

UNESCO and cultural diversity: democratisation, commodification or governmentalisation of culture?

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The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) was first adopted by its member states in October 2005. The document defines UNESCO's general principles and conceptualisations regarding culture, cultural diversity and expressions. In order to better manage culture, cultural expressions refer above all to goods and services of the markets, but another, more universally humanitarian and participatory aspect is also present. For the United Nations member states and especially countries that ratified it, the Convention offers policy and legal guidelines to support all forms of cultural diversity and expressions and the actors working with them. By using Foucauldian discourse analysis and Foucauldian, Marxist/Frankfurtian, and Habermasian theoretical frameworks, this article considers the Convention's way of defining rationalities for culture and cultural diversity, and practices through which the goals embedded in rationalities are achieved. As a result, three different but intertwined discourses take shape: governmentalisation, commodification and democratisation.

Keywords: commodification; convention; cultural diversity; democratisation; discourse; governmentalisation; UNESCO

Introduction

The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (henceforth 'the Convention') defines United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO's) principles, conceptualisations and methods concerning cultural diversity and its enhancement. Cultural diversity refers above all to diversity of cultural expressions: visual arts, music, heritage and traditions, crafts, cinema and theatre, but also to cultural differences of and among groups, organisations and individuals. The Convention is a legally binding international agreement that aims at ensuring that 'artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own' (UNESCO 2005b). For achieving this, the Convention also offers some operational guidelines for supporting the diversity of expression, which all UN member countries – but in particular those that have ratified the Convention – should implement in their policy practices.

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The emergence of the Convention followed the typical path of such international norms: national and international Non-governmental organisations and some member states and their representatives sought an instrument that would guarantee the diversity of national, regional, group-specific and art-specific expressions. The articulation of this need arose after the dispute between the European Commission's (EC) Television Without Frontiers directive – which France in particular defended in General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and World Trade Organization (WTO) – and after Canada lost its famous dispute over duties on US cultural imports, especially magazines, in 1997. Gradually this led to UNESCO's Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2001 after the influential work of Canadian and French UNESCO representatives and the International Network on Cultural Policy (INCP). Thus, the Convention tries to enhance national and regional regulation of cultural production of free global trade while ensuring the emphasis on the economic value of cultural expressions and a need to regulate the cultural expressions of the individuals and communities in national, regional and local governance. (Singh 2011, pp.100–107; see also Neil 2006).

UNESCO began the actual drafting of the Convention after adopting the declaration to support it in a 2002 meeting in Istanbul. The final decision to begin work on a universal convention took place at the 32nd General Conference. UNESCO appointed an independent experts committee to draft the Convention, and after its three meetings and the three intergovernmental meetings of UNESCO representatives between 2003 and 2005, the draft was presented at the 33rd General Conference of UNESCO in 2005. All but the US and Israel voted to approve the draft (UNESCO 2005c, Singh 2011, pp. 100–107).

The above gives but a glimpse into the processes behind the Convention. There are loads of different national and regional interests embedded in the Convention, and many regional and national actors organised lobbying at UNESCO, INCP and EC and national-level institutions and networks involved in the Convention planning. The final Convention text is a consensus, trying to serve as many stakeholder interests as possible, but still chiefly serving the interests of actors and countries which have been successful in building coalitions for their stands in the process of constructing the Convention. This is crucial to recognise, although this article observes the Convention text as such and cannot thus reach the manifold political processes behind it. The 'studied reality' here is the Convention text and texts explaining it afterwards; the surrounding practices are read through these texts.

There is no doubt about whether or not the Convention document is trying to increase the cultural industrial market value and public, third-sector and private steering of cultural expressions: it is (Singh 2007, 2011, p. 107). However, the objective of UNESCO or the Convention does not empty to commercialisation and governmentalisation of culture and cultural expressions – there is a democratic tendency in it, too. The Convention and the practices it suggests for the member states aim at enhancing the participation of non-Western states and their cultural producers, civil society organisations (CSOs), and cultural minorities within the spheres of national and international cultural policies and art worlds. However, as proven here, they mix with certain ideas and practices of making culture better governable and marketable. In the end, these latter aspirations tend to become hegemonic in the studied texts.

The overarching research problem of the article is, which are the main 'rationalities' (see, e.g. Miller and Rose 2008, p. 16) of UNESCO's work for cultural

diversity? The guiding sub-questions for analysing the problem are: (1) How does the Convention – and UNESCO's work for diversity in general – signify culture and value cultural expressions? (2) How do these significations and valuations relate to the main rationalities? (3) What are the key technologies – i.e. governmental and administrative means of implementing particular rationalities – and subjects (member countries, interstate organisations and civil society actors) of realising UNESCO's significations of culture and cultural diversity? (4) How do the rationalities found in the analysis synchronise and resonate together?

As research data this article benefits the Convention and all its post-documentation, including follow-ups, the Operational Guidelines (UNESCO 2009a; henceforth 'OG') concerning the organisational (UNESCO), national (country-specific) and regional (e.g. Europe) implementation of the Convention, and reports from the meetings of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, Conference of Parties to the Convention and general UNESCO conferences held after the adoption of the Convention in 2005. I also use UNESCO's (2009b) World Report 'Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue' (henceforth 'WR') as my data. To trace the historical – from many parts contested – formation of the Convention I use reports and minutes of the UNESCO meetings where the Convention was planned, and also the historical information on the background of the Convention found from the UNESCO (2005c) website.

Cultural diversity in the Convention

The Convention approaches cultural diversity from two perspectives: on the one hand, it refers to the variety of lifestyles and systems of thought, i.e. to the broad understanding of culture. This is the 'background' of the Convention's conceptualisations and understanding – in the spirit of United Nations' (UN) human and citizens' rights norms and UNESCO's earlier 'Our Creative Diversity' (1998) and 'Declaration on Cultural Diversity' (2001). It is outspoken in utterances describing how cultural diversity is part of human nature, basic rights and equal opportunities for socioeconomic development. It directly links to the political goals of UNESCO and UN: their instruments should promote the development of equality and democracy, especially in non-Western contexts. Within this understanding, diversity of culture(s) is seen to comprise the participation of citizens and CSOs in cultural policies as well.

Cultural diversity can be protected and promoted only if human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression, information and communication, as well as the ability of individuals to choose cultural expressions, are guaranteed. (UNESCO 2005a, p. 3, Article 2, §1)

On the other hand, cultural diversity in the Convention text refers to the diversity of cultural products (activities, services and goods), and their marketing and consumption. From this perspective, the Convention approaches culture through its material and immaterial manifestations, such as recorded songs, films, handicrafts, paintings, movies and so forth. The emergence of the Convention, the process of which I depicted briefly in the previous chapter, also draws the definition of diversity towards this direction. As a counterforce to WTO's intentions to liberate the markets of national regulation and the possible monopolisation of the markets stem-

ming from that, the Convention needs to follow the same rationalities, operational logic, lexicon and even practices as its ‘enemy’. After all, the question is about the global markets and the balance of positions therein (Graber 2006, Neil 2006, Singh 2007).

‘Cultural expressions’ are those expressions that result from the creativity of individuals, groups and societies, and that have cultural content. [...] ‘Cultural activities, goods and services’ refers to those activities, goods and services, which at the time they are considered as a specific attribute, use or purpose, embody or convey cultural expressions, irrespective of the commercial value they may have. Cultural activities may be an end in themselves, or they may contribute to the production of cultural goods and services. (UNESCO 2005a, p. 5, Article 4, §3–4)

Singh (2011, p. 104) argues that the humanitarian and democratic dimensions are a kind of polished surface for other UNESCO objectives, such as the development of cultural industries and markets and the mechanisms that regulate them. Great humanitarian justifications legitimise other, more market-oriented objectives, like developing countries’ access to global markets and funds for supporting this (UNESCO 2005a, p. 9, Article 14, p. 10, Article 18). ‘While its context and preamble evokes broad definitions of “cultural diversity”, its specific provisions and implementations are geared toward regulating narrow conceptions of “cultural industries”’ (Singh 2011, p. 107).

Approach to the commodification, governmentalisation and democratisation of culture

The theoretical framework of the article is based on three approaches, here understood as interrelated, due to the nature of the Convention discourses: a Marxist conceptualisation of the commodification of things and culture (Marx 1867, Adorno 1975); a Foucauldian analysis of modern government, known as a ‘governmentality approach’ (Foucault 1991, Rose *et al.* 2006, Foucault 2007, pp. 108–109, Miller and Rose 2008, p. 14); and the Habermasian theorisation of lifeworld and its communicative public space (e.g. Habermas 1989, 2006). The theoretical combination of these approaches arises from the data: the administrative conduct of cultural diversity is justified for the effective recognition and implementation of its economic side in the Convention discourses. However, democratic development and the increase of participation of different parties are also strongly present and intertwine with commodification and governmentalisation, but not always without contradictions. This ‘triadic’ theoretical framework is supplemented by previous studies on UNESCO and its Convention (e.g. Graber 2006, Neil 2006, Singh 2007, 2011, pp. 73–92).

According to Marx (1867), commodification takes place when economic value is assigned to something not previously considered in economic terms; the exchange value compensates for the use value of a product. Generally commodification refers to the expansion of for-profit trade into previously non-profit spheres, and to the treatment of things as if they were a tradable commodity. Adorno (1975, see also Horkheimer and Adorno 2002, pp. 94–136) has reconsidered commodification in the context of cultural production. According to Adorno, cultural industry is the apparatus that separates the cultural and artistic product from its other – more intrinsic – significations and submits it to the logic of markets and consumption.

The economic and administrative centralisations and condensations help to translate cultural expressions and things to trade objects with commodity value (Ibid.). Gray (2007) highlights this by arguing that the commodification of cultural products is a consequence of the commodification and instrumentalisation of public policies in general, indicators of which are, for instance, European attempts to combine culture with national innovation and marketing strategies (Kangas 1999, p. 172). Tzanelli (2008) interpolates this by writing that in societies with highly mediated communication, cultural industries are sign industries par excellence, which even become markers of the public sphere, and, thus, fundamental elements in public cultural policies. Following Adorno's lead, one can argue that a cultural – or sign – industry turns both cultural producers and consumers into objects of calculation in terms of the accumulation of capital and the efficiency of their own actions. This does not mean that cultural industry makes artists, cultural workers and consumers into brainless non-agents without own will; rather that it shapes the logic of practices and discourses within which they operate.

What, then, does the analysis of the commodification of culture and cultural diversity mean here? Above all it means the analysis of discursive elements, which give economic importance and market value to cultural expressions in UNESCO's documents and signifies cultural expressions as products, its doers as producers and its audiences as consumers. It is not only an analysis of visible elements. Gray (2007, p. 206), while referring to the UN's declaration on cultural diversity, advises that UNESCO's 'attack' on the tendency of valuing cultural products only for their economic status can be seen to imply an acceptance of the existence of such a hegemonic approach, and therefore beef up its position among the discourses on culture.

Foucault (1991, pp. 96, 102–104, 2007, p. 109, 2008, p. 77) uses the term 'governmentalisation' when referring to the processes in which the modern governmental apparatuses emerged and the state took over the governance, regulation and maintenance of the practices – which were formerly taken care of by markets, families, civil societies and religious ensembles – during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. These processes, in which a more or less self-reflexive art of governance became a central tactical concern, he termed 'governmentalisation of the state'. For Foucault this development did not mean a one-dimensional centralisation of state power, but rather a more or less calculated distribution of resources, positions and functions between the actors of the state, markets and civil society. More than just a centralisation of state over 'social', governmentalisation is the emergence of the social – and hence the cultural too – as a central task for the apparatuses of public governance. Governmentality is:

the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target a population; as its principal form of knowledge, political economy; and as its essential technical means, apparatuses of security. (Foucault 1991, p. 102)

Governmentality is also an intersection of the conduct of others and the self (Foucault 2000, p. 225). 'Government' then means more or less systematic conduct of the people's self-conduct in various ways. It seeks to shape the self-conduct 'by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs, for definitive but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects

and outcomes' (Dean 1999, p. 11). In its most functional form it works 'at a distance' (Rose 1996): it guides and creates frameworks for the 'free subjects' to operate in normal ways by using their own vitality, capacities and resources.

By 'governmentalisation of the culture' I hereby mean those tendencies present in the Convention, which make the culture a central task of governance for international and national cultural policies. From words, utterances and regularities of their organisation in the Convention texts, I analyse how culture is made into both an object and a subject of government: (i) how culture is discursively made into an entity that comprises ways of life, human nature, ideas, activities, goods and/or services, and that needs to be governed; and (ii) how certain cultural actors are made into subjects of this government.

UN and UNESCO, and in this wake the Convention, promote the democratic development of societies and as organisations strive for being – at least in principle – international 'public spaces' which enhance democratic interaction between the representatives of nations and groups involved in peace, human rights and cultural affairs (e.g. UN [online], UNESCO 2005a, p. 1). According to Habermas (e.g. 1996), democracy means communicative decision-making based on – at least in theory – argumentative power. It is a state or a process of making a collective political will on the basis of subordinating individual wills and the expressions of wills to the consensus-orientated competition of arguments. Communication is the most important element in his pragmatist conceptualisation of democracy. In his theories Habermas (e.g. *Ibid.*) seeks the 'public sphere', a forum of communicative action that strives for consensual reasoning and constitutes out of this practice. I do not argue here that the Convention represents Habermasian ideals of democracy, but that it strives for something similar by emphasising the participation of citizens in the public sphere of culture, CSOs in national and international cultural politics and sovereign nations in its own international forum for communicating diversity in the spirit of consensus on the principles and ways of implemented diversity of cultural expressions. However, as the reader will notice later, my analysis brings up an aspect that this democratic dimension intertwines with the ones of systematic – thus non-Habermasian – governance and commercialisation of cultural expressions.

Analysing Convention discourses

Methodologically my work anchors to the Foucauldian discourse analysis. This 'archaeology of knowledge' analyses the formation of discourses with the focus on the practices of power and institutional settings framing the discourse formation, discursive practices as conditions for the emergence of utterances, and textual elements such as utterances, themes and keywords (Foucault 1972). The discourse is 'an entity of sequences of signs in that they are enouncements' ('*énoncés*'; often translated as 'statements') (Foucault 1969, p. 141). Text is a demarcated discourse for analysis. This means that a textual entity consists of particular utterances, whose reciprocal relation is regular and its own objects and subjects are produced through this regularity. Texts produce the people, things and phenomena about which they talk and those persons and institutions which talk in and with them. Archaeological discourse analysis concentrates on the conditions for the emergence of knowledge: the archaeologist reveals the regularities, regulations and structures in the framework that enables the text authors to speak for it, the things present in the texts to exist and the reader to know the issue with which the text deals (Foucault 1972).

The quest for regularities manifests within three interrelated dimensions of archaeology (Foucault 1972), first in the dimension of discursive practices, where ‘discursive practice’ refers to regularities in institutional and contextual conditions, which influence the selection of objects, utterances and other elements of discourse. UNESCO’s decision-making procedure is, for instance, a discursive practice in the Convention. Second, the analyst collides with regularities in the dimension of utterances. The group of utterances, with a regular relation to each other and a regular way of objectifying their targets, forms a discourse. Utterance gives significance and regular order to the words and concepts. The analysis of utterances then reveals how certain – and by definition, arbitrary – words and concepts formulate statements, which represent fact in a particular way. The analysis of utterances requires an analysis of keywords or key concepts and their organisation. Third, embedded in the analysis of utterances, the archaeologist studies the regularities in the dimension of discursive formation. The elements of discursive formation are utterances and their enunciations, objects and subjects of knowledge, concepts, and themes. Every discursive formation has a relatively fixed way of producing and selecting these elements. An archaeologist needs to reveal this way, including how and why it has emerged. However, every discourse also shares some elements with other related discourses. I pay also close attention to this interdiscursivity.

This Foucauldian discourse analysis is often called ‘critical’ because it indicates the connection between institutional authority and knowledge, and proves that there is no such thing as natural or neutral knowledge. Every discursive formation emerges in the conditions, which are framed by earlier, often powerful and stable, discourses, rationalities, practices and subjectivities of power, and in relation to other existing rationalities, like the somewhat neoliberal idea of free trade in this case. Here, a Foucauldian discourse analysis points out that the Convention’s ways of signifying culture are systematic attempts to create truth-knowledge for rational reasons and relatively definitive ends – governmentalisation, commodification and the democratisation of culture.

The governmentalisation of culture

[UNESCO] must now also learn to sustain cultural change in order to help individuals and groups to manage diversity more effectively – for this ultimately is the major challenge: *managing cultural diversity*. (WR, p. 5)

The discourse of governmentalisation – making culture more governable and creating self-reflexive governmental systems – is present in all analysed documents: In the Convention text this is evident in the definition of stakeholders and their positions; affirming the positions of states and international instruments and practices for the use of power over culture. Effort is put forth to ‘enhance public sector strategic and management capacities in cultural public sector institutions, through professional and international cultural exchanges and sharing of best practices’ (UNESCO 2005, Article 12, p. 8). In OG, the governmentalisation is comprehensively permeable: it sets directly international and national measures and goals for cultural policy instruments by comprising declarative sentences for organising instruments of cultural administration and financing, and by naming practices and strategies that actors should realise. The WR continues to formulate the discourse

most visibly by offering recommendations for policy practices and strategies at the end of each chapter. The most practical forms of the discourse can be found from the programmes and projects strengthening the governance of culture – i.e. establishing structures and apparatuses of cultural policy – in accordance with the Convention (e.g. EU/UNESCO 2011).

Which kinds of words and utterances, then, comprise the discourse of governmentalisation in the data? The keywords indicating and constructing it can be grouped into *rationality-related* and *technical* categories. The naming of categories comes from ‘post-Foucauldian’ conceptualisations, in which rationality is defined as the style of governmental reasoning, which include scientific and professional, but sometimes religious, justified widely shared arguments about how things are and how they should be (Rose 1999, pp. 24–28, Rose *et al.* 2006, p. 88, Miller and Rose 2008, p. 16). In order to be influential, rationalities must have a technical dimension. Techniques of government are systematic ways of action through which individuals, groups, institutions, organisations and states tend to conduct others or themselves for achieving particular, rationality-inspired ends (Dean 1999, pp. 31–32, Rose 1999, pp. 51–55).

The keywords belonging to the category of rationality-related words are problematising, programmatic and teleological of their nature. They reveal the social, cultural, juridical, political and developmental challenges and goals of the Convention. Rationality-related keywords also indicate the background values of the diversity work. They point out the aspects of human life to which the Convention and governance of culture should direct their attention. Hence, these define *why* the governmentalisation of culture is needed. The common keywords of this category are culture and cultural diversity (as basic good characters of humanity), cultural expressions (with intrinsic, instrumental and economic value), freedom, equality, poverty, cultural rights and so on.

Technical keywords talk about the needed actors, activities and practices for tackling the challenges and goals defined by the rationality-words. Technical keywords and utterances of the Convention discourse indicate how the governmentalisation of culture is or should be implemented. Many of the words – and the statements they constitute – relate to knowledge collection and formation, and communication, which are all crucial for modern governmentality (Dean 1999). Such words are CSOs, collaborative arrangements, cultural professionals and experts, national and international agreements, legislation and legal instruments, monitoring, evaluation, reports, and so on. A related set of important technical keywords in the studied documents consists of named actors and mechanisms, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN, UNESCO (and its preparative and decisive bodies), International Fund for Cultural Diversity, national focal points and coalitions (for realising the Convention), World Observatory on Cultural Diversity, international copyright laws, and intellectual property rights.

As individual signs, neither rationality-related nor technical keywords yet produce any particular knowledge on cultural diversity; rather, knowledge formation starts to take shape, when the regularities of their mutual organisation are traced and attention paid to the utterances the words construct. They give the words specific meanings within this discursive formation of governmentalisation of culture and unify the dimensions of rationalities and technologies:

Recalling that cultural diversity, flourishing within a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures, is indispensable

for peace and security at the local, national and international levels. [...] Celebrating the importance of cultural diversity for the full realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other universally recognised instruments. (UNESCO 2005a, p. 1)

The governmentalisation of culture is both international/interstate and national/state-specific in terms of its nature in the discourse. The international perspective on governmentalisation highlights in the text parts concerning international legislation, agreements, organisations and measures and especially in statements emphasising UNESCO's role of organiser in the international cultural policies and its monitoring role in the national and regional implementation of the Convention (UNESCO 2005a, pp. 12–13, Articles 22–23). The national side of governmentalisation is mainly represented when the sovereignty of states in promoting cultural expressions on their territories is emphasised (e.g. cf. Hardt and Negri 2000, p. 132; UNESCO 2005a, Article 2, p. 3). From both international and national perspectives, the definition of the above-mentioned key actors and the demarcation of their tasks are crucial, because they give form to this governmental matrix.

As Foucault (2007) states when observing the historical process of governmentalisation of the state in Europe, and Miller and Rose (1991) claim when analysing the history of the governance of poverty in Europe, the discursive justification of the experts and authority is part and parcel in creating and rooting apparatuses of governance. The experts talking in the data are academic, administrative and civil-society professionals of culture with long and recognised expertise in the field. They do not only refer to the earlier UN and UNESCO declarations on diversity and humanity, but also to the anthropological, economic, sociological and humanistic studies on culture in the globalising world. This is especially evident in the WR, which is full of references to the earlier conceptual, ethnographic and statistical studies on culture.

Even at first glance at the Convention, it is obvious that its governmentalised view of culture descends from the earlier UN and UNESCO texts, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations 1948) and Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO 2001). Those texts created a favourable atmosphere for the Convention's diversity discourse to emerge by successfully representing cultural diversity as fundamental for humankind. The Convention and related documents continue this by linking such definitions to culture and diversity that enable enhancement of their governance, and by pointing out concrete measures and actors for taking care of this governance. Governmentalisation invokes the sensitive nature of cultures – especially developing and indigenous ones – and their imbalance in the globalising markets, which are possessed by the multinational media corporations (UNESCO 2005a, Article 14, p. 9, WR, p. 13). Culture and cultural diversity need more planned and internationally guided governance and regulation than before, because otherwise the cultures in weak positions would be too vulnerable to external influences. Modern governmentality in general arises from the appreciation and cherishing of freedom, activeness, wellbeing and vitality of individuals and the societal whole (Rose 1999, 61–65, Foucault 2008, pp. 67–68). Cultural governmentality here is constituted from the appreciation of *freedom of culture*. The ultimate aim of the international cultural policy should be to enhance vitality, activeness and liberty of cultures (OG, p. 11, 19–23, see also Smiers 2006).

Dean (1999, pp. 167–170, 1995) writes that contracts and contracting are two of the key instruments of the present government. Contracts come into play when individuals or collectives are expected to become active in their own conduct for the sake of their own wellbeing, based on the common rationalities of the given context. A contract places parties in a particular framework, which enables them to influence the form and content of the framework, but also subjects them to its rules, regulations and control. In the context of the Convention, contract governance takes place, first of all, in the membership agreement between UNESCO and the member countries. Second, it is realised through detailed agreements concerning the diversity of cultural expressions: ‘Parties agree to exchange information and share expertise concerning data collection and statistics on diversity of cultural expressions as well as best practices for its protection and promotion’ (UNESCO 2005a, Article 19, p. 11, cf. Walters and Haahr 2005, pp. 114–136).

In addition to the contracts, culture is made governable through conveying it as being subject to evaluation, calculation and measurement (cf. Power 1999). The Convention and its sister documents are full of examples and recommendations for creating international and national technologies that measure culture and diversity (WR, pp. 259–371). This embeds the idea of the necessity of calculation and technologies in the parties’ ethos. The good cultural expressions are those that are calculable and visible, and administration of which can be properly evaluated. What this kind of knowledge formation then causes for the actors in cultural fields is encouragement – and sometimes even requirement – of them to make their actions as visible and knowable as possible, and to proportion them to the accepted and non-accepted actors. Hence, it can in fact narrow the diversity of cultural expressions.

The commodification of culture

[...] The strengthening of the cultural industries in developing countries through creating and strengthening cultural production and distribution capacities in developing countries; facilitating wider access to the global market and international distribution networks for their cultural activities, goods and services. (UNESCO 2005a, Article 14, p. 9)

The results from analysing the governmentalisation of culture may lead to wondering why culture, which is understood as almost everything related to human life, needs to be systematically governed. One answer seems to be at the forefront: the commodification of culture. This discourse, which is part of a more general economic or neoliberal trend of thinking creativity through market utilisation and which intensified in cultural policies after the so-called ‘Florida turn’ (McGuigan 2009), is present in the words and utterances that emphasise culture as saleable activities, goods and services, and defining cultural markets.

In the discourse of commodification, the value of culture comes from the transferability of the material and immaterial forms of cultural creativity into commodities that benefit socioeconomic development. The ‘hegemonic’ position – meaning the most influential discursive formation, deeply embedded in sociocultural practices (Fairclough 1992, p. 10) – of this discourse is salient in the analysed documents. One of the chapters under the main title of ‘Key Vectors of Cultural Diversity’ in the WR (pp. 161–185) is even named ‘Creativity and the marketplace’.

In analysing the discourse of commodification, one can again begin with the mapping of keywords and themes. As in the case of the discourse of governmentalisation, the discursive formation of commodification consists of both rationality-related and technical words, themes and utterances. Examples of the previous are access, participation, creativity, and creative economy, for instance. Some rationality-related words are similar to the governmentalisation discourse: culture, cultural diversity and expressions are strongly present here as well. Technical keywords are also partially the same (monitoring, evaluation, reporting, strategies, programmes, etc.), but also unique to the implementation of commercial rationalities, most visibly copyrights, intellectual property rights, cultural goods, cultural industry, marketing, (micro)finance, trade mechanisms and agreements, and so on. The technical keywords indicate the immaterial and material things that are required and included in bringing cultural expressions into the sphere of markets more than before and the mechanisms through which this process should be implemented in UNESCO's point of view.

Each party may adopt measures aimed at protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions within its territory. Such measures may include the following: [...] measures that, in an appropriate manner, provide opportunities for domestic cultural activities, goods and services among all those available within the national territory for the creation, production, dissemination, distribution and enjoyment of such domestic cultural activities, goods and services. (UNESCO 2005a, Article 6, p. 6)

The commercialisation of cultural expressions and commodification of goods and services is clearly most often highlighted when referring to the weak economic and social conditions of developing countries. On the grounds of the density of their occurrences, one might justly conclude that binding cultural expressions of developing countries to the global market economy is one of the core missions of UNESCO's cultural diversity work.

Microfinance and micromarketing have the potential to help small businesses from the developing world to innovate and compete within the marketplace. [...] UNESCO's 'Award of Excellence' programme [...] now operates in Asia, Western Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and thereby helps to raise international awareness about handicraft products, as well as to enlarge and strengthen the markets for these products. (WR, p. 169)

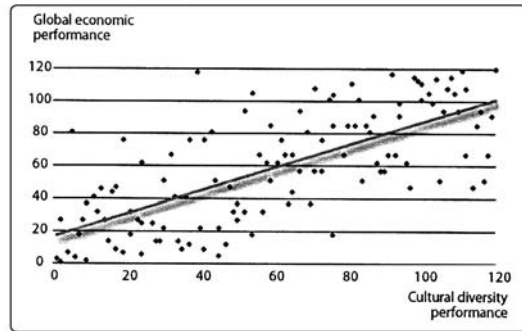
The discursive commodification takes most influentially place through locating words, culture, cultural expressions and diversity to nearby commercial and economic words, when the conceptual map and the logic of the latter reifies the significance of culture. In other words, the culture becomes – textually – an object of ideas and practices of the markets and the market economy, and it becomes understood in the terms of market-based discourses. In the language of early Marx and 'frankfurters', one could say that this 'reification process' alienates culture, as it subjects it to meanings other than its presumed intrinsic meaning (cf. Bourdieu 2011, pp. 40–52).

An important part of the commercialisation of cultural diversity is to make its expressions economically calculable through different kinds of numbers, charts and tables. Such figures depict measurement of the production and consumption of cultural goods, values of the consumers, and the relation of cultural industries to overall national or regional economic performances (see Figure 1).

Box 6.5 A correlation between diversity and economic performance?

UNESCO commissioned the extra-financial rating agency BMJ Ratings to conduct a survey of the 120 multinational corporations quote on the Paris Stock Exchange's SBF 120 index. The survey sought to determine whether there is a correlation between socio-cultural diversity and overall economic and financial performance. The results were plotted as follows:

This figure maps the coordinates of the 120 multinationals as measured according to correlations between a consolidated socio-cultural diversity indicator (perfDIV) and a consolidated overall economic performance indicator (perfECO). The perfDIV criteria were based on a qualitative and quantitative assessment of factors related to social cohesion (overall nationality, nationality of managers and directors, minority integration) and non-discrimination (gender parity at different levels of hierarchy, corporate social responsibility and recruitment policies concerning minorities). The perfECO indicator combines three partial indicators: 2007–2008 sales figures (perfCA), net results (perfRES) and stock-market values (perfB).

Correlation between cultural diversity and economic development for French stock market companies


Source: UNESCO, PBC, Diversity and Performance Report, 2009.

While coefficient correlations reveal little or no causality between perfDIV and perfCA, perfRES or perfB taken individually, the analysis concluded that a causal link does exist between

diversity and global economic performance (perfECO) and found that socio-cultural diversity explains 49 percent of the variance. Source: Bello, 2009.

Figure 1. Correlation between cultural diversity and economic development for French stock market companies (WR, p. 178).

The numbers, tables and charts value cultural diversity and expressions in relation to the economic growth and performance. The good cultural expressions are those that benefit the economic performances of nations, localities, groups or individuals, and take the economic logic as part of their ethos. Cultural diversity then starts to, importantly, also refer to the diversity of production, consumption and markets. The by-product of this discursive feature is that the word 'culture' becomes rather a signifier of arts and artistic creativity than way of life and signification system of particular groups and nations. This is in fact an 'obligatory passage point' (Callon 1986, pp. 205–206) for the discourse and its hegemonic position, because as a way of life culture is impossible to measure and value within quantitative criteria, and, thus, impossible to deploy for global economic growth. This move also makes it possible to govern culture more systematically.

The Convention and the WR are major definers of the rationalities of economic action. The economic rationality of cultural diversity comes into play through the rhetoric of necessity: the commercial nature of cultural expressions needs to be taken into account on international, national and local levels, because of pervasively piercing global markets. Therefore, the economic rationalities cannot be bypassed in the cultural sector either. OG and WR's chapter 'Creativity and the marketplace' takes the necessity of the commercialisation of cultural expressions for granted and gives concrete examples of implementing this necessity. The Convention itself deviates from this in that it problematises the commercialisation and looks at it with reservation by bringing culture and cultural diversity as intrinsic values into light. Intrinsicness is iced with the ideas of democratic communicative participation around culture. In fact, the commodification of culture adopts a hegemonic position in the hierarchy of valuation of the qualities of culture through a more or less unconscious interdiscursive strategy: the words and utterances depicting the necessity of the commercialisation and commodification of cultural expressions are

entailed in the expressions and phrases belonging to the more general ‘humanitarian discursive formation’ on culture. This means that the commodification is connected to the other kinds of significations of culture and, thus, becomes normalised along with them.

The democratisation of culture

As said the Convention’s discourse repertoire on cultural diversity and expressions does not empty into those of governmentalisation and commodification. There is also a strong emphasis placed on the democratisation of the national and international fields of cultural production. The fundamental representation in this discourse is of culture as a basic feature of humanity, with cultural diversity as its common heritage; cultural and human rights go hand in hand with freedom and democracy (UNESCO 2005a, Article 2, p. 3). ‘A full understanding of cultural diversity contributes to the effective exercise of human rights, enhanced social cohesion and democratic governance’ (WR, p. 221). This also connects to the 30-year-old general objectives on many national cultural policies of increasing the citizens’ and societal groups’ participation and access in the cultural field due to the rationalities of cultural democracy and the democracy of culture (e.g. Bennett 2001, pp. 64–65).

The theme of democracy particularly arises when speaking of the empowerment and participation of minorities, indigenous peoples and women:

Cultural policies and measures developed by Parties to promote the diversity of cultural expressions should foster the full participation and engagement of all members of society contributing to the diversity of cultural expressions, particularly persons belonging to minorities, indigenous peoples and women. (OG, 2, see also WR, pp. 51–56)

To some extent democracy stands as alternative with the other two rationalities in these kinds of contexts. In some parts of texts, the commodification and commercialisation are even understood as possible risks for artistic creativity: ‘The challenge of preserving and promoting cultural diversity is situated at this point of transition (or tension) between cultural creation and cultural commercialisation, between the market valuation and the cultural values inherent in artistic creation (WR, p. 165).’

The three themes within which democracy and communicative participation arise most frequently are: (a) international relations, in which the focus is on developing countries and their equal participation in the international systems and interaction of states; (b) civil society and citizens, who must be empowered to access and participate in cultural life and cultural policies in all countries, but particularly in developing countries; and (c) UNESCO’s organisation and networks, in which UNESCO is depicted as a reflexive organisational system trying to function as a democratic international public sphere. These themes are intensified in OG and other documents that give recommendations for the implementation of the Convention (e.g. German Commission for UNESCO 2010).

Again the keywords can be divided into two groups, rationality-related and technical. Words – and utterances they construct – that phrase rationalities explain why democracy is compulsory for the full and rich manifestation of cultural diversity. They give the democratisation an understanding within the context of universal humanitarian and human rights principles. As in the case of commodification and

governmentalisation discourses, most of them are familiar from the general principle statements of the UN and UNESCO: cultural diversity, minorities, development of poor countries, development of cultural fields and institutions, creativity, free speech and civilisation. Technical words and their utterances depict how democracy and democratisation should be implemented. The most repeated technical words are international actors and laws, member countries and civil society (often referred to as ‘parties’), internet and communication technologies, infrastructure (of the cultural field and policy), partnerships, capacity-building and education. Some often repeated words belong to both categories of keywords. Words which both give rationality for actions and tell how rationalities should be implemented in actions are such as participation, empowerment and communication.

It is not difficult to see a rather straightforward relation to governmentalisation discourse, as the suggested methods for democratisation in culture and production and the dissemination of cultural expressions require effective conduct and regulation. The connection between democratisation and commodification is manifested such that the goals of democratic aspirations and measures should serve the favourable production and dissemination of cultural expressions. The links can be seen in how capacity-building is carried out through good partnerships:

[C]apacity-building through the exchange of information, experience and expertise, as well as the training of human resources in developing countries, in the public and private sectors relating to, *inter alia*, strategic and management capacities, policy development and implementation, promotion and distribution of cultural expressions, small-, medium- and micro-enterprise development, the use of technology, and skills development and transfer [...] Parties shall encourage the development of partnerships, between and within the public and private sectors and non-profit organisations, in order to cooperate with developing countries in the enhancement of their capacities in the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. These innovative partnerships shall, according to the practical needs of developing countries, emphasise the further development of infrastructure, human resources and policies, as well as the exchange of cultural activities, goods and services. (UNESCO 2005a, Article 14, p. 9; Article 15, p. 9)

The Convention shares a ‘Habermasian’ comprehension of the ‘public sphere’, which springs from an active civil society, non-regulated and non-ideological communication, and the premise of equal rights of participation (Habermas 2006, p. 319). In this spirit, McGuigan (2004, pp. 50–58) has theorised that the communicative ‘promise’ of cultural policy leans on communicative practices that arise from civil society. The roles of civil society and CSOs are seen as fundamental to the democratic implementation of the Convention:

Parties acknowledge the fundamental role of civil society in protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions. Parties shall encourage the active participation of civil society in their efforts to achieve the objectives of this Convention. (UNESCO 2005a, Article 11, p. 8)

However, the call for partners to communicative action is not without reservations. They need to contribute to the commercialisation and governmentalisation of cultural expressions in the spirit of the Convention. Partnering CSOs should be selected by the national coordinators and focal points (OG, pp. 6–7).

Civil society plays an essential role in the implementation of the Convention: it brings citizens', associations' and enterprises' concerns to public authorities, monitors policies and programmes implementation, plays a watchdog role, serves as value guardian and innovator, as well as contributes to the achievement of greater transparency and accountability in governance. (OG, p. 6)

In all, the groundswell of economic lexicon relating to culture in the Convention and its sister documents leads one to conclude, that, ultimately, the cultural expressions get their significance after transforming into commodities in the markets. Singh (2007, p. 42, 2011, p. 104) argues that humanitarian reasons are in the end a kind of blanket in which economic and administrative aspirations are enveloped. Utterances concerning the development of democratic elements and enhancement of participation are almost always expressed close to those that emphasise commercialisation and the government of culture in the Convention – particularly in documents that recommend ways of implementation for the Convention articles (OG, pp. 11–12). This and the vagueness of the 'human value speech' can be interpreted as a rhetoric strategy, which leaves the door open for multiple interpretations and conclusions, and makes way for systematic economic arguments and their hegemonisation.

Conclusions

There are three major discourses of making culture and cultural diversity understandable and usable in the Convention: discourses of governmentalisation, and the commodification and democratisation of culture. Discourse of governmentalisation tends to construct culture as an entity in need of conduct and international and national apparatuses of governance that influence the production and dissemination of cultural expressions. Discourse of commodification touches more directly on cultural expressions by trying to set requirements for them and their production, and to organise them into the global trade networks of cultural goods. These discourses are strongly interrelated and support one another:

As diversity becomes a cornerstone in the business world, from marketing to corporate management, it will be important to develop tools and capacity-building mechanisms that emphasise the benefits of cultural diversity together with other forms of diversity. Cultural diversity must thus be considered as an asset, whose added value is coming to be recognised in more and more areas of economic development. (WR, pp. 179–180)

But there is also a third type of discourse, which aims at making the world better in terms of 'Habermasian' communicative democracy, participation, equality and empowerment. To some extent it is a 'progressive counter-discourse'. However, analysis of the three discourses reveals that cultural expressions often become recognised only through their integration into the cultural industries and regulatory apparatuses. Thus, the commodification and governmentalisation of culture rise above the humanitarian/democratic aspect and begin to dictate its practical conditions for working upon culture.

Indeed the question of commodification is also regarding governmentalisation and democratisation, as commodification needs regulation and specific participatory mechanisms to take place. The core question here seems to be the same as the 'good old' dual question for liberalist practices of governance: how to govern

economic life (Foucault 2008). On the one hand, UNESCO tends to increase the governance over culture and cultural expressions in the name of regulating the global economic processes; not directly, as is the ethos in liberalist government, but rather ‘at a distance’ (Rose 1999, pp. 49–50) by using guidance, contracts and financial support in enhancing the economic efficiency of country-specific cultural production. UNESCO creates inter- and supranational discourses, strategies, programmes and apparatuses of governing economic life through culture and vice versa in the name of global biopower, i.e. securing and enhancing the vitality of productive populations and the world economy. On the other hand, the question is one of governing enough but not too much – again at the heart of the liberalist problematics of government. The Convention repeats the sovereignty of the independent states again and again, and aims at strengthening the actorship of private and CSOs in the implementation of the Convention. This refers to an avoidance of building too heavy and too direct international mechanisms of administration. UNESCO does not decrease the power of member states over the citizens and cultures within their territories, but instead creates new manifestations for their governance and networks. The idea is not to dictate what the parties should and should not do, but to let them learn from each other through a variety of contractual and communicative ways.

My intention is not to claim that what UNESCO is doing to preserve cultural expressions and national cultural production and dissemination of products is wrong or bad. Quite the contrary: the globalising world needs actions against Hollywood-like ‘superpowers’ in order to make way for alternative expressions and smaller channels of production and distribution. Rather, I want to challenge the ordering of discourses and hegemonisation of commercialisation and governmentalisation discourses, as they prevent seeing other values of cultural expressions, some of which are indeed embedded in the Convention and its premises. The Convention’s order of discourses tends not only to create new global and national criteria of good vs. bad or acceptable vs. non-acceptable within cultural activities, but also conditions for democratic practices of cultures and cultural policies. The core mission of UNESCO’s cultural work, like that of the Convention, is to defend cultures of particularly poorer, developing countries and indigenous peoples against the Western ethnocentric discourses on cultures and cultural expressions that disseminate through globalisation processes (UNESCO 2001, WR, p. 163). However, the Convention’s discursive order makes these values un-Habermasian in the end and, moreover, something that Habermas (e.g. 2006, pp. 325–326) strongly criticised in speaking of how the technocratic system logic and market logic colonise the ‘lifeworld’ of culture. Thus, in the end, Convention’s discursive practice can lead to something similar which Spivak (1999, p. 7) speaks about when using the term ‘epistemic violation’: through its confirmative scientific, truth-speaking nature and UNESCO’s organisational global authority the Convention actually compensates multiple and diverse non-Western ways of thinking culture and their subjects and actions with the Western one(s) and merge ‘other logics’ to the one of market economy.

The Data

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