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Culturalisation and devices: what is culture in cultural economy?

Abstract
Theorisation of culture is often absent from research on production in the creative and cultural sector. Further, cultural production has been largely untouched by the insights of the cultural economy approach. Culturalisation is a means of addressing the question of what constitutes culture and thus a cultural (economy) approach. It is the process by which culture and cultural production combine in the "operationalisation of the real". Culturalisation underpins much scholarship in this journal by posing the (economic) real as a problem of definition in order to illustrate the operations involved in its temporary resolution. The implications of this position need further addressing. There is a feedback between culture as a problem of definition and a cultural approach. Devices can interrogate the relationship between processes of cultural definition and the conceptual parameters of a cultural economy approach. Workshopping, projects and events are put forward as cultural devices emerging from a ten month ethnography of literary performance in Bristol, England. This illustration shows firstly, how culturalisation occurs in a designated cultural sector to contingently realise culture; and secondly, the implicit logic of cultural economy as culturalisation, typified by the device as method, so as to open a debate concerning its implications.

Key words: culturalisation; cultural and creative industries; cultural economy; cultural production; culture; devices

Introduction

Cultural production has been examined by studying the implementation of culture in government policy (Garnham 2005; Belfiore and Bennett 2007). The cultural worker has also been an object of study (Neilson and Cote 2013; De Peuter 2014; McRobbie 2016). The focus in these accounts has invariably been on the results of the policies or on the conditions of the worker. Although there are notable exceptions (e.g. Christophers 2007; O'Brien 2016; Campbell et al 2017), one result of this is that both policy and worker are taken in advance to be cultural, so that there is less examination of the actions that make this production "cultural" in the first place. In short, the culture of cultural production is taken for granted. This problem in research on cultural production is symptomatic of a broader disappearance of culture in cultural economy scholarship. Whilst the black box of "economy" has been opened in literature influenced by science and technology studies (STS), notably actor-network theory (ANT), questions of "culture" have figured "rarely and faintly" (Cooper and McFall 2017, 3). This absence of culture is a legacy of the dismissal by Latour, and in associated STS scholarship, of "Culture" as an immaterial explanation for social practices (Entwistle and Slater 2013). The result is the partial application of the key insight of the cultural economy approach which is that action - as that which constitutes the realities of "economy" - does not equally become the ontological entry point for "culture". Turning the ontological insight of cultural economy onto culture can redress this imbalance. This requires examining culturalisation.

Culturalisation arises from the diffusion of "culture" into all sectors of economic activity (Lash and Urry 1994), which therefore necessitates a different "cultural" approach. Rather than culture as a defined way of life or a standardised entity confined to "high culture" or a "culture industry" (Adorno and Horkheimer 1972), the Post-Fordist economy means that culture must be examined through its operations and its capacities for change (Lury et al 2012). This continuous process makes the ontological distinction between culture and cultural production difficult to maintain. Culturalisation therefore provides a means of

addressing the ontological question of what constitutes culture and a cultural (economy) approach. It is the processes by which culture and cultural production combine in the operationalisation of the real. This implies acts of qualification, feats in which reality is given to a particular situation even as the parameters of realization are undergoing change. Thus, culturalisation implicitly underpins the conceptual orientation of the much scholarship in this journal by posing the (cultural/economic) real as an ongoing problem of definition in order to illustrate the operations involved in its temporary resolution. Yet the implications of this position need further addressing. There is a feedback between culture as a problem of definition and a cultural approach. This means that an explicit focus on the problem of culture is necessary to advance debates concerning the intersections between the cultural and economic.

Devices offer a way into the problem of culture and the normativity of a given cultural approach. As one key conceptual and empirical entry point in cultural economy (e.g. Muniesa et al 2007), they indicate the implicit necessity for a contemporary approach to culture that decentres the human. The emphasis on the operations of the device signifies the ambivalence of contemporary cultural form as that which extends beyond intentional modes of cultivation by humans. Devices enroll and redefine subjectivities and agencies, therefore challenging the conventional parameters identifying cultural or economic actors. Turning the device onto culture enables interrogation of contemporary processes of cultural definition and of the conceptual parameters of a cultural economy approach. To illustrate this, three examples of cultural devices – workshopping, projects and events - are put forward that emerge from a ten month ethnography of literary performance in Bristol, England. The purpose of this illustration is twofold. Firstly, to show how culturalisation occurs in a designated cultural sector to contingently realise culture. Secondly, to expose the hitherto implicit logic of cultural economy as culturalisation, typified by the device as method, so as to open a debate concerning its implications. To begin, the article outlines the issue of the "black box" of culture in cultural economy scholarship and how culturalisation and cultural devices are a response to this.

Cultural economy and the black box of cultural production

There is a twofold black boxing of culture in cultural economy. Firstly, culture is strangely absent from research on cultural production, which itself secondly has been largely left untouched by the insights of the cultural economy approach. This first black box refers not to the absence of a designated "cultural sector" of economic activity, for which there is ample literature and even journals dedicated to the topic (e.g. Garnham 2005; Belfiore and Bennett 2007; Hesmondhalgh 2012). Nor does it refer to an absence of research on cultural workers, about which there is a rich vein of critical scholarship highlighting their conditions of work, particularly the self-exploitation necessitated by precarious contractual relations (e.g. Gill and Pratt 2008; Neilson and Cote 2013, de Peuter 2014). Significant here is that in each case the question of definition, of why the sector or worker is cultural, is left unanswered. The first black box then refers to the hidden processes through which these sectoral activities and workers are constituted as "cultural". Secondly, cultural production itself has tended to disappear as a target of theoretical and empirical inquiry in cultural economy approaches. This is a manifestation of the imbalanced application of the insights of the cultural economy approach. A founding move of cultural economy as understood in this journal has been to open the black box of economy through detailed attention to the processes by which it is operationalised. Rather than a fixed category, economy is understood as an ongoing process of economisation involving the assembly and qualification of actions, devices and

analytical/practical descriptions as "economic" by social scientists and market actors (Çalışkan and Callon 2009).

However, this foundational insight of cultural economy– a focus on economy as verb not economy as noun - has been applied primarily to economy rather than to culture (Entwistle and Slater 2013; Cooper and McFall 2017). In part, this imbalance can be attributed to a deliberate attempt to separate cultural economy as a theoretical approach from an empirical focus on the cultural and creative industries that were an increasingly significant economic sector a decade ago when this journal was established (Bennett et al 2008). This extends Du Gay and Pryke's (2002, 7-8) earlier critique of what they termed the "culturalisation thesis" as a definition of cultural economy. One of the problems that they identify with this thesis that heralds an increasingly "cultural" economy (e.g. Lash and Urry 1994), is that such an analysis decides the coordinates for culture too far in advance. Instead, Du Gay and Pryke (2002) shift the focus of investigation away from culture per se and onto "cultural economic analysis as an emergent form of inquiry concerned with the practical and material" (ibid. p. 8). In addition though, foregrounding of the economic can be explained by a dismissal of culture in the ANT approaches that underpin cultural economy (Entwistle and Slater 2013, 161). Entwistle and Slater suggest that to be rid of detached meaning systems (i.e. ideologies or cosmologies) as modes of explanation, Latour attributes these to 'Culture' in order to separate them from the empirical realities of the mundane mechanisms through which social life occurs (ibid. p. 165). In this move, Latour sets up 'Culture' as "bad social theory" (p. 173), an "epistemological fantasy" (p. 165) that seeks to purify rather than trace practical or material complexities.

Although differing in their orientation, both reasons illustrate how culture, and cultural production, have been black boxed as a subject of research in cultural economy because they do not adequately deal in the materialities and contingencies of often mundane practices. Instead, when understood as an emergent form of inquiry, "culture" itself slips from view, becoming difficult to name or to fix. Rather, "the cultural" conveys an approach or sensibility to economy premised on the ways in which economic life is operationalised and thus qualified. However, this neglect of culture and cultural production is a contradiction in the cultural economy approach. To treat culture as "Culture" is to enact the same mode of reification that cultural economy approaches set out to critique in relation to economy. Indeed, this separation of "Culture" from material and practical activities is already a particular understanding of the term that has been refuted elsewhere. For example, anthropological perspectives have long treated cosmologies simultaneously as "transcendental narratives and as classifications that are minutely stitched into mundane practices" (Entwistle and Slater 2013, 165). Similarly, Miller (2002, 174) argues that symbolism and instrumentality should be held together rather than separated in understandings of cultures of economic life. Focusing on the production of culture through a cultural economy perspective provides a means of achieving this. It indicates how culture (like economy) is contingently operationalised, through processes that can be termed culturalisation, which thus has implications for the definition of a cultural economy approach. Foregrounding culturalisation, or opening the second black box outlined above, also makes it possible to dissect the first, providing a more nuanced understanding of culture in research on cultural production.

Culturalisation: culture and cultural production

Culturalisation implies a process of becoming cultural and thus an act of cultural production. The term includes but also exceeds cultural production as the essential activity of a creative

and cultural sector. Indeed, it has been used to highlight the difficulties in maintaining an epistemologically distinct sector of "cultural production". This issue in part motivates the inquiry into "culturalisation" set out by Fornas et al (2007) in which they used the term to describe "a growing number of widespread beliefs that culture is expanding in scope and significance in the present era of information, experience, media, aesthetics and virtuality." Knowledge concerning cultural production must now be found in different spheres of activity, and "culturalisation" is used to denote this condition of "more culture", similar to the "cultural" economy approach of Lash and Urry (1994) above. However, culturalisation can be pushed a step further from these epistemological questions. The forms of simulation, media and virtuality that Fornas et al (2007) describe, not only imply a requirement to examine culture and its production in different spheres. These changes also demand a different approach to culture, one in which the ontological distinction between "culture" and "cultural production" is difficult to maintain. If culturalisation implies a contemporary condition of becoming cultural, cultural inquiry can no longer operate according to a logic of identification that focuses on a defined or stable entity - such as high culture or a whole way of life - to address a quantitative change or transformation. Instead, culturalisation draws attention to how culture operates, opening an inquiry underpinned by a logic of processes to address qualitative change (Lury et al, 2012).

It is this logic of cultural inquiry that informs much of the scholarship in this journal, and indeed the notion of "economisation" (Caliskan and Callon 2009). Culturalisation therefore makes explicit the implicit understanding of culture in much cultural economy scholarship. This is an understanding of culture as the operationalisation of the real: the continuous processes providing the reality of a given situation even as it is part of ongoing problems of definition. The critical purchase of culturalisation, and therefore the cultural economy approach, lies in a combination of the exposure of operations and the identification of their reality effects. This understanding of culture as an "operationalisation of the real" builds on but extends the "cultural turn" in the humanities and social sciences, in which a cultural approach was primarily equated with operations of discourse, meaning and its interpretation. Aspects of this "turn" did highlight the performativity of particular realities through linguistic and discursive processes. However, in being too focused on texts and language, the critique was that this underemphasised material realities. The "few explicit or extended, analytical deliberations of what 'cultural' means" (Cooper and McFall 2017, 5) in this journal can be understood as a response to this critique, so too can the interest in devices and technologies that are held to bring materiality to the fore. Yet shifting away from explicitly addressing culture risks forgetting that the cultural approach underpinning this scholarship – how the real is operationalised – is an historically and geographically situated response to empirical shifts. In other words, the approach arises, however diffusely, from attempts to understand or to capture how culture is changing in the world.

An investigation of culturalisation foregrounds the question of culture and what is meant by a cultural approach. By posing culture as a problem of definition, it indicates that a cultural approach is therefore contingent and requires examination. Simply put, there is a feedback between understandings of culture and a cultural approach; currently between the operationalisation of the real and the methods for narrating this operation. In this regard, devices are one means for investigating culturalisation; both operationalising the real and serving as a method for narrating this operation. As is noted by Cooper and McFall (2017, 3), the device is one of a number of processes and phenomena that stand in place, elaborate or correct the constructive capacities of culture in cultural economy approaches. For example, in the context of financial markets, devices such as pricing models, trading protocols and

aggregate indicators are understood to operationalise calculative spaces, so that tracing these devices can narrate the operation of this economic reality (Muniesa et al 2007). Yet the question of what exactly is cultural about the device, or how the device equates to a cultural economy approach, is not addressed. Culture often appears implicitly, as "an emergent property, an ineffable something that emanates from the contingent connectivities of material and immaterial infrastructures" (Cooper and McFall 2017, 5).

The task then is to think through what is cultural about a device, or better, following Winthrop-Young (2013, 4) on the parallel German tradition of Kulturtechniken, to consider what is the question to which the concept of a "cultural device" claims to be an answer. The three devices put forward below – workshopping, projects and events (see Figure 1) – provide preliminary examples of the ways the device in general offers a solution to both the epistemological and the ontological challenges posed by culturalisation. Epistemologically, devices respond to the problem of culturalisation as "more culture" by offering a focal point for understanding culture in an expanded field, or when cultural production is fluid and diffuse. The devices below therefore emerge through a constitutive activity of a designated cultural sector – literary performance – but their operations are also shown to extend beyond that activity. Thus, examining these devices in other sectors would shed light on culturalisation. Ontologically, the device responds to the challenge posed by culturalisation of the collapsed distinction between culture and cultural production by enabling inquiry into culture as an "operationalisation of the real" through the tracing of its operations. The operations emphasised below across the three devices involve gathering together elements that are "materially heterogeneous" (Law and Ruppert 2013, 231), so that they include people, but necessarily extend beyond this. These are ordered in a manner that is purposive yet contingent, so that the performed pattern is often at odds with the intended. The articulating of these actions is thus a temporary qualification of multiple different potential relations.

Figure 1. Cultural devices and their operations

Device	**Gathers**	**Orders**	**Articulates**
Workshopping	Knowledge	Discursive and material information	Feedback
Projects	Resources	Intended future actions	Categories
Events	Actors	Space-time of performance	Live(ness)

However, these particular operations are not intended to exhaust the possibilities of cultural devices to operationalise the real. Indeed the question of what exactly constitutes an operation at a given point in time and space is central to the critical purchase of cultural devices. This becomes clear when an operation is broken down into its core entities:

> *"(i) the subject performing these operations (ii) the basic concepts, ideas and notions that appear to guide these operations (iii) the object manipulated by these operations"* (Winthrop-Young 2013, 8).

These entities constitute the operation but also therefore have a "precarious status" because they can be changed in, or partially emerge from, the operating process (ibid.). Operations therefore raise questions concerning how devices might determine the subject's field of action and by extension, the self-management or autopraxis of a given device. With this caveat in mind, the potential of this approach to redress the imbalance in cultural economy

can now be illustrated through three devices. Figure 1 is a schema of these devices according to the above three operations. Workshopping enacts collaborative knowledge production; projects arrange resources in the present to devise future practices; and events combine different actors to construct a live space-time of production. The presentation of these devices in the table is not intended to be interpreted in a linear fashion so that the operations of one can only begin when the operations of another have concluded. These devices can be at work simultaneously, in different combinations. The purpose next though is to give a fuller sense of the operations of each device through a particular example of cultural production: literary performance.

Cultural devices: producing literary performance

Seasoned - The Brewery, The Tobacco Factory, 291 North St, Bedminster, Bristol
Date: Tues 1st Nov **Time**: 8.15pm **Price**: £9 / £7 (£5 on opening night)
Seasoned is based on Edson Burton's published collection of poems of the same name.
Mixing outrage and tenderness, monologue and lyric, this is an unflinching and humane *exploration of the roots and modern day experience of 'multicultural' Britain.*
Running every night until 12th November.

Seasoned was a 2011 piece of theatre adapted from a poetry collection written by a founding member of the defunct collective of Bristol Black Writers. The writer Edson Burton was not paid to produce the text, and the adaptation for theatre was made possible through some small financial and in-kind support from both local and national cultural institutions in England. This fragmentary construction occurred through a series of less stabilised literary performances – such as the editing of texts, networking with collaborators, rehearsing for performance – required for the advertised theatre of Seasoned to come about. From one perspective therefore, this example can pose the critical issue of cultural production in somewhat familiar terms, namely how artistic quality is maintained despite pressures to extract value through the exchange of the artwork. Burton's poetic expressions of Black diasporic experience must be translated first from page to stage, and second into a show which would generate sufficient income from an audience, a potentially compromising process that might irrevocably change the text from the author's intentions. From the perspective of cultural devices and culturalisation though, an alternative question is posed: how does culture – in this case a theatre adaptation - occur in a context of deinstitutionalised production consisting of contingent arrangements? Seasoned moved through associations with a variety of different actors, and was altered through these interactions. The critical issue therefore is not one of artistic quality and authorial intention – ie an understanding of culture orientated around fixed definition – but rather how shifting arrangements may contingently stabilise to realise a cultural product, in processes of culturalisation. Seasoned indicates then how contemporary processes of what we shall call literary performance require understanding cultural production as a process of culturalisation.

Literary performance is the variety of acts constituting the relations between texts and that which they represent, relations that are realised as literary through culturalisation. So culturalisation is what produces a textual performance as literature, as a cultural product rather than just a piece of writing. In an age of "mass writing" (Brandt 2015), it is what separates, for example, "creative writing" from writing. A process that is congruent with but not the same as the rise of digital communication and the knowledge economy from the 1970s onwards, mass writing is the shift in mass literacy from reading onto writing. Writing has become a "dominant form of manufacturing" (Brandt, 2015 p. 3) that constitutes aspects

of work across many different sectors. Understanding culturalisation as that which makes writing a cultural act therefore speaks to wider questions concerning the popularisation of technologies for information production. The capacities to self-publish and self-broadcast text, audio and video not only challenges the validity of separations between producers and consumers of information (Terranova 2004), but is also indicate a form of cultural articulation in the midst of definition. The devices of workshopping, projects and events operationalise this culturalisation of writing, here of text to literary performance. In Bristol these devices cut across local writers groups, national literature networks, and city institutions, enabling texts to perform as literature and thus to coalesce as a recognisable cultural product.

Workshopping

The Southwest Scriptwriters' workshop took place at Watershed, a cinema and digital creativity centre on Bristol's harbourside. It assembled writers based in the city and the wider southwest region of England. The workshop took place in the evening, fortnightly, over three terms that roughly corresponded to the academic year. This association with the pedagogical calendar is not incidental. The emergence of workshopping as a near universal device for cultural production in written art forms can be traced through the institutional establishment of "creative writing" in Anglophone education, at first in the USA and then in the UK (Myers 1996; Wandor 2008). This birth of "creative writing" provides an idiosyncratic narrative of post-Fordist cultural production, one that precedes and pre-empts the more contemporary lexicon of the "creative industries". Underpinned by the belief that anyone can write "creatively", access to creative writing classes first in American colleges from the 1920s and then in higher education, enacted a democratisation of literature - previously a "high cultural" form - through processes of popular production. Creative writing was, and often remains, at odds with the discipline of literary studies that has historically valued the consumption of (a canon of) texts over their production (Bishop 1993, 121). Rather than English studies as a matter of historical interest, as in philology, or a subject that deploys specialist and obtuse language, as in literary theory, creative writing instead focused on the act of producing a text. It thus rendered culture creative with the device of workshopping fundamental to this enactment.

Workshopping produces culturalisation by gathering knowledge that is then ordered both materially and discursively, before it is articulated as feedback that qualifies cultural form. It is therefore a device that operates to decentre notions of single authorship, propelling cultural production through the qualifications of individual creativity with collective response. Thus, for literary performance, workshopping relegates the individual "creative writer" to the background, instead foregrounding the text itself so that writing occurs as an interactive act through the workshop space. The knowledge gathered through Southwest Scriptwriters was derived in large part from the experience of attendees. Typically 10-15 people attended, with about half being regulars. Their knowledge was accrued both through production and consumption of writing outside the workshop, but also from their collective workshopping activities over time as part of Southwest Scriptwriters. The workshopping of text was thus their exposure to the ordering of this knowledge. Written for the most part for radio, television and film rather than stage, scripts would arrive at the Southwest Scriptwriters workshop via the artistic director. These were emailed to him by writers in advance of the workshop and he would print off paper copies to be circulated for participants to read during the session. So text would enter the workshop as a necessarily mutable and multiple material-discursive form. The broad purpose of the workshop was to "air" texts written by attending group members, and so to expose the script to criticism.

Therefore, this ordering of knowledge undertaken through workshopping to shape the form of the text was reliant upon a co-presence. For Southwest Scriptwriters, the workshop space itself was constituted by a large circle of chairs arranged to facilitate discussion of the selected scripts, although this layout was flexible, usually set up and taken apart by the members at the beginning and end of each session. This physical arrangement of a temporary "classroom" mirrors the workshop's origins as a pedagogical method that emphasised the needs and development of the student through shared learning experiences (Lim 2003). Rather than a frivolous activity, workshopping was one tool enabling creative writing to contribute to a progressive education in its emphasis on responding to present experience, instead of a pedagogical model based on memorising and interpreting classical texts. Therefore, a pre-given order of knowledge is not the purpose workshopping. As a pedagogical method, it is intended to operate via decentralised authority consisting of open, generally free-form discussions between participants, with responsibility for responding, listening, and learning distributed among all actors (Green 2001, 158). In the Southwest Scriptwriters workshops, each script was initially laid bare through its performance, where different members of the group (generally regulars) were assigned characters to read from a particular script at the beginning of the session. These occasions were often the first public materialisation of the script in which workshop attendees also formed an audience, anticipating a future "finished" performance. Handing around these printed copies at the workshop cemented the script as a text at least partially independent from its writer, such that it became an object in its own right.

The subsequent group reading could expose different constituent parts of the script to consider their possibilities for rearrangement so that the text could be articulated differently. In some operations of the device, this can involve written intervention on and re-writings of text in the workshop. Although this was not the case for Southwest Scriptwriters, workshopping still involved a collective articulation of feedback intended to qualify the form of the text. This could involve suggested reorganisations of plot and scene order through the rearrangement of printed pages. Less visibly apparent but perhaps equally as important were suggestions to alter the dialogue in order to reshape perceptions of a character. Thus, by circulating the text in production, workshopping operations were often initially difficult for writers, as the artistic director, a semi-professional writer with a PhD in creative writing, noted:

> *"When you begin to write, if you've written something you think, 'great, I've written something.' You're very reluctant to do anything with it because that's* like undoing the work *that you've done. So a real beginner's trait is wanting to protect what s/he has written and* not *be open to rewriting at all."*

Workshopping then articulates a text beyond straightforward notions of self-expression and originality as writing comes into association with different knowledges that order literary performance.

This also means that the articulation of feedback through workshopping qualifies the text in often unpredictable ways. Certainly, there were particular conventions associated with writing for specific forms of media. For example, a script for television required more attention to visual modes of storytelling, and the staging of scenes, in comparison to scripts for radio. However, there was by no means a common sense as to if and how these conventions should be carried out. Instead, writing was shaped through interactive processes of response and rearrangement that do not adhere to the broadly mimetic view of the text held in literary studies (Rice and Waugh 2001, 5). Rather than a singular representative text,

numerous versions of a script circulate through interactive rewritings. There were often multiple, potentially competing issues with a script that were identified from the different viewpoints of participants, as the artistic director details:

"the feedback we give isn't a neatly packaged statement of what you must give your script in order to improve it. It's kind of an amorphous mass of conflicting opinions."

The assembly of alterations the workshopping process was thus heterogeneous rather than linear and did not produce a clear-cut set of preconceived qualifications for a text. Indeed, as Lim (2003, 157) notes, insofar as there might be a received set of literary qualities for a particular written form, such as a script or a poem, creative writing has been charged with promoting successive waves of writers whose knowledge of these criteria is "often astonishingly limited." Therefore, the device of workshopping not only moves away from a model of authorship, but also does not necessarily tend toward exclusivity or standardisation in its realisation of the text.

Projects

Under Stokes Croft was a show developed by spoken word artist Jack Dean in collaboration with Bristol Old Vic theatre's Ferment programme. Ferment facilitated the production of new writing from local artists, through a range of different devices that enabled the exploration of theatrical ideas. The project was the device through which Under Stokes Croft was developed, and is important more broadly for culturalisation. The project has been a critical focal point for discussions of cultural work and the conditions of the cultural worker as typified by short-termism and overwork. It also operates beyond this designated cultural sector though as the object of theories of "project management" that permeate business schools through the teaching of project management skills, and in the establishment of the "project manager" as an occupation. Some history of this "project management" as discipline illuminates two conceptions of the project that are important to its functioning as a device. The few efforts to construct a history of project management often begin with a recognition of the difficulty of delineating the object of study. Usually citing a feat such as the completion of the pyramids, it is claimed that human history is one of projects. A project here is broadly understood as a conception of a future reality, normally involving an act of architectural construction, although not one that had a clear sense of division between design and execution as Garel (2013, 665) details:

*"F*or a long time artisanal creation failed to distinguish between the time dedicated to development and completion, granting great leeway to improvisation of a system of trial and error. *[...] Project* management made a major step forward when men were equipped with tools offering an intellectual representation of a future creation."

Indeed it is with engineering as a scientific practice of design and execution that the origin for the more modern concept of "project management" is located.

An attempt at a history of project management as discipline is therefore one of practices that are not or rarely institutionalised, followed by a story of increasingly institutionalised ones (Garel 2013, 666). The device of the project is thus a mode of production that hovers somewhere between conceptions of the formal and the informal, of institution and outside. It functions by gathering resources from different contexts, ordering them into intended future actions that are articulated through categories for measuring its success. The resources gathered for Under Stokes Croft included finance from Bristol Old Vic, performance spaces, ideas, artists and promotional materials. These were ordered in such a way as to construct the future performance of the show, less through a single intellectual representation (like the project timeline) than through configurations enabling, for example, writing time and rehearsal space as Jack stated:

*"I don't think you co*uld underrate the fact that [Bristol Old Vic] just stepped in and said *here's some money, do a show. I think most people don't need much more support than that. They just need money, time, a space and somebody who wants them to do it."*

The project therefore combined Jack with other resources outside although associated with an institutional context, similar to other forms of freelance and sub-contracted conditions of cultural work. From the point of view the artist then, the project can create a near horizon that makes longer term thinking and the development of a repertoire of work a challenge. However, when initially instituted through the development of engineering departments, it was exactly the positive possibilities offered by this fixed duration that were emphasised.

The project was seen as a means for repetitive innovation managed by an institution. Theories of "project management" emerged as an articulation of collected best practices of innovation drawn for the most part from the study of major North American engineering projects (Engwall 2003). An article by Gaddiss (1959) is cited as the first explicit reference to project management, describing the project manager as someone who integrates the contributions of different departments to improve developmental and operational efficiency. So within this context, the project and the discipline of project management are intended for repetitive innovation within institutions with their more distant time horizons. The problem for England's contemporary cultural sector, as indicated by Under Stokes Croft, is that the project tends to operate externally, by gathering resources from, rather than within institutions. This results in challenges for the ordering and configuration of resources as Jack described:

"When I initially wrote the show they gave me a very small bit of development money, about a week's worth [...] even though I spent about two months writing it. They gave me a split on the first gig and they brought me back in October to do a run of it and gave me a split with a *guarantee in it. I didn't quite make anymore than my guarantee so I just got that."*

This uneasy translation of the project from engineering to the cultural sector is also apparent in the articulation of the cultural product.

From an engineering perspective, the discipline of project management exists, perhaps reasonably enough, to improve the operation of projects. It is therefore preoccupied with measuring what is termed the "success" of a project, or from a humanitarian perspective a "good" project (Krause 2014). This means setting standards within a set of categories that are defined in advance to delimit intended future actions (Atkinson 1999). This is effected through a backtracking of work processes from successful outcomes to day zero using tools such as "critical path analysis" to ensure that these categorized standards are achieved. On paper, this creates a disciplined space and time of execution that leaves little room for articulation beyond the categorises for success. It is this rationale - of categories performing successful outcomes - that shapes the operation of the project in the cultural sector, a logic that is at odds with forms of improvisatory and exploratory activity often associated with creative work. Of course, the relative sense of freedom described by Jack through Under Stokes Croft indicates that the practices of production set in train by the project often exceed its pre-given successful articulation. Nonetheless, through these categories of success the project can be understood as accounting frame that gives credibility to a process as a cultural one (Callon and Muniesa 2005). It is a calculative device that is both the space through which the resources to be taken in account as cultural are ordered, and also the account of culture itself. The project is an exemplar of the way the methods for categorising and measuring culture also produce it (O'Brien 2016; Campbell et al 2017).

<u>Events</u>

Poetry Pulpit was an open mic night in Bristol where writers would perform texts aloud. There were roughly eight different open mic nights operating either monthly or fortnightly. These are examples of events, devices that are vital for the packaging of "experiences" as products (Pine and Gilmore 1999). In England, the shift in strategic interests of the Arts Council demonstrates this turn to events in the cultural sector (ACE 2002; 2004). Although still invested in "flagship cultural institutions", from at least the 2000s the Arts Council began to prioritise "outdoor" performance and events, including the funding of organisations as events, such as Bristol's St Paul's Carnival, ostensibly as a means of democratising cultural consumption. Like the project though, the event also has a history outside of the cultural sector and its sister industries of leisure and tourism. The business of staging events can be traced through the new requirements for trade shows in the USA in the early 20th century, as industrial production grew and became more distributed. The first professional group, the International Association of Exhibition and Events, was established in 1928 in that country, followed by the Convention Industry Council and the Professional Convention Management Association in the 1950s. The function of these conventions, and later large business meetings (the association of the Meetings Professionals International was established in 1972), was to create the conditions for the experience of co-presence so that the exchange of products and knowledge could take place. Whilst certainly different in terms of the information being exchanged, across these sectors the device of the event is underpinned by this same privileging of presence in which live experience is articulated by the gathering of actors to order their exchanges in a space-time of performance.

So Poetry Pulpit was a space that gathered together poets and other interested actors to enable live processes of exchange that would themselves facilitate future production of this condition of liveness that realised writing as literary. The event begat new events as one poet described:

*"So things like V and J's new night is because they've met from other nights and they've said 'why don't we do our own night?' It's kind of self-*perpetuating in that respect because poets *meet and say let's do our own night, and they go off and do that and then other poets will meet at that."*

Like many of Bristol's open mics, Poetry Pulpit took place in a bar, a setting that for the attendees tended to foster exchange. The event ordered the space and time of the bar through patterning a series of temporary spatial separations to define performer and audience. This was achieved in part by the creation of a running order composed in the act of performers signing up 'on the door' for a five minute slot at the beginning of the night. These slots were normally interspersed with one or two "feature artists", who were sometimes based in other cities in the UK and occasionally beyond. Where possible the train fares for these artists were covered through donations collected at previous nights. Although short stories and portions of script were performed at these nights in Bristol, the brevity of poetry was most suited to this particular ordering of temporal structure and thus was the most common form of textual enactment, even though it often was not the main writing work of the performer. The sheet of paper comprising the running order was then used by the MC (Master of Ceremonies) to announce which writer was to perform next.

A little more conceptual precision is needed to understand how this gathering and ordering of performance through the event achieves cultural production. The gathered actors, ordered through the space-time of performance, articulate a condition of "liveness" as that which realises culture by being "live". Thus, Poetry Pulpit constructs the "liveness" of an open mic night as a set of conditions which define the literary form of poetry through live performance. The event of the business meeting also operates through this performative process: gathering

business people according to ordering tools such as agendas, that qualify the performed activities as those of business (Lezaun and Muniesa 2017). This importance accorded to live experience in culture, or co-presence in business, can be traced from the extended possibilities for communication across distance. Presence as a condition was brought into relief by the accelerated travel capacities of people and information (Chandler and Cortado 2000). These changes occurred hand-in-hand as personal mobility required shifts in the methods for the staging of information. This happened initially in the experiences of collective transmission of the train and the cinema, which was then followed by the more individualising car and television (Bachmair 1991). It is television that, like the instantaneous time developed through automobility (Urry 2004), generates an aesthetic of immediacy through the simulation of a shared temporal present (Lury 2012, 186). As Bachmair (1991, 528) predicted though, television is only a promise of sharing, one that will converge through digital networks to allow both the transmission and the manipulation of information (Yoffie 1997), on which the realisation of the more contemporary cultural condition of "liveness" rests (Lury 2012).

In the performing arts, the production of live experience in the event has conventionally been understood through physical (ie. spatially proximate) presence. This was certainly how the qualification of text as poetry occurred at Poetry Pulpit, as described by one poet:

"It's easy to work in a vacuum when you're writing and there's no end goal in mind. You might write for a year and realise that you don't have an audience for it. It becomes so disconnected from potential readers. So [performance] is a really good exercise for me and it *definitely leaks into the other things that I write, just that exercise of seeing people's reactions in real time is great. If something fails completely you'll know it immediately and* you can think about that and take something from it. Sometimes something will really work in *performance and you didn't realise that it would, so it works both ways."*

However, the condition of liveness that is articulated through the event does not necessarily require physical presence. Contemporary technologies of mediation extend experiences of "being there" without straightforward co-location, creating an expanding sense of the present and of presence termed "liveness" (Back and Puwar 2012). The rise of "event cinema" in England is a good example how this condition of liveness is reshaping older media consumption that similarly did not rely on physical co-presence of actors and audience (ACE 2016). Similarly, the investment in live broadcasting of London theatre performances to regional locations, such as NT Live from the National Theatre, shows how liveness is shaping the more traditional understanding of "life-likeness" of stage drama. Rather than being limited to physical presence in performance then, the event operates more broadly to realise an experience as cultural through this articulation of liveness.

Conclusion

Culturalisation combines empirical concerns over the diffusion of cultural production with the implications of this shift for conceptualisations of culture. It is the condition in which the ontological separation between culture and cultural production can no longer be maintained. Culture is therefore understood not as a bounded entity but rather an ongoing problem of definition in which reality is operationalised. Culturalisation names these processes within which a temporary resolution is found to qualify culture. It therefore emphasises the feedback between definitions of culture and the changing parameters of a cultural approach. The device serves as a means of illustrating this feedback. Workshopping, projects and events have been put forward as devices that can show the diffuse and contingent realisation of culture. Although the example here has been literary performance, it is clear that these devices work beyond this activity and indeed extend outside a designated cultural sector.

They thus indicate how a focus on processes on definition in the cultural sector can also aid understandings of economic realities in other sectors, as well as the converse. Through this illustration the device also indicates the parameters of a cultural approach; one that decentres the human as the cultural agent in favour of operations in which agency is not easily identified. These operations provide a means for understanding the contingency through which a given cultural or economic reality is achieved. This exercise explicitly addressing culture and its relation to a cultural approach raises broader questions of the critical purchase of the culturalisation and devices to cultural economy. Whist as indicated, this perspective necessarily emerges from clear empirical shifts, the conceptual sophistication of the approach can risk avoiding addressing the implications of culture as an operationalisation of the real.

This is not simply a request to return to, for example, impacts on the cultural worker. It is clear that what qualifies as cultural (or indeed as economic) has important and often uneven implications for many individuals and organisations at play in these performances. Yet, it is also clear that production (in and beyond the cultural sector) requires more complex conceptions of its organisation given, for example, variegated configurations of agency resulting from new technologies. If there is a next step after the exposure of the operation, it cannot therefore be a return to the same accounts of structure and agency. Nevertheless, the relationship between a cultural approach and the economies its analyses is worth reflecting upon. In this regard, it is interesting, although perhaps not surprising, that the emphasis on operation and performance in the cultural economy approach mirrors the relationship between technology and performativity at work in contemporary production cultures. This was identified early on by Lyotard (1979; 44-45), when he noted a "generalised spirit of performativity" in scientific knowledge production governed by the principle of optimal performance of technical devices rather than "the true, the just or the beautiful". Thus to a certain extent, both cultural economy and contemporary production cultures are underpinned by the same logic, one which sets out an operation that delimits reality effects. Of course, such a conceptual mirroring in cultural economy is by no means an endorsement of this mode of production, but neither is it necessarily a critique. The aim in highlighting this reflection, and more broadly rendering culturalisation explicit in scholarship in this journal, is to reopen the issue of the purpose of a cultural approach to economy, and including to ask what the limits of the principles of performativity and operationalisation in cultural economy might be.

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