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## **The International Mobility of Cultural Talent**

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### **Abstract**

Artists, musicians and writers have always been great travellers. Today, their talent circulates in new ways, and takes new forms, as the creative industries expand globally in a marriage of media technology and the traditional arts. The growing international market for cultural talent can do much to help countries diversify their economies, and improve the quality of life more broadly. The creative industries are subject to strong clustering effects, with talent moving swiftly to the most vibrant clusters, not always to the advantage of the poorer countries which can lose talent to the richer world. Countries that protect intellectual property rights, educate and train their talent, and maintain politically open and liberal societies will have a head start in the global creative economy.

Keywords: migration, culture, intellectual property

JEL classification: F22, O15, Z11

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No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money.

Samuel Johnson, in *The Life of Samuel Johnson* by James Boswell (1791)

## 1 Introduction

This paper was written at the kitchen table of my Helsinki apartment which abuts the Sibelius Academy, one of the world's largest music universities. From the window I see students, who come from over 40 countries, practising everything from classical music to jazz. Such mobility among talented people is not a recent phenomenon. Historically, musicians, painters, and writers have been some of the world's most highly travelled people. Among painters, Diego Velázquez (1599-1660) visited Italy twice, and hosted the visit to Madrid of the Dutch painter Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), himself a keen traveller. Nineteenth-century Paris acted as a magnet for painters and sculptors from as far a field as Australia, Latin America, and Scandinavia (Fey and Racine 2000; Leininger-Miller 2000). And the twentieth century saw mobility accelerate. The career of the Chilean painter Roberto Matta (1911-2002) is almost a perfect summation of the role of international mobility in forming talent; both his own and that of the artists (Salvador Dali, Marcel Duchamp, Jackson Pollock), writers (André Breton, Federico Garcia Lorca, and Pablo Neruda) and architects (Le Corbusier) that Matta met—and shared ideas with—in his wanderings through Europe, the United States and Africa (before settling in Paris, and dying in Italy).

Today, talent takes many innovative forms with creative industries expanding globally based on the marriage of new media technologies with the traditional arts. Outsourcing in the new media arts of animation, digital film, web site design, and computer gaming is in turn circulating talent between new and traditional media hubs, with cultural mixing giving rise to fresh forms of expression in literature, music and the visual arts. In these ways, the present wave of globalization resembles that of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when international migration contributed to the birth of jazz, the motion-film industry and abstract expressionism in painting.

This paper discusses the international market for cultural talent, and its implications for development. The paper is divided into six sections, each covering different dimensions of the issue. Section 2 discusses the nature of cultural talent and the creative industries and how these are evolving and generating new markets for talent. Section 3 sets out an analytical framework for understanding mobility and the market for cultural talent, emphasizing the strong clustering effects characterizing creative industries, and the mobility of talent between clusters. Section 4 discusses the impact of political upheaval on mobility, including talent's flight from repression and the surge in mobility associated with the wave of democratizations of the last 20 years. Section 5 assesses the policy implications for countries building new creative industries to compete in the global economy, as well as the importance of cultural talent to the quality of life more broadly. Section 6 concludes that countries, which protect intellectual property rights (IPRs), educate and train their talent, and maintain politically open and liberal societies, will have a head start in the global creative economy.

## 2 The nature of cultural talent and creative industries

The term cultural talent is used here to describe people who work in the visual arts (painters, sculptors, new media and multi-media artists), music, theatre performance, and dance, literature (poets, novelists, biographers etc.), crafts, design, architecture, fashion (clothing and textiles), and related fields. UNCTAD (2004: 4) makes a useful distinction between *upstream* activities—which are the traditional visual arts, literature and performance—and *downstream* activities, such as advertising, design, publishing and media-related activities (labelled ‘the new media arts’ in the introduction to this paper).

The two streams have a symbiotic relationship. For example, the music and the visual elements of the upstream activity of a live concert performance can be captured in digital media, copyrighted, and distributed downstream by a media company. However, the emotional sensation of being in the concert hall in the presence of the performers cannot be reproduced digitally. Therefore while new technologies build new relationships between the two streams (the movement from vinyl to compact disc to downloading music, for example) the upstream activity can never be completely subsumed into the downstream. Thus while your downstream experience of music occurs via the movement of ‘bits and bites’, you need to be physically present in the concert hall for an upstream experience. Similarly, paintings and sculpture convey ideas and symbols and also generate emotions; they may be copyrighted and reproduced, but the original work of art by the master’s own hand has a value all of its own.

Note that the labels ‘upstream’ and ‘downstream’ do not imply that one is better than the other since taste is subjective. Quality is an elusive term in cultural practice, and those seeking to claim superiority for the traditional fine arts are a dwindling minority; the distinction between fine and applied art is becoming increasingly meaningless as far as the new media arts are concerned. As one participant in this vigorous new area puts it:

What is the difference between an artist, a programmer, an architect, a researcher or a designer—all of whom work on new media/multimedia projects? Traditional divisions between the pure and the applied seem to fade... The expertise involved is not only artistic or technical. The skills or insights of a performance artist, for example, can create new means of computer-human interaction. (Cliche *et al.* 2002: 63)

Technology is increasingly part of creativity, although this represents an *acceleration* of a long term trend; the film industry is, after all, over 100 years old. These developments have brought the concept of the ‘creative industries’ to the fore and in a useful introduction to the area, UNCTAD sets out the field as follows:

The term ‘creative industries’ is of relatively recent origin. While there are obvious connections to and continuities with cultural industries, such as the performing arts and handicrafts, the designation marks a historical shift in approach to potential commercial activities that until recently were regarded purely or predominately in non-economic terms.... The concept of creativity [has moved] a long way from its common association with activities having a strong artistic component, to any activity producing symbolic products with a heavy reliance on

intellectual property and for as wide a market as possible. (UNCTAD 2004: 4)

So much for definitions and terms, what of data? Unfortunately, the data in this area are highly problematic. We know something about *stocks* from labour-force surveys and censuses but very little about *flows*; either occupational mobility (flows into and out of cultural occupations) or geographical mobility (movements within countries and international mobility). Moreover, multiple-job holding is common, since many cultural workers must find other income sources to sustain themselves. In addition a cultural worker may be active while registered as unemployed. Some 240,000 Americans give ‘painter, sculptor, printmaker, or craft artist’ as their prime occupation (Howkins 2002: 93). In the EU the music sector is estimated to provide employment (both full and part time) for some 600,000 persons; not only musicians, composers, and music teachers but also for all those engaged in the music industry, including distribution and publishing etc.<sup>1</sup> But we do not know much about how many people enter the EU and US already active in this area, or intent on becoming so. Our knowledge about flows of cultural talent from the developing world is even scantier. We therefore confine ourselves in this paper to the conceptual and policy issues, illustrating the main points with data when available.

### **3 Mobility and the market for cultural talent**

This section sketches an analytical framework of how mobility fits into the market for cultural talent. The framework mainly focuses on upstream cultural activities (and mostly the visual arts), although something is said about the new downstream creative industries as well.

#### **3.1 The spatial distribution of cultural production**

To understand why cultural talent moves we have to understand the spatial distribution of cultural production. There are broadly two reasons why economic activities are not distributed evenly across geographical space (see Kanbur and Venables 2005). First, the world is not a ‘featureless plane’ and the existence of geographical features as well as differences in endowments of natural capital favours some activities over others. Second, producers have an incentive to cluster even when they compete (‘co-opetition’ describes this mixture of co-operation and competition) and clustering benefits some activities more than others. This second effect is more important in determining the spatial distribution of creative industries than the first; although variations in natural capital may still play a role (the early US film industry located itself in Hollywood to take advantage of the abundant natural light of California, for example).

Creative industries have a strong propensity to cluster together (Callegati and Grandi 2005; Caves 2000). Participants benefit from forward and backward linkages to their suppliers and customers; firms and not-for-profit suppliers benefit from large pools of skilled labour as well as specialist suppliers of key inputs; and firms and workers benefit

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<sup>1</sup> Source: European Music Office (<http://www.musicineurope.org>)

from observing (and copying) their competitors. Supportive public institutions, including academies specializing in the talent required by the local creative industry, further strengthens a cluster. Education in turn enjoys the philanthropy of industry, thereby attracting the best students who graduate into the local talent pool. In the film industry, and now in the new digital media, producers also benefit from the development of a specialized pool of finance (including venture capital) knowledgeable about the industry's risks and willing to finance investment. These strengths consolidate over time, making a successful cluster a formidable competitor for any new localities attempting to break into the market.

These clustering effects apply in upstream cultural activities as well. Take the case of painters. For them, clustering facilitates the rapid transmission and development of new ideas and modes of expression. Clusters of painters almost always emerge in large cities, in which incomes are high enough for spending on cultural products—the visual arts, music, dance, etc.—and for the philanthropic support of the arts including the construction of art museums, theatres, and concert halls (with large city populations providing the regular audience). Moreover, the higher income of cities, and a greater openness to new ideas among urban populations, stimulates a greater interest in the artistic avant-garde.

These same factors support the creation in capital cities of what eventually become the best arts schools, attracting the best students, with an intimate link between the school and the principal market. In the art world of the nineteenth-century the best route for an aspiring young painter such as the American John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) lay in Paris, and involved training at the highly selective Ecole des Beaux-Arts and then exhibiting at the annual Salon. Today, that young artist might choose the Royal College of Art or Goldsmiths College, both in London, giving them immediate access to a large number of collectors and art dealers. The market in capital cities is also the attraction for those trained in provincial academies: Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and Andy Warhol (1928-87) might never have achieved fame if they had stayed in the cities of their student years (Barcelona and Pittsburgh, respectively) instead of moving to Paris and New York. Great art has been made in the provinces, but the painter is vulnerable to the fortunes of a thinner market than in a capital city. Thus Johannes Vermeer (1632-75) could make a career in Delft, and not in Amsterdam, but his income collapsed with the sudden death of his sole patron, whereas Amsterdam's numerous and rich merchants competed to have their portraits painted by the city's best artists.

The dominance of a few cities in the global art market has increased over the last 40 or so years as more money has entered the market; the fine arts (painting and sculpture), together with decorative arts and antiques generated world sales of some US\$23.5 billion in 2001.<sup>2</sup> There were only a handful of art dealers in the New York of the 1930s, but their number grew rapidly from the 1950s onwards with the commercial success of abstract expressionism and pop art. Today, London and New York account for some 70 per cent of sales at auction and through galleries (Howkins 2002: 92). The work of living artists sells for the most at auction in the United States (US\$70,000 on average) followed by the United Kingdom (US\$38,000). In 2003, New York accounted for over 60 per cent of all worldwide sales of over US\$200,000, while the United Kingdom

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2 Source: Kusun & Company ([www.kusun.com](http://www.kusun.com)).

accounted for 27 per cent.<sup>3</sup> These cities accordingly attract a considerable amount of artistic talent, thereby reinforcing the pre-eminence of their academies.

For young talent, exposure to the latest techniques and ideas is one of the primary reasons for studying abroad. Moreover, attendance at the best schools of art and music is, as we have argued, the student's first step into the network of patronage upon which their future livelihood depends. In the world of painting and sculpture, students signal their potential to influential collectors with the best art schools providing a convenient screening device. For students from countries with little connection to the international art market, the best schools provide an especially large benefit since collectors will mostly find it too difficult to seek out their talent otherwise. The life-time earnings of, say, a Brazilian artist trained abroad in a major academy should therefore be higher than a Brazilian trained at home.

There is, however, little empirical evidence on this issue. Indirect evidence comes from one study of Latin American painters by Sebastian Edwards, who calculates the real rate of return on investments in twentieth-century Latin American art by collectors purchasing at auction (Edwards 2004). This is of course an imperfect indicator of returns to the artist from foreign training since the profits from selling at auction accrue to collectors and dealers (very few artists sell directly at auction). If there is a resale tax such as the *droit de suite*, which is collected in some European countries, then the artist shares in the auction price but nearly all Latin American art is auctioned in London and New York which do not have the *droit de suite* system.<sup>4</sup> For Latin American works sold at auction during the period 1981-2000, the overall annual (real) rate of return was a substantial 9 per cent; but the works of foreign-trained artists have only a slightly higher rate of return than those who received no training abroad (5.25 per cent versus 4.91 per cent) (Edwards 2004: 32). This small difference illustrates the importance of the tastes of collectors. Most collectors of Latin American art are from the region itself, and they favour a well-established and conservative style, with only the bolder collectors valuing the latest innovations. Therefore moving abroad to get an avant-garde training has had less of a positive impact on the earnings of Latin American artists, although this may be starting to change as new and younger collectors, with more exposure to international art trends, come into the market.

Young contemporary African painters may have an advantage over Latin Americans in the nature of their market. The market for traditional African 'cultural goods'—largely produced for religious and ceremonial purposes—is much larger and more international than that for Latin American art, and indeed most of the major collectors (and collections) are based outside sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of South Africa. The average annual rate of return on African cultural goods coming to auction is considerable: 115 per cent according to estimates by Fongue (2002). Interest in African traditional art was stimulated by its impact on early twentieth-century cubism, and the first collectors bought both. This market characteristic continues, and should favour young African artists well-versed in the ideas and techniques of contemporary art.

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3 Source: Study by Kusin & Company for the European Fine Art Foundation (TEFAF) summarized at: [http://www.cosmoworlds.com/tefaf-art\\_market\\_study\\_2005.htm](http://www.cosmoworlds.com/tefaf-art_market_study_2005.htm)

4 The system of *droit de suite* is a tax on auction resales for the benefit of the original creator of the work or their heirs. Initially in operation in six European countries, a common system came into force across the European Union on 1 January 2006.

Unfortunately, aside from South Africa (which dominates shows of contemporary African art) there are comparatively few young African artists capable of supplying the market. Expanding their opportunities for training and travel could therefore do much to push forward the development of the contemporary African art market. This would go some way to redressing the injustice done to Africa during the eras of slavery and European colonialism by the theft of much of the best traditional art objects from their original creators and societies.

Whereas painters and sculptors aim to sell something scarce—the most successful are in effect monopoly suppliers of their own, unique pieces—musicians aim for maximum dissemination (Howkins 2002: 91). IPRs are crucial to securing a musician's income, and the South's poorest countries—which typically have the weakest property rights—will often see their most successful musicians enticed away by the lucrative contracts and global marketing provided by the Northern music industry. Artists will return home to undertake concerts for local audiences, but the global sales income (including that from sales in the artist's home county) will be registered in the balance of payments accounts of the rich countries in which the music industry is based—and not in the poor country which has the cultural heritage in which the successful, but mobile, talent originated. This has been especially the case for many talented African musicians. Thus the Senegalese singer Youssou N'Dour (1959-) reaches a global audience from his London base, while retaining a Dakar recording studio. South Africa's music industry remains vibrant and attracts talent from across the continent, but the very best people head for Europe or the United States. Hence clustering also occurs in the music industry, but for somewhat different reasons than in the fine arts. Both experience a migration and circulation of creative talent to, and between, international creative clusters.

### **3.2 Mobility and the 'winner-take-all' market in cultural talent**

Mobility is also propelled by another characteristic of markets for cultural talent—at least in the upstream—namely the phenomenon of 'winner-take-all' whereby small differences in individual performance give rise to enormous differences in economic reward (Frank and Cook 1995). This phenomenon has been accelerated by new information technologies which facilitate the formation of a consensus on who are the best talents. With regard to the arts, Robert Frank sums up the resulting effect on earnings as follows:

'Winner-take-all' markets have proliferated in part because technology has greatly extended the power and reach of the planet's most gifted performers. At the turn of the [twentieth] century when the state of Iowa alone had more than 1,300 opera houses, thousands of tenors earned adequate, if modest, livings performing before live audiences. Now that most music we listen to is pre-recorded, however, the world's best tenor can be literally everywhere at once. And since it costs no more to stamp out compact discs from Luciano Pavarotti's master recording than from a less renowned tenor's, most of us now listen to Pavarotti. Millions of us are each willing to pay a little extra to hear him rather than other singers who are only marginally less able or well known; and this explains why Pavarotti earns several million dollars a year even as most other tenors, many of them nearly as talented, struggle to get by. (Frank 1999: 38)

The winner-takes-all phenomenon in contemporary fine arts has also been driven by the strategies and large resources of the dominant collectors; the markets for living artists are mostly small enough for wealthy collectors to act as a monopsonist, striking profit-sharing deals with young artists in exchange for pushing up their reputations and prices (putting an official stamp of approval on their work by means of prestigious exhibitions at public art museums is one popular strategy underlying philanthropic financing). Not surprisingly, Charles Saatchi, one of the world's most successful art collectors and dealers, also founded the UK's premier advertising agency. And hedge-fund managers are amongst the most active participants in New York's contemporary art market (Frank 2005).

The very best painters, musicians, and writers have skills that go beyond those that can be transmitted by education and training alone, and indeed 'genius' lies in creating something—be it a poem, painting, or song—that represents a radical break with tradition (the impressionist and surrealist movements in painting, for example). Not surprisingly, schooling's impact on artist's earnings is lower than for other professional and technical workers (Filer 1990). Indeed, some observers have argued that academic training can be a disadvantage in the visual arts, which may benefit artists of exceptional talent, but born in poor countries with few educational opportunities (or born into poor immigrant neighbourhoods with bad schools in rich countries). The Nigerian writer Ben Okri's description of the New York painter Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-88) fits this model:

He was specifically fitted for his genius. Born black, from Haiti (with its roots in voodoo, with its roots in Africa), unschooled (and so free from the limitations and stupidities of academicism, the full constriction of the right way to see, the proper way to be), a child of the streets (Dickens speaks of the best education coming from being street-wild and street-alive), and with a speaking disability... (Okri 2005: 65)

Basquiat's paintings now command prices which are among the highest of post Second World War American artists, although this is of little benefit to Basquiat himself since his success accelerated even further his ultimately destructive drug addiction (and indeed his personal problems were exacerbated by ambitious art dealers and collectors intent on creating a winner-takes-all market for the artist's work).

The very high *expected* return from artistic success—where success has both pecuniary and non-pecuniary characteristics—together with the behavioural tendency of aspiring entrants to greatly over-estimate their chances of success leads to an over-supply in many cultural markets. Much of the sector is therefore characterised by high levels of 'search unemployment', especially in the most attractive upstream areas, given the low probability that an entrant will achieve a place in the 'pantheon of the arts'. Foreign artists can face as tough a time as locals, with the added disadvantages of less market knowledge and often fewer financial resources. This was certainly true of painters trying to break into the US market of the early- and mid- twentieth century. The Mexican painter, José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949) failed to progress on his first visit (resorting to sign-painting) and had only modest success on his second, eventually returning to Mexico and to fame as an outstanding muralist (Lucie-Smith 1999: 196). Similarly, the Dutch painter, Willem de Kooning (1904-97), entered New York illegally at the age of 22, worked as a house painter for many years while struggling to make his name, and eventually found fame in his mid-forties as a leading abstract expressionist

(Stevens and Swan 2005). And of course we have no idea at all of how many lesser migrant-talents failed completely.

Some cultural markets segment into a formal sector where there are relatively full-time jobs, and an informal sector of casual work. For instance, in classical music the best-funded state and city orchestras provide salaried full-time employment which is coveted. Only a minority of each year's cohort of newly qualified musicians can get these jobs, and the remainder must either engage in temporary work as musicians, or combine this with some other job. At the high-end of the market, the most talented international musicians may be recruited directly into the most prestigious orchestras. Thus Finland has carved out something of a niche for itself in the international market for orchestra conductors, reflecting the quality of the country's musical education.

As a result of these forces, the markets for fine artists, musicians, and dancers are characterized by low mean earnings and a high skewness in the earnings distribution towards the lower end (Caves 2000; Frey and Pommerehne 1989; and Menger 1999). The poverty rate is generally higher than among other professional and technical workers (see for instance Alper *et al.* 1996 on the United States). Moreover, the incomes and employment of cultural workers exhibit a higher variance over time than other professional and technical workers (Menger 1999). Those who make unique pieces (painters and sculptors) may be 'forced sellers' while they are still establishing their reputation and, once that reputation is made, they will not share in the appreciating value of their early work unless they have withheld pieces from the market (although they will share in the resale value in European countries where *droit de suite* is in force). Musicians and novelists, whose output is reproducible, may sign over their royalties in their early years. Consequently, to make ends meet, artists have much higher rates of multiple-job holding than other comparable professionals (Alper and Wassall 2000).

In summary, given the high expected private return—which is rising with the spread of the 'winner-takes-all' phenomenon—domestic and international mobility of cultural talent has the characteristics of the migration process described in the classic Harris and Todaro (1970) model (which was developed to explain rural-to-urban migration in developing countries). That is to say, there are a small number of very remunerative 'slots' in the high-end cultural markets which attract aspiring artists—who also over-estimate their chances of getting a slot. As a result, rates of unemployment and under-employment are high but these fail to deter the flow of new entrants (many of them migrants given the concentrated spatial distribution of production in the arts) who are encouraged by the high expected returns.

These market characteristics have several interesting implications for South-North migration of cultural workers. The migrant with average skill (relative to their profession) is likely to have: a low mean income (but probably a higher income than in their home country, reflecting a larger market for cultural products in richer countries); to work in the informal market rather than the formal market; and to hold multiple jobs. The formerly-trained migrant—who has no alternative but the informal market—may face intense competition from people who have no formal training (see below). However, the lack of educational opportunities which is typical of poor countries will not constitute as severe a barrier to very high levels of talent in this area, as compared with other professions. We can expect that the participation rate in the formal labour market will be even less than for nationals because many migrants will lack formal

qualifications or their foreign qualifications will not be recognized ('credentialism'). Migrants need to be young to succeed in music, dance, and some of the visual arts (see Galenson 2001 on the latter). Older migrants seeking careers in these areas are highly likely to fall into the bottom end of the earnings distribution for their talent.

The rise of the new media industries may provide an alternative for those who fail to succeed in the world of upstream culture. Since many years can pass before success is achieved, entrants to upstream culture run the risk of a substantially lower level of lifetime earnings than their peers. In the past, when the new media industries did not exist, failed artists were left with few alternative jobs matching their skills; a problem compounded when alternative professions prefer younger workers that they can train. Today, there may be more possibilities for employment downstream for those failing to make it upstream. Indeed, cultural talent that is more risk-averse may well prefer to find employment in the downstream, where there is a more stable job market with a defined career structure. Success then depends on the deployment of the more conventional and widely-distributed skills of organizational ability and management—rather than on the very specific and high-level talents ('genius') that define the upstream arts.

Failed job-seekers take refuge in non-cultural employment, often hoping for better luck. Others will survive in the informal cultural market, but they face competition from entrants with no formal training. Thus African craft products are sold in streets and markets across Europe, traders sometimes being artists themselves, but often having no training. This provides an important survival livelihood for migrants who are otherwise unable to obtain employment (including illegal immigrants such as the *sans-papiers* in France, for example).

Restrictions on immigration affect cultural workers along with all other migrants. French policy has gone through distinct phases of encouragement and discouragement, for example. During the Mitterrand presidency (1981-88) the Ministry of Culture promoted the idea of an expanded Francophone culture and helped visiting African musicians obtain visas, a contributing factor to the rise of 'world music' during the 1980s. But the subsequent years have seen a stricter immigration policy which has affected immigrant cultural workers along with everyone else, and the *sans-papiers* began to organize themselves politically to resist expulsion in the 1990s (Winders 2004). Their strategies included gaining the support of major artists, notably the actress Emmanuelle Béart.

In summary, international mobility can be central to an artist's chances of success. But this is not to say that it is always essential. The painters and sculptors of St Ives in Cornwall became internationally renowned from what was one of the most remote parts of England when they first established themselves in the 1930s. Aboriginal artists have flourished over the last two decades despite rarely leaving Australia or, indeed, their communities, being part of a value chain that extends from the outback of Australia to major galleries and museums in Sydney, London, and New York. Indeed, their work would lose some or all of the 'authenticity' so valued by the international art market if they did relocate. The counter-factual case of successful immobile talent should therefore caution us in being too exuberant about mobility being a pre-condition for success. Clearly more empirical research is needed on these issues.

#### 4 Political upheaval and the mobility of cultural talent

People move through choice, but also from fear. Today we see large numbers of people forced into migration as the result of social upheaval and violent conflict (Borjas and Crisp 2005). No doubt there is much cultural talent among their numbers, adding to the loss of their home country's stock of talent. And aside from being victims of violent conflict alongside everyone else, artists are especially vulnerable by the nature of their work, which can criticise the ruling order (and potentially reach a large audience to do so) or may simply be distasteful to rulers (Hitler's hatred of modernism, for example). The Nazis in Germany persecuted 'degenerate artists', Nigeria's military government imprisoned the musician Fela Kuti (1938-97) for his politics, while the Taliban regime in Afghanistan notoriously banned music. Albert Hirschman's distinction between 'voice' and 'exit' is especially apt here (Hirschman 1970).

Exclusion and discrimination are powerful forces driving flight. Racial prejudice pushed African-American painters and musicians to France in the nineteenth and early-mid twentieth centuries. The colour of his skin denied Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937)—who studied under Thomas Eakins at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts—a permanent teaching position in the United States, but Tanner found success in France, eventually becoming a Chevalier de Légion d'honneur. Gender persecution can also drive mobility. Djur Djura (1949- ), a Kabyle (Algerian Berber) singer rejected the traditional life that her community demanded, left Algeria, and has built an international career in which her songs express rebellion against the patriarchy and gender violence found in her homeland (Djur Djura 1992).

More recently, Africa's political turmoil has created an exodus of artists and musicians. The musician Angélique Kidjo (1960- ) fled Benin for Paris after refusing to conform to the dictatorship's coercion of artists to make works praising the Marxist-Leninist leadership: 'it was either stay there and shut my mouth or leave' (quoted in Taylor 1997: 137-8). Wole Soyinka (1934- ), the Nigerian playwright and Nobel Laureate in literature, was imprisoned for his opposition to the 1969 Biafra war, and was exiled from his homeland for many years. Similarly, the Kenyan writer, Ngugi wa Thiongo (1938- ) was imprisoned and then spent 22 years in exile as a result of his opposition to the ruling party.

One of the few positive outcomes of exiling cultural talent is the creation of new art, music and literature, as artists from very different backgrounds mix together. The Second World War, for example, caused a large-scale migration of European painters to the United States. Roberto Matta, whose example was cited in the introduction to this paper, went into exile in New York in 1939, and exercised considerable influence on the young New York School artists. One of the pioneers of post-war development economics, Albert Hirschman—himself a refugee from Nazi Germany—was part of an American-led network that helped artists, writers, and musicians escape from Vichy France into neutral Spain and Portugal, and then onwards to the United States (Marino 1999). They included the French poet André Breton who was the leader of the Surrealist movement, as well as the painters Max Ernst (German) and Yves Tanguy (French), among others. Their presence reinvigorated what had, up to that point, been the lonely existence of avant-garde artists in the United States, a situation described by the critic Clement Greenberg in 1947 as 'the dull horror of our lives' in an isolation that was 'crushing, unbroken, damning' (Greenberg 1947). Robert Hughes, the Australian critic (and New York resident) sums up their profound impact as follows:

... the Surrealists' very presence was a tonic. The young Americans felt marginal, ignored by other Americans, provincial with respect to Paris. The Surrealist émigrés had brought the center with them. Their sense of mission, their belief in art and life were inseparable, heartened American artists who wished, above all, to believe in the value of an avant-garde. (Hughes 1997: 468)

Their sojourn in the USA was a short one and, with the exception of Max Ernst, most were relieved to get back to Europe at the end of the war (André Breton never mastered English and the absence of a Parisian café life in New York impeded artistic collegiality). But surrealism not only gave confidence to American artists embarking on abstract expressionism, it also permeated into the worlds of commercial art, advertising, and film and gave rise to new and startling juxtapositions of images and words that we now take for granted in today's media. The externalities arising from mobility are therefore significant. They are not just artistic in nature, but include economic, social and political externalities as influential creative practices become embedded and in turn transform ways of thinking and doing in the migrant's host country.

Our own era has been one of similar mobility for the last twenty years or so have seen immense political change, including the end of the cold war, the end of military rule and the reversion to democracy in Latin America, the spread of multi-party democracy in Africa (including the end of apartheid rule in South Africa), and political liberalization and democratization in Asia (notably in South Korea and Taiwan). This is not to imply that the 'third wave of democratization'—the term used by Samuel Huntington (1991) to describe the political liberalization from the 1980s onwards—has always created full democracies or is necessarily irreversible (and Goldstone *et al.* 2003, find that that new democracies have a higher risk of conflict). But for our purposes, it is certainly the case that these advances have done much to liberalize the international movement of cultural talent over the last twenty years. In the first 40 years after the Second World War, much talent circulated from South to North, as artists and writers visited and settled in the cities of their former colonial masters leading to a new literature exploring the post-colonial world and the reality of immigration (see for instance the work of Derek Walcott (1930- ), the West Indian poet and dramatist). But movement between the Cold War's 'East' and 'West' was largely confined to officially-sanctioned 'cultural exchanges', although clandestine interactions between visiting writers and artists with their persecuted hosts was important in some Eastern Bloc countries, notably in the creation of the 'Charter 77' movement in Czechoslovakia.

The third wave of democratization has generated greater possibilities for the circulation of talent through art, music and literature festivals as well as commercial tours of music, dance and theatre. In the visual arts this is evident in the new biennials that have emerged. The oldest biennials (Venice, Sao Paulo, and Documenta in Kassel, Germany) have been joined by Johannesburg (established in 1995 after the end of apartheid and the international cultural boycott against South Africa), Gwangui in South Korea (started in 1995 after South Korea's democratization in the late 1980s), and Senegal's Dak'Art established in 1992 (which has bravely soldiered on despite chronic underfunding).

In the past these upstream cultural events, and the mobility of talent associated with them, were largely seen as worthy endeavours but ones that had few ramifications for a country's economic development. However, the last ten years have seen a considerable

change in attitudes; upstream creative activities are becoming more important to strategies and practices in the creation and encouragement of downstream creative industries. It is therefore to these policy issues that we now turn.

## 5 Policy implications

The last few years have seen rising interest in the role of the creative industries in development (Barrowclough and Kozul-Wright 2006). A notable recent initiative is that of UNCTAD with the support of the Government of Brazil—in particular the minister of culture (and celebrated musician) Gilberto Gil Moreira—which is seeking to establish an International Centre on Creative Industries, in order to better understand the sector's economic and development impact.

Three major factors account for this new attention. First, the acceleration in the restructuring of the global economy has forced countries that have successfully developed on the basis of manufacturing to expand their service sectors (particularly internationally traded services) as manufacturing shifts to lower-cost producers, principally China. Moreover, with the rapid and easy diffusion of technology, creativity is one of the few remaining sources of product differentiation and competitive edge; in the fashion industry its value-added far exceeds production and material costs (Santagata 2002: 4). And this is becoming evident in many other industries; Apple defines itself by a creative and design edge that gives its products a premium over rivals, even though the contents are often sourced from the same manufacturing plants. Some analysts, notably Richard Florida, have gone so far as to claim that creativity is now the *decisive* source of competitive advantage for companies and, by extension, for countries (Florida 2002: 4).

Singapore is one country that has a clear strategy (called 'Renaissance City') to develop and encourage creative industries to reduce its dependence on traditional sectors—which are now under intense competition from new suppliers (Heng *et al.* 2003; Government of Singapore 2005). This includes encouraging upstream cultural interactions through: increasing scholarship funding to send abroad local talent (as well as foreign talent based in Singapore) for training; according greater recognition to Singaporean artists by making them cultural ambassadors for Singapore abroad; and upgrading the Singapore Youth Festival into an international event, including collaboration between schools in the arts (Government of Singapore 2000: 6). However, the creative sectors are less amenable to the successful government planning that Singapore and the other Asian success stories used in the heyday of their manufacturing development and success may yet prove elusive.

Second, urban regeneration schemes increasingly look to the creative industries to fill the gap left by the decline in traditional (often 'smoke stack') industries that led growth in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Bales and Pinnavaia 2001; McCarthy *et al.* 2005). Cultural capital such as concert halls and art museums is one of the 'location-specific' factors that attract the 'mobile factors' of capital and talent (both domestic and foreign) into urban areas (Dunning 1997). Moreover, cultural industries are now seen as a potential driver of urban regeneration because many cultural products are made by small manufacturing enterprises, which are in turn seen as an attractive replacement for declining large-scale industries (not least in their more positive impact on the local

physical environment). In addition, the market mechanism acts to attract cultural talent independently of any local government strategy or assistance since the fall in property values (associated with urban decline in major cities) provides cheap space for artists, writers and others. The recent renaissance of the arts in the otherwise depressed economy of Berlin, and the resulting flow of European and international talent into the city, is an example of this process at work.

Recognizing the positive impact of the cultural sector the European Union is now encouraging the mobility of cultural talent across the region. Measures include reforms to eliminate the double taxation of incomes from the arts and to agree common standards on qualifications for employment etc. (Audéoud 2002). A number of associations are now active in promoting global mobility in the arts, including the Informal European Theatre Meeting (IETM) (Staines 2004). There is also great scope for more philanthropic action to facilitate mobility. One example is the Pollock-Krasner foundation in the United States, which is funded from the estates of Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner. The foundation provides grants to artists from across the world, including travel funding to assist interaction between artists of different nationalities. In poorer countries with very limited budgetary resources and many competing priorities it may well have to be philanthropy that encourages mobility rather than state subsidy, and there is scope for more international philanthropic action in this area.

Third, smaller low-income countries need to diversify to reduce their dependence on traditional commodity exports for while commodity prices have recently risen (and commodity earnings provide valuable foreign exchange) commodity dependence has its drawbacks—notably the economic volatility associated with boom-bust cycles in commodity earnings. At the same time they now face intense competition from China which is increasingly dominant in sectors such as clothing and textiles that traditionally provide the first rung in the ladder of industrial development. This has reawakened interest in service industries, and principally tourism where many low-income countries have at least some location-specific advantages. In addition, there is now an emerging interest in the potential for creative industries where national cultures—in music, dance, and the visual arts—are location-specific factors. Knowing how to promote and nurture clusters in the developing world, particularly in the smaller and poorer countries is a new but important policy issue.

Most importantly, any national strategy must recognize that the most talented cultural workers in low-income countries are themselves highly mobile internationally. When attracted away from their home countries, their royalties flow to international media companies. These show up in the ‘invisible’ earnings of the rich countries where the international media is headquartered (as well as in the public revenues of rich country states via corporation taxes), rather than in the balance of payments accounts (and fiscal accounts) of poor countries. For poor countries the fundamental task should be to improve the investment climate for small business, of which creative industries are just one part. Many poor countries have regulatory and tax environments that discourage small-business creation and employment and these need major reform. And talent will not remain at home if political regimes remain repressive: democratization is therefore vital to the sector’s expansion in poor countries.

## 5.1 Cultural talent and the quality of life

In addition to its potential contribution to economic growth, cultural talent has a broader role in improving the quality of life (Nussbaum and Sen 1993) as well as human happiness, a metric of success of increasing interest to economists (Layard 2005). Cultural goods are similar to environmental assets in having an option and existence value in addition to their pure use-value. Many people value the existence of the temples of Angkor, Cambodia, irrespective of whether they will ever get to see them, in the same way that they value blue whales, despite never having seen one in the flesh: in both cases a contingent valuation study could estimate the option and existence value, and in monetary terms this would probably far exceed their use value. It follows that promoting the mobility of cultural talent, or at least reducing the impediments, would be welfare-improving when it results in a more efficient pattern of cultural production.

Moreover, it must be emphasized that cultural mobility not only contributes to the production of existing types of cultural goods, it also changes the nature of cultural goods by giving rise to new forms of music, visual art, performance, and literature. The interaction between artists and musicians of different immigrant communities can be especially creative. The birth of jazz in early twentieth-century America is a famous example. A contemporary example comes from the British music scene. ‘Apache Indian’, a British musician of Punjabi descent was influenced by the local Afro-Caribbean community in his native Birmingham to mix reggae into bhangra (itself a blend of dancehall and Punjabi traditional music) to create what the musicologist Timothy Taylor (1997: 155-6) calls ‘a very British sound’. Travel by artists to experience new cultures is also another facet. Chris Ofili, a British born artist of Nigerian descent was funded by the British Council to visit Zimbabwe while still a student, for example. The resulting African-inspired images set him apart as one of the most innovative members of the YBA (‘Young British Artists’) movement that emerged in the early 1990s in the UK.

The mobility of talent also brings different cultures into interaction with each other, and artists enrich our lives by explaining and interpreting the often hard life of the immigrant, a politically important counterbalance to racism and exclusion which feeds on ignorance about other people and their cultures. In Germany the second-generation of the country’s largest migrant group—Turks who arrived as ‘guest workers’ in the boom years of the 1960s and 1970s—are now exercising a stronger influence on the national culture, notably in film and in writing. A German-Turkish film director, Neco Celik, sums it up in this way: ‘The second generation was always one of interpreters. Because we could speak German, we had to translate and fill in forms. That gave us independence and cultural agility’ (Benoit 2005). Similarly, writers of South Asian descent such as Salman Rushdie and Hanif Kureishi have revitalized English literature since the 1970s.

Culture also contributes to our understanding of the human experience of movement, and the interaction between different societies in each era of globalization. These themes have been especially important to African and African-American artists reflecting, as they do, Africa’s history—in particular the transatlantic economy in slaves—as well as today’s reality of refugees and displaced people attempting to reach Europe and a better life. Thus in his piece ‘Trade Routes’ the London-born Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare (1962–) recreated the parlour of a Victorian philanthropist upholstered with African batik. Colourful batik—seen everywhere in West Africa—is

widely thought to have originated in Africa, but the technique and the basic designs come from Indonesia, with Dutch and British merchant ships first carrying the cloth to West Africa during the era of the slave trade in the eighteenth century. Shonibare's work has been exhibited across the world including the Venice Biennale—where, fittingly, it was shown in a sixteenth century merchant's house, in a city that is the epitome of the early mixing of East and West through commerce and art.

These broader effects of talent's mobility imply that there may be considerable *social* returns to public action in the form of subsidies that aim to promote the international circulation of talent. Thus, when the Governor of the Province of Veracruz awarded a travel scholarship to the young Diego Rivera (1886-1957) he advanced the career of an artist whose lifetime of travel contributed to enriching Mexican art and culture, notably in his great cycle of murals inspired by seeing the frescoes of the Italian renaissance masters during his European visits (Lucie-Smith 1999: 199).

## 6 Conclusions

Cultural talent is internationally mobile in many ways, and for many reasons, including the desire to be educated and trained in the chosen field, the expectation of high rewards (both monetary and non-monetary, including 'fame'), and flight from political repression and conflict. This chapter has explored a number of issues relating to the international mobility of cultural talent. It has only chipped away at the surface of what is a large and fascinating topic.

Five main messages emerge from our discussion and analysis of the issues. Our first message is the importance of the spatial concentration of cultural activity, both the upstream arts and the downstream creative industries, to understanding the mobility of talent. These are activities which benefit from people clustering together, for reasons to do with having close to hand a large pool of talented labour, knowledgeable consumers, and financiers willing and able to bear the risks. From this follows our second message, namely that the existence of these clusters attracts migrants, both temporary and permanent; to be the most successful painter, musician or film-maker you greatly increase your chances by heading for one of the main clusters of activity. International migrants obviously face greater costs and barriers to entry than national migrants, but both are propelled by much the same incentive, namely the high *expected* return from being employed at the heart of their creative industry.

The third message is that markets for talent are undergoing profound change as new creative industries open up, and as increasing numbers of countries take the view that they have to expand their service sectors to offset the decline of traditional manufacturing industries—many of which are increasingly concentrated in the larger developing countries. There is a symbiotic relationship between the upstream arts and the downstream creative industries since the former attract foreign and domestic investment in the downstream. Hence any effective national strategy must encourage both, and countries which protect IPRs, have a good system of education and training, and which are politically open and liberal will have a head start in the global creative economy. This is the fourth message.

The fifth and final message is that the interaction and influence of cultural talents upon each other through mobility gives rise to new cultural products which can significantly improve the quality of life. Therefore, the mobility of talent should not be viewed simply as a means to economic growth; it must also be seen as a contributor to human development more broadly.

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