

# Creative cities and the global crisis



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## The phase of “globalisation” now coming to an end has been a process of:

- economic restructuring (growth of construction, retail, finance, tourism, commercial sport, the creative industries)
- intensification of flows (of capital, media messages, people)
- commodification
- standardisation
- de-territorialisation
- erosion of local distinctiveness and loss of cultural bio-diversity
- growing popularity of standardised metropolitan models
- oversupply and excessive consumption

# **Some processes of urban change, and their implications**

## The standardisation of city centres

The 'anywhere' shopping mall



## Urban sprawl

The rhetoric of environmental sustainability, the tyranny of car dependency and the 'obese city'



## Urban sprawl

The dull new public realm of 'anywhere' out-of-town shopping centres



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## Urban sprawl and leisure activities

Citadels of entertainment, from film to fitness  
(Marc Augé, *Non-Places*)



## Urban sprawl and leisure activities

The sad centrality of the car park



## The 'experience economy'

(Joseph Pine II and James Gilmore):

**a response to the crisis or just more of the same?**

Theming, 'experiential retailing', 'eatertainment'

*Horror vacui?*

The economy of controlled experiences

"In return for the assurance of safety and certainty, theme park visitors surrender an extraordinary degree of control, both in terms of freedom of movement and freedom of imagination" (John Hannigan, Fantasy City)

## Threats to cultural participation, local distinctiveness and urban creativity

Less leisure time for people in work:  
the problem of work-life balance

The fast city and the values of slowness  
(see [www.slowmovement.com](http://www.slowmovement.com))

*Pensiero meridiano and pensée du Midi*



## Threats to cultural participation, local distinctiveness and urban creativity

Information overload and its consequences



## Threats to cultural participation, local distinctiveness and urban creativity

‘Night-time economies’: the dream of a convivial café culture, and the reality of the ‘alcoholic agora’ (and its costs)

The phenomenon of alcohol-based tourism  
Residents v. revellers in some city centres



## Threats to cultural participation, local distinctiveness and urban creativity

The 'audit society': evaluate anything that moves

Auditing as ritual

Auditing and power

See Michael Power *The Audit Society*

The emergence of more balanced approaches to auditing and evaluation

## Threats to cultural participation, local distinctiveness and urban creativity

The risk averse society:

more and more restrictions on children's play

the pervasiveness of health and safety and insurance frameworks and mentalities

negative impacts on grassroots cultural activities

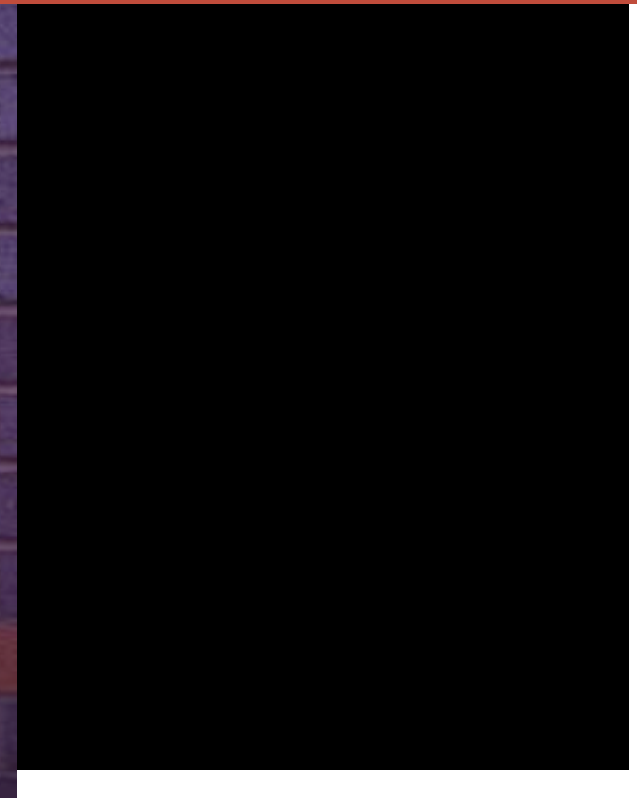
## Some issues in urban cultural policy today

An uneasy coexistence of policy rationales from different historical periods

- 1) the intrinsic and civilising value of access to culture
- 2) the transformative potential of 'cultural democracy' and active participation
- 3) culture as a tool for economic development and place marketing
- 4) cultural actions to change the behaviours of individuals and communities

## Other issues in urban cultural policy today

'Newism', the neglect of the tangible and Intangible heritage, and the rhetoric of historical continuity



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## Other issues in urban cultural policy today: the rhetoric of high quality architecture, and the reality of blandness

“I have learnt from my mistakes, and I can now repeat them almost exactly” (Peter Cook)



## **Other issues in urban cultural policy today**

The crisis in local (public and private) cultural funding

The problems generated by focusing funding on consumption activities, (iconic) buildings and city centres

The issue of social exclusion: the importance of access policies, 'soft boundaries' and public space networks

## Urban cultural policies in the context of the recession

The 'triple' (credit, energy and climate) crunch  
(New Economics Foundation)

A new focus on production and skills

Creative cities *for* the world (Charles Landry):  
beyond destructive forms of urban competitiveness

New priorities:  
reducing the negative impacts of unemployment  
finding new uses for redundant buildings  
fostering a climate of resilience, exploration and  
innovation  
encouraging less materialistic lifestyles

## The rise of multi-ethnic and multicultural cities



**National approaches to managing ethnic diversity are being questioned**

*Corporate multiculturalism (UK, Netherlands)*

*The search for alternative concepts - e.g. integration and community cohesion*

## Multi-ethnic and multicultural cities



**National approaches to managing ethnic diversity are being questioned**

*Civic cultural integration (France)*

## **The debate around the concept of 'interculturalism' and its applications**

Definitions

The temptation of 'theming'

Exploring shared histories and heritage

Holistic cultural/social/health centres:  
the Peepul Centre, Leicester

European initiatives: the EU's Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008)  
and the Council of Europe's  
Intercultural Cities research project

Comedia's international action research project "The Intercultural City: Making the Most of Diversity" ([www.interculturalcity.com](http://www.interculturalcity.com))

*The Intercultural City*, by Phil Wood and Charles Landry, London, Earthscan, 2008

"The Intercultural City" conference, Liverpool, 1st-3rd May 2008

The fragility of intercultural projects in the forthcoming recession/depression

## **Some issues raised by the project:**

### **Creating an Intercultural Civic Identity and Culture**

Creating intercultural architecture and urban design

Reshaping collective memory to include “the other”

Shaping collective self-image through intercultural public art strategies

Transforming mentalities through public awareness and education initiatives

## Some issues raised by the project:

### Counteracting Ethnic Segregation in Urban Space and Public Life

The strategic siting of cultural infrastructure:  
examples from England, Austria and Portugal

Countering ethnic stigmatisation through place marketing:  
Hyson Green, Nottingham

From multicultural to intercultural festivals: examples from  
Rotterdam, Edinburgh and Berlin

Diversifying the airwaves

## **Thinking culturally (and artistically) about urban policy: towards the ‘creative city’?”?**

‘Cultural planning’ as ‘the strategic and integral planning and use of cultural resources in urban and community development’ (Colin Mercer)

**Learning from the processes of cultural production,  
which tend to be:**

***collaborative, interdisciplinary***

e.g. cittadellarte, Biella, Italy  
([www.cittadellarte.it](http://www.cittadellarte.it))

PROJECT (an initiative by the Arts Council, CABE  
and Arts & Business in the UK;  
[www.publicartonline.org.uk](http://www.publicartonline.org.uk))

Comedia ([www.comedia.org.uk](http://www.comedia.org.uk))

**Learning from the processes of cultural production,  
which tend to be:**

***innovation-oriented, experimental, not narrowly  
instrumental***

need to open up policy systems to young talent,  
and to set up pilot projects and R&D budgets

e.g. Lewisham

([www.creativelewishamagency.org.uk](http://www.creativelewishamagency.org.uk))

Bristol Cultural Development Partnership

Cultural Pathfinder projects in England

([www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk))

**Learning from the processes of cultural production,  
which tend to be:**

***critical, questioning, challenging***

welcoming conflicts and contradictions as a creative resource - e.g. 'Cities on the Edge' project, Liverpool 2008

Projects on the Third Reich legacy, Linz European Capital of Culture 2009

Proposal for Mafia Museum, Corleone, Sicily

***cultured, and critically aware of history, local distinctiveness and of traditions of creativity and cultural expression***

documenting local distinctiveness (also through cultural cartography)

creating a local 'image bank'

drawing inspiration from traditions of creativity and innovation

## Researching and mobilising local cultural resources

### A definition of local cultural resources:

- Arts and media activities and institutions
- Sports and recreation
- The tangible and intangible heritage
- The local 'image bank'
- Places for sociability
- Intellectual and scientific milieux and institutions
- Creative inputs into local crafts, manufacturing and services activities

## **Understanding urban mindscapes and imaginaries**

One *gestalt* of the urban imaginary?

The politics of symbolic contestation

The production of official urban mindscapes

## The importance of mapping

- entrepreneurial opportunities & desires, not just needs
- obstacles & constraints, not just opportunities
- gatekeepers, gateways, networks & collaborations
- local talent & creative & innovative milieux
- the uses of time
- different moral, aesthetic, philosophical, organizational and policy concepts and styles

The importance of making innovative links between different types of cultural resources – e.g. food and crafts, or dance and sport

## Can implementation problems be overcome?

Training needs

Institutional arrangements for effective partnerships

Emerging professional specializations: the 'cultural cartographer', the intercultural mediator and the cultural planner

The fragility of existing cultural planning and creative city experiments

## **The strategic main lines of a local cultural policy**

Cultural policy proper (sectoral policies on arts, museums, libraries, media, other aspects of the cultural industries)

Cultural planning approaches to:

youth policy

place marketing and tourism promotion

physical planning

local economic development

The relationship between sectoral/vertical and  
Integrated/ horizontal functions

## Reflections on the 'European City of Culture' and 'European Capital of Culture' initiatives

Invented by Melina Mercouri in 1983

Celebrations of major centres for culture

Athens 1985

Florence 1986

Amsterdam 1987

West Berlin's swansong 1988

Paris 1989

## The 'European City of Culture' and 'European Capital of Culture' scheme

Culture and urban regeneration:  
Glasgow 1990

Dublin 1991

Madrid 1992 as the "poor cousin" of Barcelona 1992 and  
Seville 1992

Art and politics: Antwerp 1993

## The 'European City of Culture' and 'European Capital of Culture' scheme

Is the ECoC an important event?

Evaluation issues

Is the ECoC a festive and transformational event?

Who owns the ECoC event?

Is the ECoC about culture or about something else?

How can the impetus generated by an ECoC event be sustained?

How 'European' is the European Capital of Culture?

## The 'Cities on the Edge' project

Cultural partnership between six culturally rich but 'difficult' port cities:

Bremen, Gdansk, Istanbul, Liverpool, Marseilles and Naples

Exploring the multiple meanings of the concept of 'edge'

# The 'Cities on the Edge' project

History of the idea (2003-2008)

The difficulties of European cultural  
co-operation

Communication difficulties

Documentation and evaluation

## The 'Cities on the Edge' project

Cultural actions for 2008:

Emilia di Liverpool

Serious and organised crime conference

Rebel Lectures

Intercultural City conference

Sound City and Streetwaves

Contacting the World (youth theatre festival)

ReBerth anthology of short stories

## The 'Cities on the Edge' project

Cultural actions for 2008:

Photography on the Edge

On the Edge of Passion (football documentary)

Street Philosophy

Coming and Going

For the Likes of Us

# Cities on the Edge

The future of the project

Marseilles 2009

Istanbul 2010

Gdansk and Bremen 2011

Naples 2012

The uncertain future participation  
of Liverpool

## Constructing an evaluation framework for European Capitals of Culture: some issues

The difference between evaluating “importance” and “impact”

Positive and negative impacts

Evaluation should be:  
practical and simple  
useful and understandable

# A 360 degrees approach to evaluation?

Economic impacts

Social impacts

Artistic/cultural impacts

Environmental impacts

Educational impacts

# A 360 degrees approach to evaluation?

Media impacts

Image and local identity impacts

Creative milieu impacts

Gathering the views of different stakeholders and social groups

Contextualising evaluation

## Evaluation problems in other European Cities/Capitals of Culture

Limited resources

Insufficient planning

Inadequately defined/vague criteria

Limited or no follow-up evaluation

Lack of independence of evaluators

# Evaluating the extent to which an ECoC addresses the EU's criteria

How other European Capitals of Culture have done this

Special publications

European twinnings/links/participation in networks

Special education programmes

Involvement of people in cities from other countries

Use of other languages

Residences and exchanges involving European artists

# Evaluating the extent to which an ECoC addresses the EU's criteria

How other European Capitals of Culture have done this

Organization of European conferences and seminars  
European co-productions

Assessing how the ECoC's programme relates to issues of 'European cultural diversity':  
Impact on cultural production, distribution and consumption patterns, and on audiences

## Other evaluation issues

### Assessing innovation

Different types of innovation

Artistic

Technical/managerial/organizational

Conceptual

Process

Evaluation

Links between creativity and innovation

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