examples we can gain an insight into the expressive potential of small-scale digital media enterprises as agents of activism in an embryonic public sphere. Each case was based on an interview with an entrepreneurial individual and whose role as agent of this new public sphere was innovative and in no way predictable. Older models of political activist or community leader or agent of social mobilisation are not appropriate. These individuals exhibit the enterprising skills of a business entrepreneur, enterprise manager, but whose enterprise played a central role in the processes of democratisation I above ascribed to the impacts of the internet, and effects of digital media tools more generally. Digital media has opened up a space in which citizens are able to be more expressive about their opinions – and that is obvious. What is more crucial, however, is that huge realms of public information, data or political activity, are digested and presented to specific categories of citizen. Aside from the debates and public opinion, which form the essential communicative content of any functioning public sphere, these cases articulate the need for specific forms of activism – providing certain kinds of content (objective, informational, data-sourced or factual) for such. These enterprises underline a critical issue for actors and agents in a new embryonic public sphere – the media (not just content) is crucial. And by media we mean a management of the relation between device, communicative act and engaged recipient or citizen – and where this relation is reciprocal, (which old media found very difficult, if not politically prohibitive).

The enterprising activism of the new digital public sphere, finds it much easier to cluster public opinion, which then builds a propensity to present the demand for social change or effect some form of political intervention. The cases all illustrate not only the importance of access (downloads, for example), but free access. Activist organisations tend not to monetise their essential services. Egunje.info, the Nigerian constitution app and BudgIt exist to support an emerging digital public sphere, not to at the same time present that sphere with a financial condition. Born out of a political consciousness of human rights and freedoms once deprived Nigerian citizens by the military junta of the past, and not least the rank poverty that resulted, the case interviewees all testified to a personal commitment to social justice, and this at the cost of immediate financial reward. At the same time, there was no expectation of public or governmental funding or the immediate donations that might come from a wealthy progressive middle class – and this has driven activists to develop profound entrepreneurial skills.

Whilst celebrating the potentials of digital media for democracy can be found on the countless websites of social movements or NGOs, we require more specific and analytical examples of the ways in which enterprise and activism can be more strategically and specifically applied. It will also remain important to critically address the reverse side of the Internet – as host to the worst, undemocratic movements, as stimulant of new forms of populism and misinformation. The internet does not in itself provide for the forms of political education that allow newcomers to tell fact from fiction. An education system and social involvement in public dialogue remains a considerable component of any emergent public sphere. Evgeny Morozov, in his 2012 book *Net Delusion*, argues that the 'counter-hegemonic' power of the internet is a "delusion" and "to salvage Internet's promise to aid and fight against authoritarianism…" we must eschew "cyber-utopianism and Internet-centrism". Rather, we must engage in a realist assessment of the attendant risks and dangers associated with the Internet, especially when situated in local contexts (2011: xviii). Morozov is not one of the many commentators (far Left and Right) who 'demonise' the Internet, he simply calls

for a recalibration of online activity with social activity.

In our three cases: certain themes stand out. Their enterprise activism maintained a strategic understanding of the relation between appropriate new media platforms, certain communication techniques, and the nature of their content. The substantive content and dynamics of an emerging public sphere, I would argue, depend on such a strategic comprehension if such activist entrepreneurship is to intervene in political discourse and stimulate a 'culture' of democracy. As Morozov suggests, we must contextualise any talk of digital media, particularly the internet, and not be deluded by the rhetoric of globalisation and its pretence to political universalism. While global civil society can be said to exist, the reality on the ground in Nigeria is determined by specific place-based activities of the kinds of enterprises discussed above, which engage directly with constituents of citizens whom they know and possess knowledge of.

BudgIt as a social initiative, operates from a website, social media channels, as well as traditional print leaflets. The use of printed leaflets is such place-based activity that engages 'street-level' citizens. The architecture of digital space, like Twitter, is then populated by a more substantive actor. However, in SO's opinion - "the conversation style, layout, makes you express yourself and just move on…" However, it can be argued that the ability to "just move on" in online interaction also poses a challenge. To move on from a debate without granting the subject matter substantial time for critical deliberation raises issues as to how effective the digital public sphere in itself might be. Unlike Habermas' classical public sphere that was mostly 'face-to-face', the digital public sphere brings participants spatially dispersed across several geographical locations into one discussion, but they are not in anyway bound to remain there, that is, in the conversation. Conversations online are transient. This transiency in turn limits the impact online deliberations may have on the governance decisions taken by the state over the people – knowing the people will "move on" after some time. This raises the need to develop a strategy around transience, consistency and permanency. Perhaps this can be done through live archiving, or perhaps through forging political alliances with broadcast media. The Nigerian budget, for example, can be a complicated discussion and perhaps in rural areas more effectively mediated by a radio and TV discussion, supported with online platforms content.

Concerning the architecture of a social network site such as Twitter, (that restricts each entry to 140 characters), certain issues can be avoided or discarded because their complexity cannot be adapted to fit into a series of 'tweets'. Other challenges plague other platforms. Facebook for instance, is less 'open' as one needs to send requests so as to add someone to your network (unlike Twitter, where you may simple "follow" or "unfollow" a profile). Instagram has an architecture better suited to pictures than written forms of deliberation, albeit having the "comment" function. It is equally clear that imagery has a place in a digital public sphere, but their role in linguistic discourse can be instable. All of the above illustrate how segmented and disjointed digital media platforms can be, and how digital media can as easily fragment a public sphere or at least limit its potentiality for effecting a collective participation in an emergent democratic culture. New ways of integrate platforms are indeed ameliorating this to some degree (where, say, a user may post the same content to Twitter, Facebook, and other social network sites at the same time), but this of course depends on the individual's tech-savvy-ness, education and availability of internet in the first instance, raising issues internal to arguments over 'digital democracy'.

For the Nigerian Constitution for Blackberry app, the interview with the creators revealed that they had proactively partnered with a local radio show on WaZoBia FM, "Know Your Rights", through which they publicise the app and encourage discussion around the content of the Nigerian constitution. Here is how they describe the radio programme: "They take a section of the constitution every week…and they discuss it, they break it down – 'this is what this means to you". This program is in pidgin (a Nigerian version of the English language), so anybody who is Nigerian should be able to relate to it…People call in afterwards, and based on that topic, they can ask questions." Z& B offered an example of a caller who wanted clarification about what the law says regarding an issue concerning his landlord/tenancy agreement. This example exemplifies certain key points. Firstly, that mainstream broadcast media (radio and television, or newspapers) may in some places remain critical to *digital media's* ability to stimulate a culture of democracy Secondly, the challenge of literacy (and digital literacy) in local

contexts, must remain a priority.

For the Nigerian Constitution for Blackberry App, the respondents identified language as a barrier to users' adoption of the app, and are working towards providing the same content in Nigerian local languages. Language as a barrier to effectively participating in the digital public sphere as an active citizen calls for a critical consideration on how to ameliorate this challenge. One suggestion would be that local technology companies be supported to produce local-centric technologies that meet the needs of the immediate society. Also, digital media technologies that are visual or voice-based, for instance, YouTube, are more amenable to adapting local languages. Hence, the communication techniques and strategies of cultural and social activists need to do more to take advantage of these platforms.

On the other hand, humour is a strong component of S.A's online interaction and communication. In his interview, he mentions that humour is what determines whether his "informational tweets" will get any traction, so he builds a technique around it. Further on, he explains that to pass across a message, in this case, educate people about corruption, you needed to "attract people first". "What gets them attracted to your message is the humour; it's showing something to be ridiculous, or…super-interesting…now they are interested, you can start to come out with the detail…" Here, we see a depiction of principles of marketing and creative entrepreneurship transform to activism. S.A has a target audience for his message when he goes online, and he seeks to acquire a captive audience for his social message.

Another communication technique through which S.A supports his activism online is through spreading "animated cartoons on corruption". They have been produced in mobile-friendly version in order to enable them to be shared "from Blackberry to Blackberry." Once again, S.A demonstrates a consciousness of his target market for his messages, including the digital platforms or devices they would most likely use to access his messages.

When S.A is on Twitter, he says "I have evolved my own style." This "style" is to share information he considers people do not have access to, and use hashtags "with lots of examples." Usually, S.A says he would then find someone who is ready to engage him critically and then "use that as an opportunity to now go deeper and share a lot more." On dialoguing and interacting online, S.A says "a conversation by yourself is a bit boring."

Lastly, S.A in his interview shared the use of SMS versus Twitter in launching social campaigns online. He describes the techniques as "SMS blast" and "Twe-minars." In his account, S.A says it was not financially sustainable to run his campaign via SMS in bringing traffic to engage on his anti-corruption website, egunje.info. This led him to seek a more affordable alternative on Twitter though conducting "twe-minars."

Twe-minars are simply traditional seminars, but conducted via Twitter. S.A says he had made initial plans to conduct his seminars to a class of twenty-two people, but his organisation was only able to recruit nine volunteers to attend. This led him to Twitter, where his four training modules were split into tweets and published for "social media influencers" to amplify by retweeting onto their respective timelines. The use of social media influencers is reminiscent of advertising on radio, television or newspapers, albeit it that in this case, money may not have changed hands. In the field interviews, Twitter-Conferences & Tweminars were disclosed as significant communication techniques for engaging in discussions online. "Dialogue takes place in the Nigerian digital public sphere through organised Twitter meetings" says S.O.

S.O, the BudgIT founder says about Twitter use in Nigeria, it "is the biggest opposition party to government…". In this statement, he demonstrates his awareness that discussions within the online public sphere does affect the Nigerian government to some extent. Content from BudgIT and apps such as the Nigerian Constitution for Blackberry; have been instrumental in social movements such as the Occupy Nigeria protest, which led to the scale back by the government on the removal of fuel subsidy.

Conclusion

This paper has argued, through case examples of new emergent digital media enterprises, that an embryonic public sphere is emerging Nigeria, and it is emerging outside the normal parameters of social change (system reform of a system of governance).

Change is emerging partly through pressure (as with older forms of 'pressure group' tactics) but where this pressure issues from a panoply of debates and issues under discussion, and not a single issue or from a single interest group. Change is also issuing from the disclosure of information and the visible identification of government and its ministers as accountable to a realm of decision making outside their immediate political orbit. The significance of the situation in Nigeria is that empowered by new digital media, a panoply of new enterprises have emerged, by which harnessing new media technology they in effect create a new social space. This space is used and occupied by others without immediate regard for status or position, and this in turn generates a more widespread social consciousness of the conditions of political change. These conditions I locate in the public sphere's foregrounding of communication and deliberation, with concomitant issues to do with access to space, social interaction, literacy, information and the demand that the issues of government are a matter of rightful debate for the people. While it cannot be said that the situation in Nigeria – of random, improvised, media enterprises, mostly driven by individual entrepreneurs – constituted a fully formed public sphere or component of such, I assert that what currently exists is an embryonic public sphere, a 'culture' of democracy.

However, I also identify significant inhibitors to the growth of this 'culture' of democracy. Literacy, language and access to digital technology and internet broadband (poor communications infrastructure) are a few. Moreover, where digital technology is increasingly a private, market driven and always socially improvised space, there is a chronic need for public leadership if an embryonic public sphere will remain embryonic and not constitutive of the broader representation of interests required for full democratic public policy making. That the Nigerian digital public sphere is emerging in the agglomeration and networked interconnection of blogs, social network sites, and mobile phones – an entirely commercial realm – is not in itself prohibitive. Civil society is largely 'private'. And yet, capitalism and democracy are historically antagonistic. Dean (2003) for instance, discusses how "communicative capitalism" stands in the way of the Internet's potential for democracy, as evidenced in the "expansion and intensification of communication and entertainment" (2003: 102). In a later paper she presages what we now take for granted, that the internet's vast and fragmented range of users do not meet the popular inclusivity criterion that democracy requires (1997: 278). The freedom we suppose digital media provide is the "freedom of the market" where "large corporations, pornographers, hackers, and environmentalists" thrive (ibid.).

So we conclude with this thought – which is the constitution of Nigeria's 'embryonic' public sphere. As empirical research can easily show, digital media and the internet have been used to empower agents and agencies, in tracking government's activities through crowdsourcing information and whole host of other democratic activities. Yet it remains that poor access, poor digital literacy, language barriers, and other challenges, attest to the continued need of traditional, state supported, broadcast media, along with government-led public policy making in education, social rights, and infrastructure.

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Resisting Linguistic Imperialism: a Response to the 'Chinese Dream'

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ABSTRACT

China, one of the world's oldest civilisations and now routinely cited as the world's second largest economy, has declared its ambition to *rejuvenate* and prosper under the government of President Xi Jinping. Since the slogan 'Chinese Dream' was promulgated in 2012, Chinese scholars have been made aware of a new impetus in the promotion of Chinese language and culture. However, globalisation has evidently generated (or played a role in generating) the spread of English as global Lingua Franca (particularly for culture, business and academic research), and this too has exerted a significant impact on China's national policies. This research paper sets out to investigate the reactions of Chinese scholars to the tensions created by these two 'forces', particularly as registered in the classroom discourse of university-level teaching in English. The paper's central subject is the problem of *imperialism through culture* – in this case, the cultural orientation (to knowledge and development) embedded, expressed and communicated by language. My findings are concerned with what is promulgated and what is resisted in terms of Westernisation and the phenomenon of 'linguistic imperialism'. Through a scrutiny of a pedagogic context, the paper identifies a critical tension in China, central to the Chinese Dream, along the simultaneous rise of English and the return of Chinese history, philosophy and literature.

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Introduction

The "Chinese Dream" is a term that has become globally renowned and frequently discussed since the President of People's Republic of China Xi Jinping came to power in March 2013. It is rightly and commonly understood as a politically engineered neologism that expresses China's national plan to rejuvenate the nation, improve living standards, construct a better society and build a strengthened military. Within this 'top-down' policy framework, there are countless supporting strategies being implemented, including the promotion of Chinese language and culture. One such strategic innovation has involved changes with regard to English language education in China. China's new found eagerness to promote its language and culture, not only within its own ethincally and culturally complex domestic territories, but also globally, can immediately be interpreted as a countermeasure to the worldwide spread of US popular culture as well as English as a Lingua Franca (henceforth ELF). The latter, of course, is commonly understood as a consequences of economic globalisation, or at least the economic interconnection of regional markets and concommitant flow of goods, services and capital. Recent decades have witnessed a tremendous transformation – often unnoticed – in how the languages of nations, tribes, and whole civilisations, have been undergoing, and the cultural implications of language. It is an assumption of this paper that language is not a 'neutral' media of communication, but embedded in the political economy of a country. By implication, culture itself is neither neutral nor insignificant with regard the economy of state politics and the orientation of national policy changes.

The central government of the People's Republic of China have indeed recognised that culture can no longer be taken for granted, or assumed to emerge from the routine social development and education of its people. Culture is a realm of values and beliefs, as well as aptitudes and capabilities, and these can change and will change. The question remains, under what conditions will cultural change ensue. China's government are providing for new policy conditions of cultural change, and these conditions are in relation to what is calls "core socialist values" and the recognition of the creative and cultural industries as a central dimension of national economic policy. Resulting from this, (and other measures), is a renewed concern with heritage, identity, cultural production and cultural content – of which the Chinese language is one pervasive dimension. In the West, the production and function of language is rarely considered as a part of 'cultural production', and yet this is what I am assuming in this paper, largely by way of observation of such recent developments in China's policy frameworks. Given how the "creative and cultural industries" as an economic concept, along with its range of creative practices (in design, fashion, gaming, music and so on), are so heavily mediated by globally disseminated Western products, the role of language within the creative economy is also, I venture to say, one seriously ignored subject for research. My study will undertake a linguistic analysis – but one which I hope will demonstrate a relevance and viability for cultural economy research, (where cultural economy is subject to a 'politics' of government policy making).

The phenomenon of ELF has been warmly received in some quarters and criticized in others. Scholars in support believe that ELF is a natural pan-national social development and its priority of communication allows for new spaces of cultural variation and accommodation (Guido and Seidlhofer, 2014; Jenkins, 2012, 2013; Motschenbacher, 2013; Schneider, 2012). The opposing view would understand ELF as promoting a monolithic English dominance and is merely another form of linguistic imperialism – where, like all imperialisms, linguistic diversity and cultural identity will be potentially under threat (Pennycook, 1994, 1998; Phillipson, 1992, 2003; Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1997, 1999; 2008). Evidence has shown that in the face of ELF expansion, certain kinds of negotiation and modification have taken place in professional and academic contexts so as to preserve local languages and cultures (Canagarajah, 2005, 2013, 2014). The current research in this paper aims to investigate to what extent the tension caused by ELF and China's national strategy has had an impact on the academics in China where English has been taught as a compulsory course for students of all levels.

In this paper I will approach the above tension from the perspective of teachers' classroom discourse, particularly the student's use of their mother tongue (Chinese) in an environment for second language (English) useage. Most previous studies exploring first language use in second language classrooms tend to focus on the metalinguistic or motivations and purposes of teachers' first language use in specific second language situations, so as to understand students' second language learning process (Barnard and McLellan, 2013; Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Carless, 2007; Copland and Neokleous, 2011; Macaro, 2000, 2001b, 2005; Moodley, 2007; Nakatsukasa and Loewen, 2014; Tian and Macaro, 2012). However, my intention here is to explore within a sociolinguistic framework the tension between first and second language use, using Phillipson's conception of linguistic imperialism theory, and in so doing I will assess the effectiveness of national language policy and the broader political landscape of cultural self-determination.

The Chinese Dream and Its Linguistic Implications

The term "Chinese Dream" was firstly proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2012 during his talk at an exhibition named Road to Rejuvenate. The term was subsequently was popularised in 2013 and after, and is now routinely used by journalists and visible in official government documents. Since then, the term has been frequently interpreted by Xi himself, party media, and political researchers. Though the overarching policy implications of the Chinese Dream seem vague, Xi has referred to the dream as national rejuvenation, an improvement of people's livelihoods, economic prosperity, the construction of a better society and a strengthened military. The meaning of this term can be understood on three levels. It represents (i) an advancement of the harmonious society for individuals, (ii) of the rejuvenation of the Chinese civilisation for the country, and (iii) of national strength (primarily military) for security of the nation.

However, the Chinese Dream is not exclusive to China and its people living in the P.R. China. Inwardly, it does indeed emphasise the rejuvenation of the nation and the improvement of people's living standards. It also includes the expansion and impact of a renewed China worldwide, enhancing the Chinese image on the world stage and in global markets ('soft power' policies). To this end, one key element that crosses both domestic and international or foreign policy-oriented concerns, is inevitably the promotion of Chinese language and culture. New strategies for promoting the Chinese language and culture is commonly considered a counter-strategy in the face of the evident development of English language education in China and, as noted, the rise of English as a global Lingua Franca. English is commonly learned as the preferred foreign language in China, although since colonial times has remained a second language for the majority of the language learners. Since the Reform and "Opening Up" policies (of Deng Xiaoping) of the late 1970s became effective, English language education has been developing rapidly, particularly in metropolises enjoying economic prosperity – such as Beijing and Shanghai. It is now taught as compulsory in most elementary schools, secondary schools and universities, and is included in all types of national and local students' attainment tests.

Nonetheless, subtle impacts on English language education in China could be witnessed in relation to the Chinese Dream. One such impact was the deliberate downgrading of the status of English in Chinese society, manifest, for example, by the reform of the English test in the national College Entrance Examination. Since the resumption of the traditional College Entrance Examination in 1977 after the Cultural Revolution, English has always been a compulsory test for secondary school students majoring in either science or arts for further education entrance. It has traditionally enjoyed a resulting performance equal to mathematics or Chinese itself. However, in 2014 the Ministry of Education announced that it was reviewing the necessity of English testing in the Entrance Examination, and one possibility was to outsource the English test to other types of organisations. Students would be able to choose the time and frequency of taking the test, and the test result would not be in the form of the actual score, as in the past, but rather of differring levels, where each university would simply determine their threshold level of English for recruitment (MoE, 2014).

The Ministry of Education did not call for an immediate implementation of this new policy and will wait untill 2017 when a consultation with each municipality and province is complete. In fact,

demands for reforming the College Entrance Examination has been a topic in the media for decades, but this is the first time substantial changes are proposed. This Ministry of Education decision is suspected to have been made under the pressure of some local authorities; for instance, in 2013 the Beijing Municipal Government announced its decision to reform both the Secondary School Entrance Examination and College Entrance Examination taken in the city (CEE, 2013). This reform will take place in 2016, and the proportion of the English test in a students general grade profile will be reduced whereas the proportion of Chinese will be raised. This, I suggest, is a symbolic action in the cultural politics of the Chinese Dream – delivering a fairly concerted message to Chinese citizens on the non-negotiable centrality of China's linguistic culture, particularly where education is a dominant mechanism of all forms of social mobility as well as economic prosperity.

Similar policy shifts can be witnessed in the reform on College English Test (Band Four and Band Six). These two national tests have existed since 1987 as a conventional practice to assess the English levels of non-English college majors. Students are required to take these tests during their four years of studies in colleges and the majority of Chinese universities use the results in relation to the final graduation certificate (though the Ministry of Education never specified that students had to pass these tests to successfully graduate: MoE, 2005). English was thus not only a criterion for students to graduate from college, but also a requirement set by most employers in China. However, in 2007 a number of universities declared that they would stop associating English tests with graduation certificates and the trend, among China's 2000 or more universities and colleges, has grown to the point where it is widely recognised that the test is not necessary ('Reform history of CET', 2014).

Apart from the sphere of education, the decline of the status of English can also be identified in everyday life. A most recent example was the new regulation issued by Shanghai Municipal Government in 2014 forbidding the use of a combination of both Chinese and English vocabulary in advertising slogans – stimulating that Chinese must be used alone ('No English-Chinese...', 2014). This act was widely understood as protecting the autonomy Chinese, but also raised some suspicions of the motivations of the Chinese Dream. Theoretically, the deliberate efforts to slim down the influence of English can be interpreted as an unavoidable scheme to resist the development of linguistic imperialism – so it is to this subject we must turn.

Linguistic Imperialism

The concept of 'linguistic imperialism' is related to historical conditions, particularly British colonisation, when English as the colonialist discourse was imposed accross its colonies, facilitating the bureaucratic management of economic enslavement, among other things. The fear that with the advancement of globalisation, a cultural colonialism of Easternisation through English will bring about a manifest neo-colonialist order seems entirely reasonable. One of the crucial changes that globalisation has brought, together with the rapid development of information technology, is the necessity for English when engaging in negotiations and transactions internationally. English's dominance is also a pragmatic fact. The notion of ELF has thus been heatedly debated in the field of sociolinguistics, where researchers more positively inclined towards the development of ELF tend to believe that ELF's built-in negotiability and variability "involves a good deal of local variations as well as substantial potential for accommodation" (Jenkins, 2009: 201). In other words, English no longer being strictly tied to the colonial ambitions of one (English) nation, and no longer being as mono-lingual in character as it was, it can now be appropriated and developed for the welfare and capabilities of other cultures and countries. It can creates space for its users to adjust their speech, expression and articulation, to an intelligible and appropriate degree (during conversation, or in cultural expression). However, a more cautious and often critical perspective is taken by those who argue that ELF promotes a monolithic form of English and will ultimately lead to greater overall homogeneity – from conversation and lingustic articulation, to culture. Among scholars who hold such perspective, Robert Phillipson and his theory of linguistic imperialism stands as a seminal example.

Phillipson regards the spread of ELF as essentially a form of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992, 2003, 2008; Phillipson and

Skutnabb-Kangas 1997, 1999), and that ELF poses a serious threat to other national languages and and multilingualism itself, generating a scenario whereby the linguistic heritage of many nations are, and will be, undervalued and marginalized. His definition of English linguistic imperialism is where "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (Phillipson 1992: 347). He categorises English linguistic imperialism as one sub-type of linguicism, which affects educational language planning in two respects: one in language and culture, the other in pedagogy.

Linguistic imperialism is also a distinct type of imperialism. It permeates all types of imperialism, since language is obviously ubiquitous, pervasive and the means for transmitting all ideas, concepts and a carrier for meaning and content. Linguistic imperialism is therefore a primary component of cultural imperialism, and is also central to social imperialism. It provides a conceptual framework within which the dominance of English language and the efforts spent to promote it can be understood (Phillipson, 1992).

Both Britain and the USA have longsince regarded the promotion of English as a national strategy of their own. The British Council has established itself as a key agency for the training of English language teachers worldwide, whereas America has also been aiming to advocate English language and American culture via a range of government funded education and development projects and private organisations. Language, in this context, is elevated to a significant status because it is implicit that a good knowledge of English language makes one favourably disposed to the country and its culture, which is conducive to country's cultural diplomacy or maintaining its interests through cultural bilateral relationships on the world stage. The spread of English as an international language becomes inevitably interconnected with the world economy, politics, military and so on. According to Phillipson, English linguistic imperialism both facilitated global imperialism and was a consequence of it.

The area of English Language Teaching (henceforth ELT) is where the advocates of ELF and linguistic imperialism theory holders diverge significantly. On the surface, it seems that both parties are against adhering to the norm of standard British or American English, yet they possess rather different reasons. ELF encourages teaching varieties of English language for the purpose of facilitating communication, but recent discussions on this topic have not developed a consensus on the extent to which ELF could have an impact on ELT pedagogy (Kirkpatrick, 2010c, 2014; Sowden, 2012; Jenkins, 2012). However, linguistic imperialism tends to believe that the ELT has economic-reproductive, ideological and repressive function, and that aiming at a British or American set of global norms could lead to a value dependence in the ideological sphere and furthermore cause dependence in the technical, economic and political spheres. Such dependence is a form of domination, or at the least an homogenisation that limits self-determination and so suppresses differentiation in cultural identity.

Phillipson (2009) has further developed his theory, emphasizing the importance of using robust language policy to protect the diversity of all languages. He argues that in order to understand how ELT has been shaped by political and cultural forces, we need to 'decolonise our minds' (Phillipson, 2009: 17). English, in fact, is tied to market forces with regard to both process and product. What we can do in order to resist such linguistic hegemony includes campaigning and awareness rising, investing in learning other languages, moving away from a monolingual model in both personal and professional contexts.

Although linguistic imperialism seems to lack support from other major theorists, empirical evidence has consistently been available to prove that negotiation and even resistance to the hegemony of ELF and the western culture do exist. For instance, conflicts between globalization and nationalism have lead to changes in language policies in many places so as to develop national identity (Canagarajah and Ashraf, 2013); increasing linguistic and social homogeneity in the representation of literacy and expertise has caused urgent local concerns (Canagarajah, 2005); immigrants to English-dominant countries have negotiated their language rights in order to facilitate communication or maintain or reconstruct ethnic identity (Canagarajah, 2012, 2013, 2014); and so on.

The influence of ELF is prominent in part because of the acceleration of the

internationalisation of higher education, particularly universities, worldwide. The mobility of young people in Higher Education has generated closer contact between people from various countries, resulting in a "new homogenizing discourses and activities across global Higher Education" (Jenkins, 2013: 5). The increasing use of international English language tests is a case in point, as is the escalating magnitude of English useage in universities where English is not even the native language (Jenkins, 2011). Under such circumstances, will Chinese universities, living in the irretrievably universal force of internationalisation, be pulled apart by the tension – of a top-down strategy of promoting national language and culture on the one side, and global trends in English and global mobility on the other? Has there been any form of resistance against the rising status of English language – without a consequnt limitation of a student's intellectual range or mobility? If so, who proposes the resistance and what form does it take? This paper now sets out to respond to this by looking at teachers' language-use in Chinese university classrooms.

Methodology

The context of an English department in a leading Chinese university is selected based on the hypothesis that the teachers' working language is English and that the changes of their language use, particularly their use of English, is indicative of the state of things generallly for academics in China. They are all facing the pressure of linguistic imperialism in the face of a national strategy of assertively promoting Chinese language and culture. Therefore, this short empirical case serves to consider the following: (a) the general observable language behaviour of teachers in English departments; (b) the extent to which their language behaviour is affected by the tension of the national strategy and the global ELF trend respectively; and (c) their interpretation of linguistic imperialism. Do they agree that the development of ELF is a form of linguistic imperialism? Why or why not?

The participants of this case are three male teachers (Teachers A, B and C) from a Chinese university exemplary in its foreign language teaching and research. They comprise a typical group of competent and qualified cases in terms of researching English language education at tertiary level in China, all receiving their Bachelor, Master and PhD education in prestigious universities in China along with experience as visiting scholars in English-speaking-countries. Their English language proficiency is necessarily at a high level (compared with other English teachers in Chinese universities as a whole). They have all been teaching for more than ten years (are all mid-career), that is, they are of a status where their professional self-understanding (of their jobs, students and curricula) have reached a stabilized and consolidated stage (Huberman, 1989).

I have employed classroom observation (lesson recording) and interviews as my two data collection methods. Classroom observation ran for eleven weeks of the summer term (from September to January). Classes of four subjects were observed: Advanced English, American Literature, Western Philosophy and British and American poetry.[1] A total of 31 lessons were recorded. Interviews were held with the three participants at the beginning and at the end of the study. A total of six interviews, varying in length from 30 to 60 minutes, were conducted. Interviews were undertaken in Chinese based on the preference of the participants. The first round of interviews aimed to obtain participants' general views on the term 'Chinese Dream' and its implications on the promotion of Chinese language and culture. Their opinions on the recent development of ELF were also asked. The second round intended to explore participants' language use behaviours, particularly their motivations of using either language. After data collection was completed, all lesson recordings and interviews were transcribed. Extracts of participants' use of Chinese in class were categorised based on their contents and time coding was applied to determine the amount of time participants spent on each category. Interviewing data were subject to thematic analysis.

Findings and Discussion

[1] Teacher A. taught English and American Literature; Teacher B. taught Western Philosophy; Teacher C. taught Advanced English. Advanced English is a comprehensive skill-based course, whereas the rest of the subjects are content-based.

The results of my data analysis have shown a surprisingly significant time spent on the use of Chinese in class, compared to previous studies into teachers' language use in second language classrooms. See Table 1.

Participants	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C
Average amount of Chinese spoken during a term	41.3%	50.8%	36.5%

Table 1: *Average Amount of Chinese Spoken for Each Participant.*

Considering that the classes observed were conducted in an English department for English majors, exposure of the target language is crucial for students' second language learning processes. The National Curriculum Guidance for English Majors also states that classes should be taught in English. To further explore their use of Chinese, each extract containing the use of Chinese in all the classes observed was categorised according to its content and purpose. Table 2. presents the ten categories generated from the current study.

1	Translating long, difficult and illustrative sentences
2	Explaining / paraphrasing / interpreting new vocabulary or difficult phrases
3	Giving procedural instructions
4	Explaining grammar
5	Providing background information
6	Lecturing on text-related culture/literature/philosophy
7	Asides/anecdotes/personal opinions embedded in interpretation/ lecturing on the text
8	Raising questions
9	Meta-textual comments concerned with interpretation, evaluation of the text, etc.
10	Emphasizing pronunciation

Table 2: *Categories of Participants' Use of Chinese in Classroom Observation.*

The category 'lecturing on text-related culture/literature/philosophy' was found to be the most prominent one both in terms of the amount of time and frequency. Time coding discovered that Teacher A., B. and C. on average spent 53.2%, 67.5% and 35.8% respectively on lecturing on text-related culture/literature/philosophy, even though such content was not part of the syllabus in some courses. Moreover, a closer look at this particularly category revealed that the majority of the content in this category was about Chinese culture/literature/philosophy. Questions regarding this phenomenon were asked during the interviews. Response from participants indirectly answered the second research question which investigates the influence of national strategy and global ELF trend on their language behaviour. It is only possible here to offer extracts from the interviews; they are as follows.

"I feel a sense of responsibility for giving students a knowledge of Chinese culture, literature and philosophy, because such knowledge is missing in the curriculum and the students definitely need it. As English majors who learn English and American literature and culture everyday, they should also understand the great history of Chinese civilization…I am aware of the amount of Chinese I am using in class. I deliberately employ a lot of Chinese because it is natural to deliver Chinese culture and literature in Chinese. It will raise students' awareness of appreciating their own language and culture." (Teacher A.)

"In order to understand Eestern culture, we have to firstly understand our own culture. It is only through the culture of others that can we best confirm our own moral standards. Firstly of all, they are Chinese. If they don't have a good grasp of Chinese language and culture, how can they call themselves Chinese? Sometimes I use Chinese to teach because I intend to establish a comparative framework within which students can form a cross-cultural vision based on the knowledge they learn. Otherwise how are they supposed to promote our language and culture to foreigners in the future?… I am not worried about them having enough exposure to English, since they are English majors. They have their own means to improve their English skills. English is undoubtedly an international language now…but as Chinese nationals, Chinese is of the most importance to them." (Teacher B.)

"I fully support the national strategy of promoting Chinese language and culture. I feel we are almost drowning in an English learning environment these days. Everyone is learning English. Every employer requires English test certificates. It has sort of invaded our lives. Our children are sent to learn English at a very young

age even before they can speak fluent Chinese! If we do nothing to control such situation, I am afraid that our nation will lose it to the ELF force… For instance, these English majors I am teaching now are immersed in English environment everyday. They listen to English songs, watch Hollywood films and American TV series. They chat to native speakers of English online. However how much do they know about their own language and culture? This is very worrying." (Teacher C.)

When asked for their interpretation of the term "linguistic imperialism", Teacher A. expressed that he was not entirely certain if his understanding was correct. He described it as "a new form of colonisation" and regarded it as detrimental to multilingualism and multiculturalism. He used the case of Hong Kong as an example where a fierce tension has existed within schools since the handover in 1997. Such instances can be seen in other ex-colonial countries, especially countries in Southeast Asia. Teacher A considered that ELF to a certain extent was a type of linguistic imperialism. Admittedly, English as an international language provides the means for people who share different mother tongues to communicate freely. Nonetheless the freedom and varieties of English that ELF encourages actually "blur the boundary of traditional ELT and pose more confusion instead of convenience".

Teacher B. was in total agreement with the opinion that the development of ELF is a form of linguistic imperialism. He believed that "ELF damaged the harmony of language diversity and caused countless challenges for local minority cultures". In his opinion, it was a joint effort made by Britain and America to culturally conquer the elsewhere of the world. He spoke with a low regard for exported American culture and its values in relation to the youth in China, defining American pop culture as "trash culture". In addition, he stated that language and culture were interconnected, and could not be possibly separated. Therefore linguistic imperialism is, in its essence, cultural imperialism. China's national strategy of promoting Chinese language and culture is indeed a positive move towards building a confident image worldwide but it lacks detailed steps and methods. According to Teacher B., promoting Chinese language and culture should be executed in two steps: first of all, raising Chinese nationals' awareness of their own language and culture; secondly spreading Chinese language and culture to overseas countries. "Currently we seem eager to accomplish the second step, without knowing that we are far away from completing the first step". As an academic in an English department, what he could do was providing his students with as much knowledge about Chinese language and culture as possible, which was in fact very limited. Therefore, he suggested that there should be more tangible and feasible action plans developed.

Being a sociolinguist, Teacher C. had a firm understanding of linguistic imperialism of all the participants, but he did not perceive ELF as a form of linguistic imperialism. From his point of view, the expanding of ELF as an irretrievable global force brought both positive and negative impact to social development. However it would be extreme to label it as linguistic imperialism. Truly the English language education in China "is to a large extent excessive, manic and commercial, with the pressure of having to pass English tests being put on a large number of people who do not even need to use English in their daily lives and jobs". Meanwhile the time spent on learning English could have been used to learn more Chinese, considering that young people are often criticized for lacking understanding of their national language and culture. Teacher C. believes that for a traditional and vastly developing country like China, it is crucial to maintain the beauty of its distinct language, because losing one's language advantage leads to the loss of one's political, cultural, economic and military power.

This empirical study was deliberately conducted in relation to well-known previous studies focusing on teachers' language use from the perspective of second language acquisition. However, the emphasis of my approach was on teachers' motivations and purposes of their language behaviour in relation to their understanding of culture, and the very current global politics of culture. My study registers an understanding the impact of the national strategy and widespread ELF force on their use of language(s), whereas previous studies largely draw upon the effectiveness of classroom teaching aside of the broader political complexities that the results articlate. This study employs teachers' classroom discourse, considering it sociolinguistically, reveals much more than

classroom behaviour. Even Guo (2007), which is probably the closest to the current study regarding the context and the level of participants, limits its discussion within the territory of language pedagogy.

There are, similarly, many studies available that touch on the affective functions of teachers' first language use in second language classes. An interesting line of inquiry is where the first language is used as a type of 'we-code', to build teacher-student rapport and raising student awareness of their own language and culture (Guthrie, 1984; Guthrie and Guthrie, 1987; Polio and Duff, 1994; Brice, 2000). The study was concerned mainly with the benefits of second language acquisition, identifying and analyzing the affective functions in order to what extent these functions could help students better acquire a second language. My study has no intention of providing insights for second language pedagogy, but rather teachers' classroom discourse offers us an insight into the tension between the global trend of ELF and current national policy shifts. On the one hand, we can find a certain level of negotiation or even resistance in the Chinese classroom, and Chinese teachers may employ their own modifications to preserve their native language and culture upon encountering accelerated westernization. On the other hand, it's possible that the teachers choose to comply with such global ELF forces and make adjustments to their teaching pedagogy. The findings from this study confirm in some small way that the participants are more inclined to follow national policy initiatives in taking an initiative to provide students with knowledge of Chinese culture/literature/philosophy even when it is not part of the lesson objectives.

Phillipson's theory of linguistic imperialism alerts us to how the global spread of English has generated significant shifts on educational language planning in many countries – concerning language and culture (anglocentricity) as well as pedagogy (professionalism). This has gven rise to a contentious issue: what norms should learners be ecouraged to follow when learning English? Should they aim at standard British English or a local variety, which permits more effective communication? If the former, will this entail a British linguistic imperialism, a threat to multilingualism and a process of cultural homogenization – the outcome of, which is cultural imperialism? (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1997, 1999; Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008). In order to preserve multilingualism and multiculturalism, negotiation, modification and resistance against the hegemony of ELF and westernization can be observed, and many empirical studies have attempted to do so. Facing the powerful momentum of ELF, a resurgence of linguistic nationalism could still be witnessed in a number of countries such as India and Brazil (Ramanathan, 2004; Rajagopalan, 2005). In some places (e.g. India, Singapore and Hong Kong) the resistance against English is in fact a type of defiance against the elite group, as English is used to serve such group primarily (Annamalai, 2005; Rubdy, 2005; Lin, 2005). In addition, Canagarajah (1999) demonstrates how, within in a language ecology where English medium education is advocated, how local people in Sri Lanka negotiate and appropriate the international resources so as to reflect their own values. Canagarajah (2012, 2013) describes how immigrants negotiate between languages to construct their ethnic identities. Canagarajah and Ashraf (2013), discussing the conflicts between globalization and nationalism in India and Pakistan, observe how change of language policy quite deliberately aims at developing national identity.

This paper, to some extent, confirms Phillipson's theory on linguistic imperialism and its impact. Teacher B. specifically states that "we are now living in the hegemony of English language and the western culture", and the reason that he prefers to provide students with knowledge about Chinese philosophy and culture is that he does not want them to "forget that they are Chinese, no matter what subject they study and what language environment they choose to immerse themselves in". Similarly, Teacher C also criticizes the spread of English and ELT in China being "excessive". He speaks highly of the recent national strategy of 'Chinese Culture Going Abroad' and comments that "before going abroad, we firstly have to educate every Chinese person about our great history and culture and we should start with ourselves and everyone around us. I very much support the decision made by the Ministry of Education of eliminating English test from the College Entrance Examination. This decision should have been made a long time ago". During the interviews, Teacher B

mentioned the lack of detailed action plans to promote Chinese language and culture, echoing critics of the Chinese Dream. There is certainly a set of personal and national ideals that define the Chinese Dream, most of them seem hollow and unsubstantial ('Japanese media', 2014). In addition, the way the Chinese Dream has been promoted in China betrays traditional propaganda tactics, which could well lead to a decline in public confidence over time.

For a top-down policy requires multi-tiered schemes and corresponding assessment measures. 'Rejuvenating the Chinese nation' is probably the most frequently cited objective of the Chinese Dream, yet we hear little reference to how this could be achieved. Promoting national language and culture is certainly one was of revitalizing the nation, but the agenda built on this is not effective if it only relies on voluntary behaviour provoked largely by individual moral conscience, as my interviews suggest. The policy response to ELF has resulted in a fragmented range of efforts, witnessed in the abolition of English tests, or the recent calls for a cautious use of imported textbooks that contain western values (MoE, 2015). However, systematic strategies are required. The process of a politically motivated cultural promotion of national language and culture, needs to be objective and systematic if we are to avoid an indiscriminate resistance of western culture, which in turn can be used for political purposes.

Conclusion

This research paper sets out to investigate the impact of the recent Chinese national strategy and the widespread ELF phenomenon on Chinese academics' classroom discourse. It aimed to explore to what extent teachers would modify or negotiate their use of language, while being pulled by the tension caused by the two forces of globalisation and nationalism. Three teachers from an English department in a Chinese university were selected on the assumption that their language behavious can offer us an insight of a current pervasive dilemma facing many other Chinese academics.

The full analysis of classroom observation supplemented with in-depth interviews could not be represented in its entirety here, but even in short, has provided a vivid indication on how participants employed a significant amount of their first language (Chinese) in classes where the target language (English) is expected to be the working language. They invested considerable effort in switching to Chinese, and did so intentionally to provide students with what they are currently thinking is their lack in knowledge of Chinese literature, culture, and philosophy and so on, even though the syllabus did not demand it. They attributed their language behaviour to the student's immersion in English and so Western culture. Facing the powerful ELF momentum, they all welcomed the government's policy in promoting Chinese language and culture and implement this policy in voluntary and improvised ways, even though the mandate of their class is only English language skills. Not all of them agreed that ELF is a form of linguistic imperialism, but they still recognised the danger in Chinese students losing interest in their own culture, and that this is directly owing to the process of Westernisation.

Of course, the findings in this paper have limitations due to the small sample size and single location. It is far from a holistic picture of the current state of national English language tuition across China. Yet, these teachers and this institutional location is prestigious and work under considerable pressure to attain the highest of competency in the English language. In doing so, they still registered and acted upon the imperative identified by the Chinese Dream national rejuvination policy: China is losing its culture and identity in the face of globalisation and needs to devise and implement integrated cultural policies in response.

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Law, Social Justice & Global Development

Intergenerational transmission of values and cultural sustainability: the cultural participation of local, small town communities in Poland

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ABSTRACT

This article aligns the correlated dimensions of cultural policy and development, and looks at issues all too often taken for granted in the debates on the nature and demands of sustainability. The article further reflects on recent research undertaken on small urban communities in Poland, particularly given its consideration of the value of cross-generational interaction through culture. The aim of this study is to recall, re-define and discuss a spectrum of issues related to these two essential components -- of culture and development -- and to provoke a debate on the often concealed content of mainstream discourses that form our understanding of sustainability; for example, environmental ecology. This article is part of a broader study committed to rethinking culture and development through sustainability, where these two elements, the article argues, are also suppressed in the broader global discourse of creative economy.

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1. Introduction.

This article will begin with an exploration of the concept of sustainability. It will then move onto a series of critical reflections on a research project that investigated cultural participation in small urban communities in Poland, with a particular concern for the way it identified an unexpected dimension of significance -- the intergenerational transmission of cultural values and skills. In doing this, I wish to underline the significance of intergenerational transmission for our concept of sustainability, and by implication argue that sustainability is beneficially implemented through culture.

The inspiration for this article emerged through the authors' participation in an international, interdisciplinary conference 'Culture in Sustainable Futures', held in Helsinki in May 2014, and organized by University of Jyväskylä. The experience of hearing about the widest possible spectrum of topics on culture and sustainability, with over fifty topic-based papers each sharing observations on cultural sectors and sustainable futures, and from the broadest range of international, professional, academic, multi-disciplinary perspectives, was indeed invigorating. And yet my two topics above were rather absent.

This observation raises several questions: are we not too selective (or even unsure) in our understanding of the "environmental" framing of arts and culture, or more generally unsure on how we understand the interrelation of arts and culture within environment ecology? It may be, that our theoretical efforts are worthless if, with all our work on understanding sustainability in culture, we only attend to broad conceptual frameworks and global growth issues, but not attend to the individual, the local, the existential, grass-roots, and the community dimensions of the ecology of culture -- in other words, the integrated reality of human, social and environmental ecology. And moreover, how is this intimately bound up with the fact of generational difference and the socio-demographic diversity of subsequent trans- and cross-generational transmission of cultural values, cultural content, skills and competencies? While cultural policy often uses categories pertaining to age -- all too often derived from marketing segmentation (children, youth, the elderly, for example). The productive cultural dynamics of *generational* differences themselves (and the implication of this for memory, cultural education and literacy, knowledge, skills and participation) is so often ignored in cultural policy on all levels.

I argue that we therefore require a granular attention to the pragmatic and specific place-based issues where the dynamics of culture emerge and impact on social life, and consequently are bound up with our theoretical discourse of sustainability or sustainable growth and cultural development. One of the related purposes of this paper is to highlight and exemplify a crucial aspect of the intergenerational transmission of cultural values within culture and development issues, and this aspect is related to the *Creative Economy Report* 2013 *Special Edition* (UNDPD/UNESCO 2013). I attempt to carry this through the empirical substrate of this article, and through my reflections on an investigation conducted by four different research projects completed in Poland (by a group of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan scholars under supervision of the author: Poprawski and Mękarski 2013, Poprawski and Firych 2014). With reference to the *Creative Economy Report*, our attention was directed by the significance of place-based cultural participation, cultural education, cultural developmental policies, and so drawn in our empirical research to culturally-active senior citizens, and senior leadership in cultural sector organizations -- all contextualised by these small social communities, each having experienced post-communist transformation.

The structure of this article is a logical sequence of items. It opens with a description of essential conceptual components of our broad subject -- culture and sustainable development -- then by way of discussion on the limitations of the dominant understanding of these concepts and notions, I will generate a background framework for my reflections on the cited research projects. An account of the projects will be brief, but will serve to emphasise the significance of our subject, for Poland as a country in the process of multidimensional transition, and across Eastern Europe. This is indeed prefaced by a short explanation of the methods used to collect the

data, and the way I formulated notions on the most convincing future scenarios that will provide the conditions for any policy thinking on culture and sustainability, particularly in relation to small communities and intergenerational dialogue. I will only be setting out the broad conclusions by way of discussing the research, after which I conclude by way of a set of recommendations for local communities and decision makers in engaging with cultural sector, urban cultural development and social policies dealing with intergenerational transmission of cultural values and skills. I end with a dilemma: who is the change agent, or development agent, within local cultural policies for sustainable development?

2. Culture and sustainability relation in terms and concepts.

The complexity of the issues embedded in the relation between culture and sustainability or culture and sustainable development, is epitomised by the title of a recent report: "Culture *in*, *for* and *as* Sustainable Development" (Dessein, Soini, et al. 2015). This publication is an output of an interdisciplinary, international research cooperation, and the result of a four year journey through a vast repertoire of academic papers, policy scripts and strategies. This network of scholars identified three essential dimensions for an investigation of our pair of terms: particularly in their iteration in successive policy documents. The first dimension, (i) denotes the role of culture when situated in a sustainable development framework: 'culture *in* sustainable development'. Culture can provide supportive and self-promoting tools for a range of sustainability issues and programs, and can add a notional 'fourth pillar' to the existing, conventional, three pillar structure of the UN sustainable development discourse: social, economic and environmental. In this role, culture is said to possess key intrinsic values -- creativity, a diversity of (cultural) expressions, and artistic activities as mechanisms of growth within human development. The second dimension, (ii) is 'culture *for* sustainable development', in which the role of culture is to frame, contextualize and mediate, and so balance all three existing economic, social and ecological pillars, guiding sustainabilities actions through its terrain of challenges and pressures. The third dimension, (iii) is 'culture *as* sustainable development', where culture possesses an essential function: it provides the structure and set of aims for sustainable development as a project. It integrates and coordinates all actions within the concept and practices it generates; as mentioned in the report: 'by recognising that culture is at the root of all human decisions and actions and an overarching concern (even a new paradigm) in sustainable development thinking, culture and sustainability become mutually intertwined, and the distinctions between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability begin to fade' (Dessein, Soini et al. 2015, p. 29).

This basic tripartite scheme can serve to position the approaches to culture and sustainability, taking into account a vast range of policy documents and over 108,000 peer-reviewed papers published on, or related to, this subject. The report's analysis in turn reveals at least eight overlapping fields or competencies where culture and sustainability are internally related: "the negotiation of memories, identities and heritage; the relevance of place, landscape and territory; the complexities of social life, commons and participation; the centrality of creative practices and activities; culturally sensitive policies for economic development; nature conservation; the importance of increasing awareness and knowledge of sustainability; and finally, policies aiming at transformations" (Dessein, Soini et al. 2015, p. 8). But even all these, as the authors indicate, do not mitigate against the fact that: "the prevailing current of conventional sustainability discourses [are] rooted in environmental and economic perspectives" (Dessein, Soini et al. 2015, p. 8). Mainstream research does not extend much further than the 'environment-economic' nexus, even where involved in cultural sector organisations and their activities: in this paper I wish to push the boundary through considering the cross-generational transmission of values and intergenerational cultural equity in small towns and their cultural communities, and so outside this nexus.

A central purpose of the Jyväskylä study is to make sense of the relation between culture and sustainabilty so to provide the conceptual means for integrating culture in core of policy-making areas: "education, tourism, research, cultural

diplomacy, social policies, city and regional planning (…) for the economic, the social and the environmental, and for the global and the local" (Dessein, Soini et al. 2015, p. 9). The presence of culture within sustainability has now also become a routine issue strongly advocated by a number of transnational and international organizations, the most obvious being perhaps UNESCO and the Council of Europe. Yet, the specific requirements pertaining to small communities – paradoxically, I suggest – are routinely ignored, and yet were indeed present in the milestone Brundtland (1987) sustainability report, 'Our Common Future'. Svetlana Hristova (2015) points out that this, one of the most cited reports on the subject, proposed resetting the direction of urbanisation, by "taking the pressure off the largest urban centres and building up smaller towns and cities, more closely integrating them with their rural hinterlands" (Dessein, Soini et al. 2015, p. 23). Also present in this Brundtland report is the second issue animating my paper: the intergenerational transmission of values. For sustainable development is famously defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland 1987, p. 41). Quite obvious is also the fact that sustainable development is conditioned by culture in a way that 'sustainability' does not mean the same in different languages and indeed differing cultural practices around the world. The current policy consensus on its meaning also remains exposed to constant change. For the paradigm and conceptual meanings activating in the 1990's are quite different from the ones we will use in the 2020's. Policy's central terms are dynamic and subject to discursive change, which is more than political-institutional change; it involves the various adaptations of conceptual meaning in relation to culture itself. And the various concerns or requirements of sustainability are often not discussed using (or under the heading of) the term sustainability.

In testing the cultural limits of sustainability, why do we not have a look for alternative terms, substitutes or serious supplements for sustainability? This may be necessary when talking about complex relations between culture and the future of humanity, globally. Extending our vocabulary is certainly necessary in the case of the twin concerns embodied in our topic of 'small towns and intergenerational transmission'. These have been neglected (perhaps marginalised in favour of what at the time is regarded as more pressing or urgent) in current sustainability deliberations and debates. However, we may be encouraged by the critical perspective of Slawomir Magala (2012), who has introduced a significant proposal, whereby we are to test the cultural limits of sustainability, by defining and interpreting the cultural dimension of sustainability's emergent values. For sustainability discourse has migrated into the centre of the management of organizations, among other areas. The values generated by sustainability discourse are beginning to dominate over other values, and this is changing general management practice in unpredictable ways. Management academics and industry or market think tanks can now be found defining the future of business schools in terms of sustainability, that is, oriented to providing a "fair redistribution of creatively multiplied wealth (sociocultural responsibility) and ecologically sound and socially robust maintenance and management of livable environments (responsible management of material environments)" (Magala 2012, p. 904). Yet, however admirable these sound, they are all build upon a set of "unquestioned assumptions about the nature of social reality, meaning of history and desired direction of change" (Magala 2012, p. 904). Cultural change, when mentioned, is usually only a matter of communication, behaviour or substance of organizational change. According to Magala (2012), the ideals and philosophical basis of sustainability, were preceded in history by two others: personal salvation and the classless society. Sustainability is a new synthesis, a new value kit, and strangely reminiscent of past doctrinal frameworks of religious institutions. It is far more than simplified principles based on the empirical evidence for global warming, the depletion of fossil fuel deposits or increased emissions of carbon dioxide.

The cultural limits of sustainability define *social imaginaries*, structured not only with respect to the ecology of air, animals and plants, but also to social institutions like taxes, banks, the stock exchange, political parties, top-down governance structures, television and other mainstream media

communication channels. Global warming (as a term now largely supplanted in political discourse by 'climate change') is perhaps obsessively foreshadowing other, more essential, threats to humankind observed by Magala (2012), such as environmental degradation as an outcome of the erosion of soil, along with fast urbanization upon former agricultural lands, and the growing communication infrastructure invading nature (across uninhabited land or sky). Another is the so called "unmanageable consequences of social injustice" (Magala 2012, p. 904), or the inability to manage the inequalities generated by economic and political unevenness. These phenomenon alone are pushing the meaning of sustainability into levels that are essentially ungraspable. Every time a new crisis appears in these areas, "what we feel and desire can matter more than what we calculate and rationalize" (Magala 2012, p. 906). Following this logic, and in the spirit of Brendan McSweeney (2012), we are now experiencing the power of cultures as "fusions, remixes and recombinants (…) made and remade through exchange, imitation, intersection, incorporation, reshuffling, through travel, trade, subordination" (McSweeney 2012, p. 164). The limits of sustainability are then cultural, artificial, negotiable by nature, based on thinking that is unpredictable, flow, process and dialogue-like.

Approaching the essence of sustainability. Is sustainability, then, not dependent on the existence of realities previously grasped with other terms: continuity and consistency, harmony and coherence? When approaching the 'sense' of sustainable development, are we not facing, first, other key issues, those of communality and literacy, locality and human ecology? Is sustainability not essentially about learning from history, or a kind of, craftsmanship of the meaningfulness of life, and of slowing down its pace? Without doubt, we will never understand sustainability and the meaning of 'the good life' without understanding the fundamental continuity of aesthetics and ethics (Berger 2000) or the importance of maintaining meaningful interaction generated by intergenerational encounters, such as mentoring, and so the ever-presence of 'masters' – or student-master relations in professional practices everywhere. It is a poor way of discussing sustainability if we only accept for granted past dominant approaches to the social, material and natural environment, which have provoked pervasive pessimism and optimism, which then become incorporated into institutions and whole communities (Bennett 2001, 2015). Not taking into account the cultural genealogy of the concept of sustainability makes the discourse itself dangerously exposed to collective emotion and political manipulation.

There are two other critical terms significant for the concept of sustainable development, and they are again derived from the cultural domain. They are: *change* and *choice*. The invocation of change can become overwhelming, particularly when extending the scale of organizations: "change provides a kind of meta-narrative, an overarching rationale or assumption which than acts as an explicit or implicit justification for specific change programmes (…) change is like a totem before which we must prostrate ourselves and in the face of which we are powerless…" (Grey 2009, p. 90). And paired to 'change' is this other challenging, and constantly present, notion -- choice: a "…huge array of choices we in the West have to face is overloading and leads to dissatisfaction and unhappiness (…) being socially connected takes time but the combined pressure of speeded-up work, consumption and choice do not allow time for such connections to be made" (Schwartz 2004, p. 110, after: Grey 2009, p. 120).

In relation to cultural ecosystems, in reflecting on sustainability in a diversified world should we not look first at the smaller scale of ethical and aesthetic diversity that comes from the settled, meaningful work within an actual social community? Here we find ourselves in the realm of cultural policies, and finally arrive at what has been called the 'ecology of culture' or the cultural ecosystem (Holden 2015). These are helpful terms when it comes to explaning the essence of cultural sustainability. 'Cultural ecosystem' can be useful if one wants to identify and comprehend the circulation of thoughts, theories, policies, and cultural organizations' practices in the interconnected organisational fields that are governed through the discourses and practices of cultural policy and even cultural activism.

There are (at least) five significance meanings that pertain to the concept of ecosystem: (i) culture is a complex and dynamic reality, far from

the logical processes as indicated in statistics, numbers and trends forecasted by economists (and then politicians); culture is more organism than mechanism; (ii) the ecology of culture could be an active and dynamic frame for the description and explanation of complex correlations that are shaping public needs in relation to art creation processes and the cultural market; (iii) the cultural ecosystem can be effectively defined as the reality inhabited by the interrelated organisms of (a) subsidised cultural institutions; (b) commercial enterprises and projects; and (c) co-creative individuals, private amateur art and culture actors, volunteers an art organizations and those who create cultural artefacts in their homes. This co-related trio is now a basic triangle of interchanges that is not regulated by monetary exchange or simple transactions in the economic sense; (iv) the metaphor of the organism is far more explanatory and insightful in the descriptive dimension of strategic facilitation of social relations in the cultural realm – we can use terms like regeneration, symbiosis, growth and life cycle, which are cyclic and intrinsically holistic and useful in defining the processes that make the activities of cultural policy and cultural management, teaching, research and training; (v) local cultural ecosystems are particularly important, as a crucial place where cultural activity is rooted and exposed to different conditions for growth or 'death'.

The ecology of culture therefore is a field of constant positive and negative interactions, and it is preferable to the older conservative conception of 'organic' (hence homogenous) culture. The ecosystem thrives on diversity and difference – and so the fundament principles of sustainable development in the cultural sector must be based on an attentiveness to such local ecosystem activities and so will acknowledgem the central role of intergenerational dialogue and transmission of values within this. Intergenerational justice is ultimatelly constructed out of genuine cultural relations between the elderly and the young, their interactions and mutual interests in the context of the exchange of cultural values and skills. Above all, for economists and politicians, the intergenerational equity dilemma is a classic inter-temporal allocation problem -- that is, a choice between present and future consumption (Throsby 1995, 2002).

3. Cultural sustainability of small urban communities in Poland.

Local cultural ecosystems are integrated, condensed and tend to be more able to facilitate the intergenerational transmission of values. At least, it was within this framework hypothesis that the potential for agency in culture and development was researched -- on the level of small towns in Poland, conducted by a research team of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. The object of research were selected small town communities and their cultural policies and practices in 16 regions of Poland; research was undertaken in 2012 and 2013 (Poprawski and Mękarski 2013). Another 30 towns and small local communities (in the region of Greater Poland, central west part of the country) were then researched by the same team in 2012 and 2014 (Poprawski and Firych 2014). The precise research topic at the time was defined in terms of an object of analysis being the "quality of local cultural public spheres and the impact of senior citizens on them". These locations, after a 25 year period of intense political, economic and social change (initiated by the fall of the communist regime) are surprisingly, very multi-dimensional. They were not homogenous, or hopelessly oppressed places; they were experimental in their cultural policy, but quite different in their approach to standards in Northern and Western Europe, particularly to metropolitan regions. The key issue tested and discussed was 'agency' – agency as a factor for citizens and 'bottom-up' community leaders, as well as town halls officers and officials.

The cultural economy is a playground of activities and involve an active dynamic of generations and in the legacies passed down (and up) in the form of competencies, skills and heritage in the form of material and non-material artifacts. The research surveys conducted, generated important insights into the essential aspects of cultural relations between elderly and young, their interaction and mutual interest in the exchange of cultural values and skills, impacting directly cultural production and free cultural expression. These processes cannot be neglected in any investigation or discussion on sustainability, and should not be marginalized as optional components of cultural economies in times of socio-economic change. The

methods used to collect the data were of both quantitative and qualitative: questionnaires were distributed to the towns' inhabitants, and to culturally active participants and cultural organizations and activists; in-depth interviews with institutions and opinion leaders as well as focus groups with a selection of active town opinion leaders, such as artists, teachers, entrepreneurs, journalists, local politicians and activists, and town hall public officers.

The substance of the conclusions generates by this research can be digested as set of eleven points: (i) local leaders not only possessed a form of agency, but worked with passion and commitment, both of which were values that seemed to be intrinsic to the small town communities as social-spatial entities; (ii) the people in the small communities possessed a recognition of cultural organizations, which in turn allowed the organisations to develop a strong identity and right to space and location, both physical and in the imaginary map of the community; (iii) communication was direct and access to data was expected, as with, for example, teachers in schools who expect to know the family, cultural and neighbourhood background of each pupil; (iv) active community participation was a norm, where 'bottom-up' organization may be evident in 'circles of housewives' or elderly people clubs; (v) with this broad-based participation, gender equality or at least a strong female participation (in community leadership, including village, or town districts heads, school headmasters, cultural institution directors, city council chairs, and so on), are often occupied by women. This, as observed by the researchers, has expanded the range of social an interpersonal skills – including an increase in empathic, social, dialogic, mediative, and a culturally sensitive approach to citizens needs; this is particularly significant with regard the intergenerational economy in the community cultural life; (vi) the distribution and re-distribution of public funding is more efficient and directed in a small town community context; (vii) the traditions and historical memory of community people is transmitted more effectively, and anonymity is low; community legends, cultural myths, and local heroes make their way into education and are sustained by specific material resources; (viii) small town communities exhibited an 'ethos' or collectively acknowledged set of values, which includes respect for entrepreneurship and private property, 'good, solid work', thriftiness, efficiency, and other traditional values common to rural farmers and the small scale trade based around local economy; (ix) small town citizens were observed to be ambitious in educational and self-development terms, albeit more motivated when they moved to the metropolitan city; (x) small towns inhabitants were eager to engage in performative arts, like dance, music, theatre, which was identified as a legacy of folk culture traditions; (xi) cultural activities with an intergenerational dimension were numerous, examples include music education projects for pregnant mothers, and cross-generational brass bands. Co-creative activities facilitate shared experience between generations, which in turn cultivates collective memory, of places, people, facts, processes, include storytelling. Retired citizens can offer time that a generation of employed citizens cannot provide. This opens up a space of exhange, of sharing passions and perceptions, and which can be extended using crafts or new media or digital skills.

Another research project, featuring a nationwide survey of culture and elderly people in small town communities, found the data to demonstrate a general quality of 'silver power' (Poprawski and Mękarski, 2013): 73 percent of surveyed senior citizens express a definite curiosity for new cultural trends, as well as media content; 59 percent saw themselves as creators of culture; 26 percent testified to regularly undertaking art and cultural activities in organized groups; and 68 percent of senior citizens expressed concern that they are personally involved in transmitting cultural values and content to the next generation. Even the modest research sample articulated outcomes that pertain to our conception of cultural sustainability, and where elderly citizens – a growing demographic across Europe -- provide a critical perspective, challenging our prejudices and assumptions on the correlation between age and passivity, or age and conservative politics. This confronts local authorities, city halls and local administration, with some constructive possibilities in the face of perceived demographic problems but also the generational divide and conflict between age groups. This is a call for a political, social and

economic framework for essential material and texture of future social development of local communities. Mutual share of values in cultural sphere and a provision of tools for mutual understanding of elderly and youth is a key factor to obtain cultural balance in local cultural policies.

Taking as a comparison the larger cities of Poland, we find that the intergenerational dimension has virtually disappeared, along with an expression of a balanced working life (Sójka et al. 2009; Poprawski 2015). The role of the 'mentor' in cultural activism is misperceived in Central Europe. The paradox is that the cultural sector needs bi-functional charismatic elders who are fluent and experienced in both cultural, intellectual, aesthetic on one side, and pragmatic, ethical practice of leading organisations on the other. Or are no sides as such? The absence of mentors and 'masters' who have both inspiration and teaching skills is actually a major issue for sustainability. The careful formation of the young managerial or cultural activist 'mind' in practical dialogue with an individual 'master' is a systemic tool that is often not employed. Few in Central European circles care for the facility of knowledge and skills formation that come with systemic succession in cultural organizational leadership. The elite (the most experienced or executive managers in flagship cultural organizations) are themselves formed by the professional education system in terms of egoism and individualist 'fighters', trained in conditions provided by political and bureaucratic tensions, with their endemic cynicism, and without any kind of focus on their 'public' terms of contract or public recognition. Their model of development often compels them to think of their talents, connections and professional experience, as non-transferable and not replaceable.

The dominant professional career profile is less present in the smaller urban communities, where the dynamics and conditions of socio-cultural production, management and decision-making are more transparent and open to community scrutiny. Moreover, within them we find a significant number of unused and under-employed mentors, who in career or self-interested terms, are disinterested. They often possess hybrid artistic and managerial backgrounds and skills sets: often bi-functional as ‘writer and cultural activist’, or ‘musician and manager’. It is my conviction, that only such social personalities can convince a younger generation of cultural managers and cultural activists to engage in the kinds of processes that construct place-based cultural ecosystems. In Central Europe one, for sure, meets such people in small numbers in often tiny urban enclaves, where they are cultural change and development agents. However, a critical mass of such are needed for the most demanding dimension of cultural change management in countries that have recently made the transition from totalitarian to democratic social systems (as indicated by Lord Ralph Dahrendorf (1990) in his metaphor of 'three clocks of change': we usually need six months to reform political systems, six years to change economic systems, and sixty years to effect a revolution in the people’s hearts and minds). The later of these changes opens onto the reality of cultural development -- commitment and participation; culture is demanding. Cultural change leaders, therefore, located in public, civil and private sectors, must understand the urgent approaches required to become the organizational actors of social and cultural transformation, where talent, creative processes, and aesthetic choices will be key.

4. Conclusion.

My argument is that only cultural policies that can be calibrated for engagment -- with a community and communicative conditions for intergenerational dialogue -- will facilitate the development of small local communities sustainably. And research strongly suggests that cultural policies built upon practices of cross-generational justice become social laboratories for what is attainable in urban metropolitan regions. Traditional cultural institutions, like the library, the museum, or theatre, can effectively be re-organized around the social dynamics of mentoring and intergenerational communication, the transmission of knowledge and supporting of intergenerational social relations, where values, experience and meaning is shared. From these small towns communities emerge the playground of a future consensual, multisensoric, multidimensional development, and worth situating within the orbit the semantics of sustainability. The significance of intergenerational

exchange became more and more visible to the research group, and in many ways has resonated in recent years with the wider European public imaginary, as depicted in the French documentary *Être et avoir* (To be and to have) by Nicholas Philibert, or feature films like *The Chorus* by Christophe Barratier, *Whiplash* by Damien Chazelle, *Le Havre* by Aki Kaurismäki or *St. Vincent* by Theodore Melfi. But the public imaginary, and even policy trends, are no substitute for sustainable cultural policies defined and mediated through the deliberations of local authorities and cultural professionals.

There is substantially less agency in cultural sustainability without intergenerational dialogue and the transmission of skills through the transfer of cultural values -- from old to young and vice-versa, and between levels of professional rank or discipline. Recent trends in Poland, as the research outcomes of the number of projects discussed above prove, could enrich the new approaches that characterise the *Creative Economy Report 2013 Special Edition* (UNDPD/UNESCO 2013), where 'local cultural ecosystems' appears as the essential resource of the energy for genuine, multidimensional, sustainable development actions. The report's recommendations include a re-investment in the creative agency of local people and their immediate communities -- a policy objective particularly prescient in a Central and Eastern European context, a territory that has recently undergone a huge social and cultural transition. Culture -- creative skills, the conventions of performance, artistic traditions, styles of life and cultural expressions -- provide a conduit for inherited values, which can be transmitted from generation to generation, and contribute hugely to the conditions of sustainable development. The facilitation of this transmission and generational creative interpretation and inheritance is potentially a serious resource and surely one of the essential duties of policy makers and administrators for culture.

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