Verity: Jurnal Ilmiah Hubungan Internasional (International Relations Journal) Vol. 17 No. 2 (2025)
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
Universitas Pelita Harapan

CULTURAL RIGHTS: A BRIDGE TO COSMOPOLITAN CULTURE

Elyzabeth Bonethe Nasution

Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Pelita Harapan

Institute of Human Rights and Peace, Mahidol University

e-mail: elyzabethbonethe.nas@student.mahidol.ac.th

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the conceptual foundations of cultural rights by situating them within evolving understandings of culture and debates on cultural diversity. Drawing on contemporary scholarship, the paper shows that culture is no longer understood as a static, group-bound entity, but as a dynamic and meaning-making process, a shift that significantly shapes how cultural rights are theorized and justified. Using a qualitative and conceptual approach, the analysis identifies key strengths of cultural rights, including their role in preventing cultural oppression, protecting minority and indigenous communities from forced assimilation, preserving cultural diversity, and supporting conditions for peaceful coexistence. At the same time, the paper highlights several conceptual and practical limitations of cultural rights, such as their vulnerability to cultural relativism, political instrumentalization by states, and the homogenizing pressures of globalization. By bringing these strengths and limitations into dialogue with theories of cosmopolitanism, particularly through the notion of cultural encounters, the paper argues that cultural rights may serve as a normative support for cosmopolitan culture. Rather than guaranteeing cosmopolitan outcomes, cultural rights contribute by shaping conditions of recognition, dialogue, and respect for diversity. The paper concludes that, despite their limitations, cultural rights remain a relevant conceptual framework for understanding cultural coexistence in an increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords: culture, cultural rights, cosmopolitan culture, human rights

1. Introduction

Culture is often understood intuitively, yet it remains a concept that resists simple definition. It may refer to traditions, customs, values, beliefs, ways of life, or systems of meaning through which societies organize their social world. Rather than treating culture as a fixed set of traits or artifacts, contemporary scholarship increasingly understands it as a dynamic process of meaning-making that is continuously shaped through social interaction, historical experience, and power relations. In this article, culture is understood as a fluid and socially constructed process through which individuals and communities produce, interpret, and negotiate shared meanings over time. This understanding provides the analytical point of reference for the discussion of cultural rights throughout the paper.

The global recognition of culture's importance is reflected in the development of international norms and institutions that acknowledge culture as an essential dimension of social life. However, recognition alone does not guarantee

protection. The dynamic and contested nature of culture also makes it vulnerable to marginalization, suppression, or elimination, particularly in contexts of political domination, nation-building, or globalization. As a response to these vulnerabilities, the concept of cultural rights has emerged as a legal and normative framework aimed at protecting the ability of individuals and communities to participate in cultural life.

Cultural rights began to take shape during the drafting of key international human rights instruments. Although they were not explicitly included in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, cultural rights were acknowledged in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms the right of everyone to participate freely in the cultural life of the community (Stamatopoulou, 2012, p. 1174). Subsequent developments, including Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, further articulated the protection of cultural participation, particularly for minority communities (Stamatopoulou, 2012, pp. 1174–1175). Over time, additional international instruments have expanded the scope of cultural rights, reflecting broader understandings of culture and its relationship to identity, diversity, and social cohesion.

Two points emerge from this discussion. First, culture constitutes a fundamental aspect of social life that is increasingly understood as dynamic rather than static. Second, cultural rights have developed as a response to the need to protect this dynamic cultural life within legal and political frameworks at national, regional, and international levels. Building on these premises, this paper focuses on the theoretical merit of cultural rights by examining their conceptual strengths and limitations. It argues that while cultural rights face significant challenges, their interaction with evolving understandings of culture and legal-political processes has contributed positively to contemporary debates on cultural diversity and coexistence.

More specifically, the paper explores whether cultural rights can contribute to the development of a cosmopolitan culture characterized by mutual recognition, dialogue, and respect for diversity. Rather than offering an empirical assessment, the study adopts a conceptual approach to analyze how cultural rights may function as a normative bridge between cultural diversity and cosmopolitan aspirations. Following the literature review and research method sections, the paper discusses the strengths and limitations of cultural rights before examining their potential role in supporting the emergence of a cosmopolitan culture.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Understanding culture

Early anthropological approaches often defined culture as a set of fixed beliefs, values, and behavioral patterns associated with a particular group or society. However, this understanding has increasingly been questioned and revised. Anderson-Levitt (2012) demonstrates how contemporary scholarship has moved away from treating culture as a bounded and reified entity. Instead, culture is now more accurately understood as a process of meaning-making—an ongoing social practice through which individuals and groups create shared understandings, norms, and knowledge in interaction with one another (Anderson-Levitt, 2012, pp. 442–443).

This reconceptualization emphasizes that culture is neither uniform nor static. Rather than being owned by a clearly defined group, culture is dynamic, contested, and shaped by overlapping networks of meaning that transcend rigid boundaries of membership (Anderson-Levitt, 2012, p. 444). As a result, the shift from a group-based conception of

culture toward a process-oriented one has transformed how scholars understand world culture and the global–local relationship. Cultural production is increasingly seen as contingent, locally constructed, and embedded in social and historical contexts rather than as a homogeneous or universal phenomenon (Anderson-Levitt, 2012, pp. 445–446).

A similar shift can be observed within international heritage policy. Logan (2012) shows that, toward the end of the twentieth century, the understanding of culture moved beyond a narrow focus on elite or monumental heritage to a broader anthropological conception that includes the "distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features" of societies (p. 234). This expanded understanding enabled international institutions, particularly UNESCO, to recognize intangible cultural heritage—such as practices, representations, knowledge, and skills—as integral elements of culture requiring protection (Logan, 2012, pp. 234–235).

As culture came to be understood as dynamic and embedded in living communities rather than as a collection of static artifacts, heritage conservation practices began to emphasize cultural diversity and the rights of groups to maintain and express their cultural identities (Logan, 2012, p. 235). Consequently, heritage conservation was reframed as a cultural practice with clear political, social, and ethical implications, closely linked to human rights concerns and questions of representation, inclusion, and power (Logan, 2012, p. 232).

2.2 The conceptual understanding of cultural rights

The conceptual foundation of cultural rights is closely tied to how culture itself is defined. Chow (2014) argues that traditional legal understandings of culture, which rely on static group identities, are increasingly inadequate for addressing contemporary cultural realities (p. 612). He conceptualizes culture as "collective memories," highlighting the ways in which cultural meaning is produced, transmitted, and reinterpreted over time (Chow, 2014, p. 616). From this perspective, cultural rights are not primarily concerned with preserving cultural objects or traditions, but with protecting the processes through which communities construct continuity, identity, and meaning (Chow, 2014, pp. 620–621).

By framing culture as fluid and historically situated, Chow (2014) expands the normative scope of cultural rights. Cultural harm is no longer limited to the destruction of tangible heritage but also includes disruptions to the social processes that sustain collective memory and cultural participation (p. 642). This understanding strengthens the justification for cultural rights within international law by linking them to broader concerns of dignity, identity, and historical experience.

Pascual (2018) similarly situates cultural rights within the broader framework of human dignity, emphasizing their role in enabling individuals and groups to participate meaningfully in cultural life (p. 4). He argues that cultural rights constitute a distinct category of human rights because they protect the conditions that allow for the creation, expression, and negotiation of cultural meaning (Pascual, 2018, pp. 5–6). This perspective highlights that cultural rights extend beyond access to cultural goods or heritage sites and include the right to engage in cultural processes that shape social belonging and participation (Pascual, 2018, p. 7).

Taken together, these perspectives underscore that cultural rights are both enabling and protective. They safeguard the freedom to participate in cultural life while also supporting cultural diversity and pluralism within democratic societies (Pascual, 2018, p. 8). This conceptual understanding provides the basis for examining the strengths and limitations of cultural rights, as well as their potential role in addressing cultural diversity within

increasingly interconnected and plural social contexts.

3. Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative, conceptual research approach to examine the strengths and limitations of cultural rights as a theoretical construct. Rather than employing an empirical or quantitative design, the paper relies on secondary data in the form of academic literature drawn from international law, cultural studies, and international relations. This approach is appropriate given that cultural rights are primarily discussed and developed within normative and conceptual debates rather than through measurable empirical indicators (Chow, 2014; Pascual, 2018).

The research method is based on a narrative literature review and close textual analysis. Key scholarly works were selected for their relevance to the evolving understanding of culture as a dynamic process (Anderson-Levitt, 2012; Logan, 2012) and to the conceptual development of cultural rights within international human rights discourse (Chow, 2014; Pascual, 2018). Through careful reading and interpretation, the study identifies recurring themes, conceptual tensions, and normative assumptions that shape contemporary discussions on cultural rights.

The analysis proceeds through comparative interpretation of the selected literature, allowing the paper to assess how different scholars conceptualize culture and cultural rights and how these conceptualizations inform broader debates on cultural diversity and coexistence. This method makes it possible to synthesize existing arguments and evaluate the theoretical coherence of cultural rights without relying on empirical measurement or case-based testing. References to international instruments and selected contexts are used illustratively to support conceptual discussion rather than to provide empirical evidence (Stamatopoulou, 2012).

By adopting this qualitative and analytical method, the study aims to clarify the conceptual contribution of cultural rights and to explore their potential role in supporting the development of a cosmopolitan culture grounded in recognition, dialogue, and respect for diversity, as discussed in contemporary debates on culture and cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2008; 2011). The findings of this research are therefore interpretive in nature and intended to contribute to theoretical reflection rather than policy evaluation.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The strength of cultural rights

The concept of cultural rights offers several important strengths within contemporary human rights discourse. These strengths become visible when cultural rights are examined not only as legal entitlements but also as normative tools that address cultural exclusion, diversity, and coexistence. Four main strengths can be identified.

First, cultural rights can contribute to the prevention of human rights violations that stem from the denial of cultural recognition. Cultural marginalization and the suppression of cultural practices often form the underlying conditions for broader human rights abuses. When cultural needs are ignored or denied, tensions may escalate into conflict, during which widespread violations of human rights are more likely to occur. An illustrative example can be found in the situation of the Sámi populations living across Finland, Norway, and Sweden. Central to Sámi cultural rights are issues related to land and natural resources, which require coordinated responses from multiple states. The establishment of the Sámi Parliament in 1996 as a representative and self-governing body, followed by the agreement on the Sámi Convention in 2016, illustrates how the recognition of cultural rights can function as a mechanism for managing cultural claims and reducing the risk of conflict among states (Côté et al., 2025, pp. 317–318). While such

arrangements do not eliminate all challenges, they demonstrate the preventive potential of cultural rights in contexts where cultural grievances intersect with political and territorial concerns.

Second, cultural rights play an important role in preventing forced assimilation and cultural oppression. This strength can be understood at two levels. At the international level, cultural rights emerged partly as a response to the legacies of colonialism, where cultural suppression was a central instrument of domination. Even after cultural rights were acknowledged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, many societies remained under colonial rule. Following independence, post-colonial states faced the challenge of restoring and sustaining cultural life that had been marginalized or erased. The expansion of cultural rights in international discourse, particularly through the 1982 World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico City, reflected efforts to address these historical injustices by recognizing a broader range of cultural expressions, including religion, language, belief systems, and social practices (Hamelink, 2003, p. 14).

At the intrastate level, cultural oppression and forced assimilation often occur within culturally diverse societies. States characterized by ethnic, religious, or linguistic plurality frequently prioritize the identity of the majority during nation-building processes, sometimes at the expense of minority communities. When left unaddressed, such dynamics may give rise to prolonged internal tensions. This phenomenon was captured by Edward Azar's concept of protracted social conflict, which describes situations in which communal groups are denied the satisfaction of basic needs linked to their collective identity (Ramsbotham, 2005, p. 113). The relevance of this framework lies in its recognition that cultural exclusion can become a source of long-term instability. In this sense, cultural rights provide a normative basis for addressing grievances related to identity and belonging before they escalate into sustained conflict.

The third strength of cultural rights lies in their practical contribution to the preservation of cultural life in an evolving social context. As understandings of culture have expanded, so too has the scope of the right to participate in cultural life. Early formulations of cultural rights reflected relatively narrow conceptions of culture. Subsequent developments in international law, however, have demonstrated increasing sensitivity to the complexity of contemporary cultural realities. This complexity is shaped by globalization, migration, political identity, cultural relativism, economic interests linked to intellectual property, and dialogue among civilizations (Stamatopoulou, 2012, p. 1171). In response, international instruments such as the Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples have broadened the recognition of cultural rights to address diverse cultural practices and claims (Yúdice, 2009, p. 127; Côté et al., 2025, p. 306). The breadth of culture, therefore, necessitates an equally comprehensive approach to cultural rights.

Finally, cultural rights encourage the recognition and celebration of cultural diversity. Prior to their incorporation into international legal frameworks, cultural diversity was often perceived as a threat to political unity or national identity, particularly by dominant groups or colonial authorities. The protection afforded by cultural rights has enabled minority and indigenous communities to express and sustain their cultural identities more openly. At the same time, cultural rights also place responsibilities on broader society. They call for proactive efforts by individuals and communities to respect difference and to promote peaceful coexistence. Pasamonk (2004) defines tolerance as both a social virtue and a political principle that allows diverse groups to live together without

discrimination or conflict. This understanding aligns with General Comment No. 21 on Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which emphasizes that cultural practices must be exercised within limits that respect other human rights (Stamatopoulou, 2012, p. 1182). In this way, cultural rights support the celebration of cultural diversity while preventing practices that undermine the rights and dignity of others.

4.2 The limitations of cultural rights

Despite their normative and practical strengths, cultural rights also present several important limitations. These limitations do not negate the value of cultural rights as a concept, but they reveal conceptual and structural challenges that complicate their implementation and interpretation. Three main limitations can be identified.

First, cultural rights remain vulnerable to the practice of cultural relativism, particularly in developing and post-colonial contexts. Cultural relativism holds that all values and beliefs are culturally contingent and that no external standard can be used to evaluate cultural practices. As Pasamonk (2004) explains, cultural relativism treats ethical, political, and religious claims as truths that are inseparable from cultural identity, thereby rejecting universal criteria of judgment (p. 207). When cultural rights are interpreted through a relativist lens, they may be used to justify practices that conflict with broader human rights standards or to defend cultures against perceived external interference.

This challenge is closely linked to historical and structural inequalities between states. Many developing and post-colonial states experience a persistent fear of cultural domination, particularly from economically and technologically powerful societies. In such contexts, cultural rights may be mobilized defensively as instruments of cultural protection rather than as mechanisms for dialogue or exchange. Developed states, whose nation-building processes are largely complete, tend to face less anxiety regarding cultural survival. Their cultural products are often exported globally, reinforcing asymmetrical cultural influence. As a result, the promotion of cultural rights at the international level has frequently been driven by post-colonial states seeking to preserve cultural autonomy in the face of global pressures, as reflected in the adoption of the Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (Yúdice, 2009).

Second, cultural rights may be instrumentalized by states for political purposes. While states may formally ratify international treaties on cultural rights, this commitment does not necessarily translate into meaningful implementation. In some contexts, governments perceive cultural diversity as a threat to national unity, social order, or security, particularly during periods of nation-building. Barry's (2019) study of Thailand during the Cold War illustrates how the promotion of a dominant national identity was accompanied by policies of forced assimilation, including restrictions on minority languages and cultural expression (pp. 69–74). Similar patterns can be observed in other states where cultural diversity is selectively recognized or suppressed despite formal adherence to international norms.

The instrumentalization of cultural rights is also evident in state approaches to indigenous peoples. Although instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples have been widely endorsed, state interpretations often diverge from international standards. For example, China does not formally recognize indigenous peoples as defined under UNDRIP, Indonesia prioritizes Muslim-Javanese identity, and Bangladesh constitutionally categorizes indigenous communities as "small ethnic groups" (Côté et al., 2025, p. 321). These cases illustrate how cultural rights can be selectively applied or redefined to align with state

interests rather than to protect vulnerable communities.

In addition to political control, cultural rights may also be instrumentalized for economic or reputational gain. Participation in international cultural regimes allows states to signal compliance with global human rights norms while advancing national interests. The UNESCO World Heritage Convention provides a clear example. By nominating sites for inclusion on the World Heritage List, states gain international recognition and may leverage cultural heritage for tourism or economic development. As of the latest listings, the World Heritage List includes 1,248 properties across 170 state parties (World Heritage Convention, n.d.-b). While the Convention aims to protect cultural and natural heritage, the potential for economic incentives raises questions about the sincerity of state commitment to cultural protection.

The third limitation of cultural rights is linked to the dynamics of globalization. Advances in communication technology and the rapid circulation of cultural content have intensified global interconnectedness. Cultural exchange now occurs at an unprecedented speed, facilitated by social media and digital platforms. In this context, cultural assimilation is often voluntary rather than imposed. Individuals increasingly adopt cultural practices, values, and lifestyles that are globally popular or digitally visible. This process can contribute to cultural homogenization, or monoculture, in which local cultural expressions are gradually marginalized.

Scholars have warned that the spread of monoculture may undermine cultural diversity by privileging dominant global narratives over localized cultural practices (Rourke, 2008). While cultural rights aim to protect diversity, they face structural limitations in countering the diffuse and decentralized forces of globalization. Unlike state-driven assimilation, digital cultural homogenization operates through individual choice and market dynamics, making it more difficult to regulate through legal or normative frameworks. This limitation highlights the challenges cultural rights face in adapting to contemporary forms of cultural transformation.

4.3 The Potential of Cultural Rights to Achieve Cosmopolitan Culture

The discussion so far has highlighted the importance of culture, the emergence of cultural rights, and the strengths and limitations of cultural rights as a normative concept. This section builds on that discussion by examining how cultural rights may contribute to the development of a cosmopolitan culture. The focus here is not on presenting cosmopolitanism as an inevitable outcome, but on exploring the conditions under which cultural rights may support forms of cultural coexistence characterized by recognition, dialogue, and respect for diversity.

Cosmopolitanism has long been discussed by philosophers, political theorists, and social scientists as an idea concerned with the possibility of a shared world community. Introduced by Immanuel Kant in the late eighteenth century, cosmopolitanism was originally linked to the pursuit of peace and the recognition of universal rights beyond the boundaries of the nation-state (Delanty, 2008, pp. 217–218). While often associated with political and legal arrangements, cosmopolitanism also has important cultural dimensions. The formation of a world community requires not only institutional cooperation but also the ability of diverse cultures to interact without domination or exclusion.

4.3.1 Cosmopolitanism and cultural diversity

Cultural diversity plays a central role in contemporary understandings of cosmopolitanism. Rather than implying cultural uniformity, cosmopolitanism increasingly refers to the capacity of societies to accommodate difference while

sustaining social cohesion. Delanty's (2011) theory of cultural encounters provides a useful framework for understanding this process. He examines how interactions between cultures can produce different outcomes, ranging from conflict and rejection to peaceful coexistence and cultural fusion. Among these outcomes, the notion of unity in diversity represents the most promising foundation for a cosmopolitan political community, as it allows cultures to maintain their distinctiveness while engaging in dialogue and mutual recognition (Delanty, 2011, pp. 649–652).

Delanty's framework is particularly valuable because it highlights that cultural encounters are not inherently harmonious. Cultural interaction may lead to domination, assimilation, or polarization, especially when power relations are unequal. At the same time, his analysis suggests that cosmopolitan prospects improve when cultural encounters are managed in ways that encourage cooperation and recognition rather than exclusion. However, while Delanty explains the conditions and outcomes of cultural encounters, his framework does not fully specify the normative instruments through which unity in diversity can be supported or sustained in practice. This gap opens space for considering the role of cultural rights**.**

4.3.2 Cultural rights as a normative support for cosmopolitan culture

Cultural rights may be understood as providing a normative foundation that supports cosmopolitan culture by shaping how cultural encounters are recognized, protected, and regulated. One way cultural rights contribute to cosmopolitan culture is through the formal recognition of cultural participation as a right rather than a privilege. By affirming the right of individuals and communities to participate in cultural life, cultural rights legitimize cultural diversity within legal and political frameworks. This recognition reduces the likelihood that cultural difference will be treated as a deviation from a dominant norm and instead frames diversity as an integral component of social life.

In addition to recognition, cultural rights offer protection against forms of cultural exclusion and forced assimilation that undermine the possibility of meaningful cultural dialogue. As discussed earlier, cultural oppression often arises in contexts where dominant groups impose cultural homogeneity in the name of national unity or security. Cultural rights provide a normative basis for resisting such practices by safeguarding cultural expression, language, belief systems, and ways of life. In this sense, cultural rights help create the conditions under which cultural encounters can move away from domination or rejection and toward more cooperative forms of coexistence, which Delanty associates with cosmopolitan outcomes.

At the same time, cultural rights contribute to cosmopolitan culture by establishing boundaries that limit the scope of cultural relativism. The protection of cultural diversity does not imply unconditional acceptance of all cultural practices. International human rights frameworks, including interpretations of the right to participate in cultural life, emphasize that cultural practices must be exercised in ways that respect the rights and dignity of others (Stamatopoulou, 2012, p. 1182). This boundary-setting function is particularly important in cosmopolitan contexts, where cultural encounters involve competing values and norms. By linking cultural participation to broader human rights principles, cultural rights help prevent cosmopolitan openness from collapsing into relativism or justification for harm.

Taken together, these dimensions suggest that cultural rights do not replace cosmopolitan ideals but rather support them by translating abstract commitments to diversity and recognition into normative expectations. Cultural rights offer a framework through which unity in diversity

can be pursued without erasing difference or reinforcing cultural hierarchies. Their contribution lies in shaping the terms of cultural interaction rather than in guaranteeing cosmopolitan outcomes.

4.3.3 Conditions and challenges

Despite their normative potential, cultural rights can only contribute to cosmopolitan culture under certain conditions. One key condition is the presence of democratic governance. As Delanty (2011) notes, cultural diversity is more visible and more likely to be expressed in democratic settings, where cultural expression and participation are protected. In contrast, authoritarian regimes often perceive cultural diversity as a threat to political stability and national unity. In such contexts, cultural rights are either restricted or selectively applied, limiting their ability to support cosmopolitan forms of coexistence.

Another challenge lies in the hierarchy of cultural issues within states. Governments facing multiple cultural claims may prioritize certain issues over others based on political cost or strategic value. This selective approach can weaken the overall protection of cultural rights and undermine trust among marginalized groups. In addition, the increasing role of digital media introduces new complexities. Cultural narratives now circulate rapidly across borders, and expressions of identity shared online may intensify cultural defensiveness or misunderstanding. In the absence of tolerance and digital literacy, freedom of expression in online spaces may contribute to new forms of cultural conflict.

These challenges underscore that cultural rights are not a sufficient condition for cosmopolitan culture. Their effectiveness depends on political commitment, institutional implementation, and social practices that promote tolerance and dialogue. Nevertheless, when these conditions are present, cultural rights can serve as a meaningful normative support for cultural encounters oriented toward unity in diversity.

5. Conclusion

This article has examined the concept of cultural rights by situating it within broader discussions of culture, cultural diversity, and cosmopolitanism. Rather than treating cultural rights as a settled or uncontested category, the analysis has highlighted both their normative strengths and their conceptual and practical limitations. By reviewing key scholarly perspectives and international frameworks, the article aimed to clarify the role cultural rights may play in shaping contemporary cultural relations.

The analysis shows that cultural rights offer important normative contributions. They provide formal recognition of cultural participation, protect cultural expression against forced assimilation, and affirm the value of cultural diversity within international legal and political discourse. These features position cultural rights as a potential support for cultural coexistence in plural societies. At the same time, the discussion has demonstrated that cultural rights are constrained by persistent challenges, including cultural relativism, political instrumentalization by states, and the structural effects of globalization. These limitations complicate efforts to translate cultural rights into consistent and meaningful practice.

In relation to cosmopolitanism, the article has argued that cultural rights should not be understood as guarantees of cosmopolitan culture, but rather as normative instruments that may support conditions conducive to unity in diversity. Drawing on Delanty's framework of cultural encounters, the analysis suggests that cultural rights can help shape interactions among cultures by promoting recognition, protecting difference, and establishing normative boundaries. Their contribution lies in influencing how cultural encounters are managed rather than in determining their outcomes.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of cultural rights depends on political, institutional, and social conditions, particularly democratic governance and a commitment to tolerance and dialogue. While cultural rights alone cannot resolve the tensions inherent in cultural diversity, they remain a relevant and valuable component of contemporary efforts to navigate cultural coexistence in an increasingly interconnected world.

REFERENCES

Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (2012). Complicating the concept of culture. *Comparative Education, 48*(4), 441–454.

Barry, C. (2019). Hierarchy and diversity in Thailand's changing political landscape. *Situations, 12*(1), 67–85.

Chow, P. Y. S. (2014). Culture as collective memories: An emerging concept in international law and discourse on cultural rights. *Human Rights Law Review, 14*(4), 611–646.

Côté, I., Grant, J. A., Islam, A., McLean, V., Mitchell, M. I., & Panagos, D. (2025). The global implementation of UNDRIP: A thematic review. *The International Journal of Human Rights, 29*(2), 306–330.

Delanty, G. (2011). Cultural diversity, democracy and the prospects of cosmopolitanism: A theory of cultural encounters. *The British Journal of Sociology, 62*(4), 633–656.

Delanty, G. (2008). The cosmopolitan imagination. *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals, 82–83*, 217–230.

Hamelink, C. F. (2003). Cultural rights in the global village. In A. Goonasekera et al. (Eds.), *Cultural rights in a global world* (pp. 7–25). Eastern Universities Press.

Logan, W. (2012). Cultural diversity, cultural heritage and human rights: Towards heritage management as human rights-based cultural practice. *International Journal of Heritage Studies, 18*(3), 231–244.

Pasamonk, B. (2004). The paradoxes of tolerance. *The Social Studies, 95*(5), 206–210.

Pascual, J. (2018). Cultural rights, local cultural policies, and sustainable development: Constructing a coherent narrative. *Journal of Law, Social Justice & Global Development, 22*, 1–12.

Ramsbotham, O. (2005). The analysis of protracted social conflict: A tribute to Edward Azar. *Review of International Studies, 31*, 109–126.

Rourke, J. T. (2008). *International politics on the world stage* (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Stamatopoulou, E. (2012). Monitoring cultural human rights: The claims of culture on human rights and the response of cultural rights. *Human Rights Quarterly, 34*(4), 1170–1192.

World Heritage Convention. (n.d.-a). *About World Heritage*. https://whc.unesco.org/en/about/

World Heritage Convention. (n.d.-b). *World Heritage list*. https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/

Yúdice, G. (2009). Cultural diversity and cultural rights. *Hispanic Issues On Line, 5*(1), 110–137.