Rethinking Cultural Relations and Exchange in the Critical Zone
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Abstract:
'Rethinking Cultural Relations and Exchange in the Critical Zone' by Carla Figueira and Aimee Fullman

Figueira and Fullman reflect on the need to rethink cultural relations and exchange in consideration of engaging meaningfully in creating solutions for Earth's current ecological crisis within the interdisciplinary context of the Critical Zone. From this perspective, they examine relevant theory and practical aspects of international relations, arts and cultural management, and cultural policy to explore the possibilities and limitations of each of these areas of study in addressing sustainability during the Anthropocene era. Cultural relations and exchange are advocated for as critical contributions towards adapting to climate change alongside the underutilized potential of the arts and humanities. Cultural engagement within higher education, through arts and cultural management programs, is then positioned as a significant leverage point intervention to change systems in order to achieve a sustainable cosmopolitan and inclusive human society.

Key words:
Anthropocene
Arts management
Biosphere
Climate change
Cosmopolitanism
Critical Zone
Cultural engagement
Cultural exchange
Cultural policy
Cultural relations
Culture
Ecological crisis
Education
International relations
Nationalism

List of Abbreviations

EU	*European Union*
IPCC	*Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*
IR	*International relations*
UK	*United Kingdom*
UN	*United Nations*
UNESCO	*United Nations*
USA	*United States of America*

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Introduction

Humanity is the cause of fundamental changes to Nature which affect our life on Earth and its sustainability. Our evolution has not been inclusive; on the contrary, its progress has been built on the exclusion, expulsion and destruction of individuals, groups, and physical spaces, as documented by Sassen (2014). But the state of emergency in which we live is also a state of emergences. We borrow this key idea from Homi Bhabha's 1986 foreword to Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, but prefer to reinforce the plurality of emergences than to use the original notion of 'state of emergence'. The worlds in which we live do feel to be more than ever before in a state of crisis, and we need to encourage approaches and solutions that consider an inclusive future for humanity (Figueira, 2018). The authors of this chapter argue that higher education is key in the pursuit of solutions for our future. We feel there is a need to re-orient arts and cultural management education to meet the demands of our time and this involves a reflection about "the way we think and are trained; in the subjects and approaches our discipline values and rewards" (Burke et al. 2016, p.501) – which in our case includes international relations, arts and cultural management and cultural policy. We argue in this paper that emerging thinking and action, guided by these disciplines can support leverage point interventions to tackle the ecological crisis and change the system so that we can become a sustainable cosmopolitan and inclusive human society.

The 'emergence' we are focusing on is an understanding of cultural relations and exchange as cultural engagement, stressing contextual meaning and commitment. In the following section, we present our views on the state of crisis in which we live, describing the impact humanity has had on Earth and introducing the Critical Zone as an interdisciplinary framework for the study of the impact and the identification of solutions. Then, we argue for the need to rethink cultural relations and exchange as part of the solution to the ecological crisis. In two further sections, we engage with the disciplines across which the authors of this chapter situate themselves - International Relations, Cultural Policy & Management, and Cultural Policy - to explore how these areas of study engage with societal change in connection with the ecological crisis. This discussion allows us to understand how thinking from both these areas can contribute to an emerging new paradigm of cultural relations and exchange, conceptualised as cultural engagement. The concept is finally applied to a discussion of the work of arts and cultural organisations in that area, and to higher education in arts and cultural management.

The Critical Zone

Climate change is demonstrated by severe weather, rising sea levels, increasing Co2 levels, diminishing Artic sea ice, and rising temperatures. It is the single most species altering—and thus life as we know it—critical challenge facing the world and each individual today. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report (IPCC, 2018) warns that there are only a dozen years left to make the needed changes to limiting global warming to a maximum of 1.5 °C; the point beyond which

the necessary techniques to reduce global temperature are potentially less effective and the impacts on ecosystems, human health and well-being are greater. Negative repercussions on human health will continue to be affected by air pollution, changes in ecology, increasing allergens, changes in water and food quality and supply, environmental degradation, and extreme heat. As Scranton (2015, p.16) puts it: 'We're fucked. The only questions are how soon and how badly'. If you are not a climate change denier – although we all are to an extent (Hamilton, 2010) - you know what we are talking about… Humanity has grown so impactful on the earth system processes that geologists have classified it as a major geological force and named Earth's most recent geologic time period the Anthropocene. This impact is felt in the Earth's Critical Zone, which is the permeable surface layer from the tops of the trees to the bottom of the groundwater, where rock, soil, water, air and living organisms interact (Banwart et al., 2013). The Critical Zone concept provides an interdisciplinary framework for the different sciences to work together to study the consequences of the impact and the interventions that can deal with the changes. To date, the focus has been on leverage point interventions by the natural sciences that can produce big changes in our complex biosphere system. However, the arts, humanities and social sciences have an underutilised and significant contribution to make through their approaches to cultural and societal engagement and (ex)change that contribute both awareness to and knowledge co-creation across societies and disciplines (Galafassi et al., 2018).

The global ecological crisis resulting from the impact humanity collectively has on the planet's Critical Zone is an inescapable context any academic field has an obligation to consider in its educational content and pedagogy. We, the authors of this paper, both teach, research and practice in international cultural relations, arts and cultural management and cultural policy, and we are concerned about how thought and practice within our disciplinary systems of knowledge can face this crisis. We are further compelled by the specific environmental and societal contexts we are experiencing first hand in our daily lives: the UK is pushing ahead with fracking and is engaged in withdrawing from its largest international and regional relationship with the EU – the Brexit process; meanwhile, the USA is shifting to become a 'majority-minority' (i.e. a 'minority white') country by 2045 (Frey, 2018), and finds itself afflicted by regular flooding in the largest Naval port in the world, threatening life, property and strategic military interests; all the while governed by a federal administration that is not prioritising climate change and includes key administrators who do not recognise it as a human-effected situation. The political leaderships of both countries are focusing on tightening their borders and keeping migrants and refugees out, echoing concerns of large sections of their populations. Moving beyond nationalism (Harari, 2018) in these countries and elsewhere is imperative, since only embracing a view of humanity as one community, as in the universalist and cosmopolitan understanding, will enable us to tackle the issues affecting our complex biosphere complex, which do not stop at national borders.

Rethinking Cultural Relations and Exchange: Critical Contributions to Solving the Ecological Crisis

The Anthropocene points to humanity as the collective responsible for the biosphere crisis (a devastation that has taken place throughout human history and which is well

illustrated by Diamond 1997), while alternative geological 'cenes' (Capitalocene, Plantatiocene) try to precisely point to who in humanity, and what practices, are to blame. All highlight how many human cultures see the Earth as a given, something to possess and explore. This attitude indicates a separation between nature and culture, and an ideology of the domination of the human being. However, humanity exists diversely in both culture and nature (see for example Descola, 2013) and has never really separated from the nonhuman world (Latour, 1991). Human beings, as individuals and members of groups, form networks. Thus, the authors agree with Latour's (2011, p.6) observation that the global is generated locally: things are ordered by connectedness as if they were nodes connected to other nodes. Through this connective tissue, humanity lives, creating, changing, and destructing. The current destruction of nature affects the links humanity builds with it at a deep level: "climate change can directly challenge traditional or established identities" (Adger et al., 2013 p.114), since it can disrupt place attachment. Climate change can have paradoxical effects by simultaneously resulting in: cognitive dissonance between community (often felt as local) change, and perception of climate change as a global-scale problem which enables the formation of new links and forms of action across transnational communities (Adger et al., 2013).

A redefinition of (trans/inter/cross/multi/intra*national*) cultural relations and exchange is thus required in the same sense that Latour (2016, p.311) challenges the Empire of the Globe, as the knot tying together

> "a certain definition of nature and questions what it means to inhabit a territory, the shape of our common abode, and what it means to be a calculating subject".

We need inclusive human relations, in the cosmopolitan sense of humanity, as one community with shared moral values as enshrined in the *UN Declaration of Human Rights* made possible by *cultural relations,* defined here as experiencing individual trans/inter/cross/multi/intra*national* opportunities to create mutual trust. As Appiah (2018) notes, we have moral obligations not to screw up the world for everyone, because everyone matters: the cosmopolitan impulse of a shared common humanity where we are socially linked as citizens of the world is necessary. We do not wish to avoid the difficult question of how to deal with those states, groups and individuals, who do not share understandings compatible with cosmopolitan ideals, but this discussion is far too complex to be included in this chapter. Metaphysics of morality are also beyond our discussion scope; thus, we assume our subscription to a certain degree of normative moral relativism, which accepts that we ought to tolerate the behaviour of others even when we disagree - however we do believe in a universal ethic, which we prefer to attach to transcendent rationality although it may not be totally compatible with some belief systems.

In our contemporary world, when we talk about cultural relations and exchange, often we focus on culture and cultural groups along the dimension of nationality, particularly when we depart from the lenses of international relations and also from the point of view of culture as a public policy for arts and heritage. Similarly, anthropological lenses (culture as a way of life) may also reinforce the identification of particular features of material and non-material culture with specific groups. These views may, at times, overshadow what we see as facts: that humanity is one, that no

one owns culture, that culture changes over time, that there are many ways in which to be part of a cultural group – identity is multiple and is further complexified by factors such as class, religion, race or gender (see for example Appiah, 2018). Being aware of these different factors is not an invitation to essentialism – we do not believe that one single identity factor speaks for the whole person or for a whole social group; both dimensions encapsulate diversity. Cultural relations and exchange need to be fundamentally inclusive human relations and be conceived as meaningful cultural engagement, stressing contextual meaning and commitment – which we see as crucial elements in the connectedness implied from being part of the cultural nodes on the Earth's Critical Zone.

Trying to find a solution for the biosphere crisis that saves humanity is a difficult task – well if you think we are worth saving (unlike Gray, 2002). Like other humanists, Haraway (2015, p.160) has a hopeful attitude to which we subscribe:

> "I think our job is to make the Anthropocene as short/thin as possible and to cultivate with each other in every way imaginable epochs to come that can replenish refuge. Right now, the earth is full of refugees, human and not, without refuge".

We often characterise and acknowledge human refugees, those seeking safe shelter, based on their past point of origin, rather than honouring their commitment towards adapting and their ability to survive and thrive in an unknown future. In this sense, we are all refugees and we need to work forward on being an inclusive humanity, considering each other and Nature. Thus, we argue that openness to, and investment in, cultural relations and exchange can facilitate change, as this enables the dissemination and discussion of new ideas, approaches and solutions that can be beneficial to all. Supporting this line of thinking, Adger et al. (2013, p.114) stress that

> "changes in individuals and collective identities can open up possibilities for forming symbolic identities with distant others and 'elective communities' and facilitate new forms of collective action".

Forms of action in which people come together to celebrate common and binding cultural forms that make them act as a group, and which are interrelated, strengthen the nodes that locally make up the global.

Haraway (2015) calls this job of intense commitment and collaborative work and play, the Chthulucene. This is not an easy task, since paradigmatic assumptions of our different socio-political-economic-cultural systems are difficult to transform. Meadows (1999), reflecting on the difficulties of changing systems, notes that in an individual, change can happen in a millisecond, but whole societies resist harder. Individuals are key to a systems change approach (Eisenhardt, 1989 and Abercrombie et al., 2015), and this point is why we focus on education, in a later section of this chapter. However, at the same time, the coming together of individuals in groups through the forging of diverse bonds, which form a diversity of defined systems of thinking and action, is a crucial level of action to enable more systemic change.

Academic disciplines, as systems of thinking and guides of action, are one important level in which to take into account the task of changing systems. We now reflect on how our academic disciplines - international relations, arts and cultural management and cultural policy - as systems of knowledge and institutional practices that traditionally maintain a separation between society and nature, are responding to the biosphere crisis and engaging with societal change. Each discipline encapsulates diverse understandings of humanity and how cultural relations and exchange happen, which are important to support leverage point interventions to tackle the global ecosystem crisis.

International Relations, Societal Change and the Ecological Crisis

International relations (IR), as an academic discipline, emerged in the period between the two world wars, driven by a quest for peace. Its main concerns were and are with modern sovereign states and their relations. The nation-state is still posited as the moral and ontological foundation of world order (Burke, 2013, p.65). The discipline is thus in a unique situation to analyse the rules of the international political system and understand who has power over them. This is an important entry point for change, considering the scale and nature of the crisis.

However, many argue that established international relations practices, such as (traditional) diplomacy, can do little for the ecology of the Earth. Criticism on international relations' focus on the nation-state and its limitations has forced the discipline to develop into other (marginal) areas, such as critical geography, posthuman IR, global governance and ecological politics. However, even with these efforts to make IR become a truly international and reflexive discipline (Tickner 2011), IR seems to have failed humanity because it has been unable to escape the interests of the nation-state, even in universalist and cosmopolitan (we are all one human community) approaches for the realisation of the global common good. Bull (1977, p.82 in Burke 2013, p.67) noted, and it is still mostly true,

> "universal ideologies that are espoused by states are notoriously subservient to their special interests, and agreements reached among states are notoriously the product of bargaining and compromise rather than any consideration of the interests of mankind as a whole".

Reflecting on how to move forward, Burke (2013, p.72) notes that while the state remains important, as a system of democratic representation, governance, resources allocation and international legality, the ontological figure of the state should be replaced by humanity. This humanity is conceptualised by both an historical event of unification of life and death and a global community of interdependence, in which an embodied vulnerability is shared with each other, the earth and the cosmos (Burke, 2013, p.73). The replacement of the ontological figure of the state by that of humanity is not an easy and quick process to undertake. We assert that education (very much in line with Freire's 1970 thinking), at different levels, and particularly using the arts, can enable formative and transformational cognitive processes for individuals, which will in the long term enable the required change of individual and communitarian archetypes for the re-orientation of humanity. Burke (2013, p.75) further suggests that

> "State responsibilities to their own citizens and the global community of humans must now be discharged together through a web of cooperative action, management, norms and critique that would express our common interest in a more just, secure and environmentally sustainable world".

That web of cooperation oriented by common interests and underpinned by environmental and social justice can be fostered partially by cultural relations and exchange as these are conducive to knowledge and understanding of diverse ways in which to be human and in Nature. Being Earth-worldy, that is "responsive to, and grounded in, the Earth", embracing the condition of being entangled (meaning being-with or being singular plural, not being truly autonomous or separate be it at the scale of international politics of quantum physics) is proposed by Burke et al. (2016, p.518). This proposition comes from the realisation that human activity and nature are bound in a singular 'social nature' (Burke, 2016). In our view, culture(s) and the arts are diverse projections of that singularity. The knowledge of and engagement with this diversity needs to be developed in each individual and group, to develop empathy and humility. This point reinforces our argument about the importance of teaching and learning about cultural relations and exchange, as we discuss later.

Cultural Policy, Societal Change and the Ecological Crisis

If one can, to an extent, regard IR as the public policies of the international sphere, cultural policy can be simply defined as the branch of public policy that deals with the administration of culture (Bell and Oakley, 2015). For cultural policy, the national is a pervasive level for its development and application, although it operates in a range of scales from and across the international to the local (e.g. from UNESCO, to the Francophonie, to a country or a city). Nation-states encourage the development of culture in an anthropological sense, as their particular way of life (in Anderson's 1991 'imagined community' sense), of which are also part artistic practices and products that they use in their cultural relations and exchanges with other actors. These relations and exchanges have globalised and increasingly diversified. This causes a dynamic tension between cultural homogeneisation and cultural heterogenisation that is seen by many as the central problem of globalisation (Appadurai, 1990). The global cultural relations and flows are thus composed of complex, overlapping and disjunctive orders, made up of a diversity that harbours in itself homogeneity and hegemonic processes (Appadurai, 1990). After all, culture is dynamic and typically hybrid. Cultural relations and exchange thus serve as catalyst for the creation of new synthetic cultural expressions (Cowan, 2002).

At an individual level, the important category of national cultural identity is embodied along with many other identities each of us hold. Individual cultural identity has multiple expressions made complex by factors (some legally recognised within cultural rights and diversity policies) such as class, religion, race, gender, generation, sexuality, and education. These multiple dimensions of cultural diversity, at a time when individual and social identity is often accepted/highlighted as an unidimensional category, offers paradoxically potential nodes of networking and relationship that can transcend borders and narrow views of individual and group identity and belonging, which can enable a change of minds and hearts towards the

building of an inclusive nature-aware humanity. Individuals themselves gain from cross-cultural exchange, via a “gains from trade” model, as Cowan (2002, p.12) puts it, since those transactions make them better off by expanding their menu of choice, and we would say, of being.

Culture and the arts are key for societal change and for adapting to the biosphere crisis as, in addition to their worldly quality, they have a dyadic connection with climate (Hulme, 2015). Culture in both its material and non-material aspects is affected by the ecological crisis and at the same time it mediates every dimension of societal response to the perceived crisis (Adger et al., 2013). We agree with Latour (2018) that art can help us to deal with our current challenges: we need new attitudes and feelings, and artists, writers will be able to provide that through their imagination. Leiserowitz reinforces this idea, noting that art “provides us with a vicarious experience of something we can’t experience directly and so helps us imagine and learn” (Frasz, 2016, p. 3). Furthermore, art is (arguably) more inclusive; in not being constrained by standard scientific methods, it can allow the involvement of artists, scientists, citizens and different types of change agents to challenge the status quo (Stockholm Resilience Center, 2018). This is why, we advocate that culture, in a wide sense meaning the arts and heritage, the cultural and creative industries, but also education, sports and leisure, and those who produce it, support it and engage with it, are fundamental in contributing to thinking and action around the ecological crisis and societal change and it is also the responsibility of arts and cultural management education to prepare their faculty, staff and students to be up to the task of developing thinking and action conducive to cosmopolitan conceptions of humanity.

Beyond agency of cultural communities, links between the relatively young fields of cultural policy and arts and cultural management and the area of ecology and climate change are recent, and often emerge through the murky guise of sustainability or in complex association with the words ‘culture’, ‘sustainable’ and ‘development’ (Isar, 2017). Isar (2017 p.154) finds the engagement of cultural policy and arts management in ‘ecological’ sustainability to be problematic, because of the conflation of the meaning of culture as the arts and heritage and as a way of life, which is not operationally translatable in terms of public policy, since cultural policy is arts and heritage. However, Isar (2017, p.157) notes that promoting the transformation and (re)imagination of ways of life “that can bring us closer to true sustainability” should be at the heart of cultural policy – we agree. A good example of cultural policy research focusing on the popular ‘culture and sustainable development’ strand of research is that of Kangas et al. (2017). They propose four roles for culture in sustainable development: safeguarding cultural practices and rights; greening the cultural sector’s operations and impacts; raising awareness and catalyse actions about sustainability and climate change; and fostering ‘ecological citizenship’. Focusing on the last strand, the authors (Kangas et al., p.131) allude to the role of cultural policy “as a tool for creating ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson, 1983)” as a way to foster global citizenship (in a cosmopolitan sense) “to help identify and tackle sustainability as a global issue”. However, they acknowledge the elusive role of this type of cultural policy, since “[p]ublic policy is, by definition, defined and articulated within the framework of a state that has the political legitimacy to enforce it” (Duxbury et al. 2017, p.224). Duxbury et al. (2017, p.225) go on to say that “To date – and to the best of our knowledge – this principle has not

found its place in actual policy strategies". Perhaps, not a surprising find, as Maxwell and Miller (2017) note there is a key vulnerability in sustainable development when economic self-interest in the satisfaction of human needs tilts the balance of the relationship between human and nonhuman beings. They remind us of the need to reflect on changes about cultural activities that are ecologically dangerous or destructive in ways that account for intra- and inter-generational equity, allow for the participation of the affected communities (if not directly, through representatives), and are recognised in international agreements ensuring some inter-territorial equity.

Therefore, it is in practice and at the local level, where it is crucial for policy officials and funders, arts organisations, artists and cultural professionals to work in eco-cultural policy, informed both by ecological elements and cosmopolitan cultural elements, and also including the development of meaningful cultural engagement (more later on this). Underpinning this stance, is the understanding of the global as local – already discussed and which is for us so important. The level of local impact and awareness within communities is where a systems change needs to start working urgently, as the most affected by global climate change are often marginalised.

Although there is a long way to go, the arts and cultural sector is increasingly engaging with the ecological crisis. *Raising the temperature: the arts on a warming planet* reported 199 climate artworks and 102 climate art projects between 2000-2016 based on a literature review (Galafassi et al., 2018). "Like a kaleidoscope, the idea of climate is now refracted through photography, cartoons, poetry, music, literature, theatre, dance religious practice and educational curricula" (Hulme, 2015 p. 9) as well as specific programmes and experiences linking arts, nature and well-being including eco-arts therapy programmes. *12 ways the arts can encourage climate action* offers that the arts can encourage climate action by: "showing it's more fun to be a creator than a consumer…highlighting the downside of car culture…encouraging human empathy", addressing the "hope gap", and using stories to "stand out from the noise" (Leach, 2016, np). Leading by example, the arts and cultural sector can further contribute to the development of sustainable arts and cultural infrastructure by considering: the way they themselves operate in regards to physical implantation in ecologically sensitive areas, sources of energy and control of temperature, light and humidity; the wider impact they may have (movement of people, transportation – including international travel); their own collections and archives for sources of non-traditional knowledge and problem solving towards today's eco-challenges. Naming as a tool for investment in physical infrastructure is a well-established global practice in development and it behoves us to consider partnering with individuals who are forward thinking and to stress articulation and measurement of environmental and cultural impacts when bidding out new projects. A substantial number of studies is already available in this area of arts/culture and ecology, but this framework of discussion needs to become a more mainstream topic both theoretically and in practice.

Cultural Engagement as a Leverage Point Intervention

Human cultures and their behaviour repertoires are one of the causes and part of the solution for the global ecological crisis. Unfortunately, as Meadows (1999, p.16) notes in her study of leverage points,

> "people appreciate the precious evolutionary potential of cultures even less than they understand the preciousness of every genetic variation",

and she adds:

> "I guess that's because one aspect of almost every culture is the belief in the utter superiority of that culture. Insistence on a single culture shuts down learning. Cuts back resilience".

In order for humanity to be able to survive as part of Gaia (Lovelock 1979), our planetary ecosystem, human cultures need to work together and learn from each other how to sustain (bio)cultural diversity and socio-cultural exchange. The practice of cultural exchange, and the dialogue and cooperation inherent in successful cultural relations in the best of conditions, allows the creation of deep working relationships, exposure to other diverse world views and thus the ability for reflective development and collaborative problem-solving that transcends borders and communities.

The inherent connectedness derived from the cultural nodes on the Earth's Critical Zone, leads us to consider (trans/inter/cross/multi/intra*national*) cultural engagement, with an emphasis on meaning produced in context, through connectedness and exchange, to be a crucial leverage point intervention that can produce significant change in our complex biosphere system. In this section, we draw from our experience and knowledge as educators, in higher education, cultural policy, arts management and international cultural relations programmes, as well as our experience as, and of, arts/cultural managers and organisations, to examine one of the ways in which this leverage point intervention via cultural engagement can take place.

First it is important to establish why and how organisations operating in arts and culture engage with cultural relations and exchange as an activity. Research presented at the Association of Arts Administrator Educators in 2017, undertaken by the authors of this chapter, built off the 2009 *Art of Engagement: Trends in U.S. Cultural Exchange and International Programming* baseline survey of 134 respondents originally conducted by Fullman (2009). The 2017 *Trends in International Cultural Exchange* survey captured information from 29 arts, cultural and to some extent educational organisations, engaged in international cultural engagement and exchange in 140 countries, and yielded that motivations for engagement are predominantly mission related (89.5%), linked to objectives of increased cultural or mutual understanding (78.9%), focused on the development of art and or artists/participants (68.4%) and in support of or to raise awareness of specific social justice or policy issues (42.1%). Respondents indicated that the majority of exchanges include educational workshops (79%) often combined with a visit abroad of international guest artists (Figueira and Fullman, 2017). The overall ten-year trend continues towards embedding capacity building into international exchanges both from an arts management skill set, as well as to build out

infrastructure and to support development of artists. The additional management implication is that those in the arts and cultural sector continue to be defeated by international cultural engagement because it is perceived and experienced as being 'too difficult to coordinate'. As a result, 90% of these experienced international cultural engagement participants in 2017 still indicated a need for specific training to support international cultural engagement and exchange. Areas of increased capacity building required, included: implementing educational workshops, social network outreach, managing partnerships, government funding mechanisms and grant writing and evaluation. For the survey participants that did not take part in international cultural engagement, the most common barriers remain lack of funding, opportunities and staff resources. Evaluation of engagement has been strengthened since the original 2009 benchmark survey, but there is still a notable proportion of organisations that do not evaluate the value of their cultural exchanges, including higher education programmes. However, the emergence of funders requiring additional data over the past ten years has positively contributed to this trend with 77.8% of participants indicating that their funders or governance structure requires them to evaluate their international cultural engagement/exchanges. Meaningful measurement noted, includes: achievement of artistic goals, anecdotes and testimonials, audience and visitor metrics, establishment of goodwill, repeat partnerships, partner feedback, programme evaluations, reviews and experience of the participants. Funding trends lead us back to the importance of local interventions and training; of the 2017 surveyed participants, 92% were funded in some way by their local level/municipal or county government, while only 85% were funded by their own national/federal level government body.

The above confirms how the global is generated locally. Participants are locally contextualised in particular city/region/national cultural ecologies which inform their thinking and structurally enable/disable their international cultural engagement (e.g. funding or visas). It is thus important that those able to influence and determine cultural policy, at different levels of governance, are able to understand the importance of facilitating the means for cultural engagement. How this facilitation is structured connects with conceptions of the individual and of the nation-state - in terms of IR understandings of the working of the international system, swaying more towards nationalism or cosmopolitanism, will have an effect in, for example, releasing funds for nation branding or the fostering of national cultural identity, instead of no-strings attached co-creation. For cultural engagement to work as a leverage point of intervention, policy-makers and funders, as well arts organisations and cultural professionals, need to be aware of the potential impact of their engagements, and understand how specific objectives can be achieved. Thus, it is important to note increased focus on meaningful evaluation, inclusive of eco-impacts, which needs to be embedded from the planning stage – so that those involved understand at what intervention points change is being aimed.

Education is an important guide for action further evidenced by the data above and key to prepare leverage point interventions due to its fundamental role in the development of the cognition of the individual and in creating maps of value and meaning for individual and collective orientation. Focusing specifically on higher education, it should be noted that this level of education is recognised as a public good and has "the social responsibility to advance our understanding of multifaceted issues" (including climate change and intercultural dialogue) and "our ability to

respond to them" (UNESCO 2009, p.2). This role of leading society in generating global knowledge to address global challenges, is of great importance and those engaging in higher education as administrators, academics and students should be aware of it and prepared for it. Again, here it is important that not just students are offered education in cultural engagement, but that faculty and staff too are trained and supported – which is not always the case.

Evolutions in higher education are creating an environment where, for both of us working in public universities located in the London, UK and the Washington, DC metropolitan regions, we see the myriad of possibilities for cultural exchange and cultural relations within our own classrooms and local communities. Our 'gateway' cities, defined by their demographically diverse and somewhat cosmopolitan environments, have strong cultural infrastructures that have attracted proportionally large numbers of international arts and cultural management students predominantly representing Americans, UK and broader European citizens and the Chinese. Our students, by their enrolment in a postgraduate education, have made an active commitment to learning and thus to change. They find themselves in multicultural environments that stretch and stress their own identities, values and assumptions as they themselves become translators between their community of origin, their new professional community and their response to the new environment. Everyday exchanges and group work with their peers provide the ground for the development of personal and professional relationships, exposure to diverse world views, and engagement in collaborative problem-solving while challenging a student's contextual cultural assumptions, and hopefully developing cultural, social and emotional learning to include: responsibility, respect, compromise, empathy, understanding, compassion, tolerance, and humility.

The classroom, as a site of experiential and transformational learning and cultural exchange, is an under-recognised and under-utilised early leverage point intervention of emerging cultural engagement for future arts and cultural practitioners and thought leaders to prepare to fully participate in and contribute to humanity's adaptations to climate change. With the internationalisation of higher education, the classrooms have become a unique site of cultural engagement, the positive results of which we will for sure be able to reap in the long term if the terms of engagement are clearly and positively laid out to reinforce conceptions of humanity as inclusive and ecologically aware through processes that embrace cultural engagement

***Un*disciplined Food for Thought**

"*The cosmopolitan impulse that draws on our common humanity is no longer a luxury; it has become a necessity*" (Appiah, 2016)

Politics, the media and academia each play a powerful role in defining identities, empowering individuals and motivating communities to proactively plan or reactively respond to change. At a time when the future of humanity on Earth is being questioned and while confusion around the blurring analytical boundaries of domestic and external affairs has been reactively focused around migration and security in order to protect the status quo, more needs to be done to consider ways in which we can think about how individuals and groups can act as mediators and

translators between their national, civil and cultural national/group identities and cosmopolitanism. These issues affect our complex biosphere, which do not stop at (national) borders. Thus, we fully embrace the potential of arts and cultural leaders trained as interdisciplinary and cross-cultural facilitators through cultural exchange to address the 'hope gap' and contribute meaningfully to problem solving processes.

As *un*disciplined academics and practitioners straddling international relations, arts and cultural management and cultural policy, we believe that theory and practice should guide humans to being better citizens of the world, working for a common good. Furthermore, we believe that there are critical leverage points of intervention with the ability to assemble alternative world and discipline views between international relations, arts and cultural management and cultural policy, as these disciplines share a commitment to exploring relationships, building infrastructure and capacity and addressing how we can meaningfully and inclusively live together at the highest level of human development and quality of life.

Working as educators, researchers and practitioners of international cultural relations within the framework of the Critical Zone, prompts us to consider the higher education classroom, as a key site for cultural learning and encounters, an early leverage point of intervention in the biosphere system that is able to inform thinking and guide action for individuals and collective action. The cultural engagement produced there can change societies by bringing diverse individuals and groups together and enabling the dissemination, discussion and implementation of new ideas, approaches and solutions needed to combat the current and future impacts of climate change on macro and micro levels.

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