



# CREATIVE DISTRICTS AROUND THE WORLD

## CELEBRATING THE 500<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF BAIRRO ALTO

The 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of the historic creative districts of the world, Bairro Alto, in Lisbon (Portugal) served as a catalyst for the publication of this interactive e-book. In a journey that starts in the heart of the Bairro, several authors and artists take us through different creative districts around the globe. *Creative Districts around the World* is a snapshot of the dynamic changes taking place in very different cities, such as London, New York, Johannesburg or Melaka.

Enjoy your journey around the creative districts of the world!

*Lénia Marques and Greg Richards*



## Table of Contents

<b>Editors introduction: Creative districts around the world</b> .....	1
<i>Lénia Marques and Greg Richards</i>	
<b>Lisbon and the Bairro Alto: 500 years</b> .....	5
<i>Jorge Mangorrinha</i>	
<b>Architecture and society in Bairro Alto: prostitutes, artists and stabbings; <i>palazzi</i>, streets and alleys</b> .....	9
<i>Fabiana Pavel</i>	
<b>Gentrification and cultural heritage in Bairro Alto: Prelude to a creative district</b> .....	17
<i>Luís Mendes</i>	
<b>The Unusual path of 'rural urbanisation': The creative transformation of Ponta Delgada, The Azores</b> .....	23
<i>Emese Panyik, Carla Miguel and Rosa Vilaça</i>	
<b>Alameda de Hercules</b> .....	33
<i>Guido Cimadomo and Pilar Martínez Ponce</i>	
<b>The Ouseburn Valley</b> .....	37
<i>James Whiting</i>	
<b>East-West identities and creative fusions in London's 'Asian Quarters'</b> .....	47
<i>Stephen J. Shaw</i>	
<b>Custard with the colourful taste of creativity</b> .....	57
<i>Peter Horsten and Peter van der Aalst</i>	
<b>The Veemarktkwartier: Pioneer in The Netherlands</b> .....	67
<i>Simon Wijs and Kristel Zegers</i>	
<b>Fashion district Arnhem: Creative entrepreneurs upgrading a deprived neighbourhood</b> .....	75
<i>Dany Jacobs, Ewan Lentjes and Esther Ruiten</i>	
<b>The Finlayson/Tampella Area</b> .....	81
<i>Mariangela Lavanga</i>	
<b>Creative districts of Helsinki – Two distant relatives</b> .....	87
<i>Pekka Mustonen and Taru Lindblom</i>	

<b>New life of New Holland in a classical city</b> .....	93
<i>Valery Gordin, Marina Matetskaya and Mariya Dedova</i>	
<b>A Post-Socialist transformation – From a factory to a creative quarter</b> .....	99
<i>Ieva Rozentale and Timurs Tomsons</i>	
<b>The Creative heart of Budapest</b> .....	105
<i>Anita Zatori and Melanie Smith</i>	
<b>From a Jewish Quarter into a creative district</b> .....	111
<i>Anett k. Tóth, Barbara Keszei and Andrea Dúll</i>	
<b>Transformation through the revival of industrial heritage</b> .....	119
<i>Emese Panyik</i>	
<b>Revitalisation through creativity</b> .....	129
<i>Milica Ilincic</i>	
<b>Varosha – A creative meaning through the years</b> .....	137
<i>Liliya Terzieva</i>	
<b>New cultural polarities and the revival of Beyoğlu in Istanbul</b> .....	143
<i>Jérémie Molho</i>	
<b>Creative districts in the Global South: Maboneng Precinct, innercity Johannesburg</b> .....	149
<i>Christian M. Rogerson and Jonathan J. Rogerson</i>	
<b>The Saadiyat Island cultural district in Abu Dhabi</b> .....	155
<i>Hamed Al Hamed, Shabbar Jaffry and Alexandros Apostolakis</i>	
<b>Creative heritage: Melaka and its past</b> .....	163
<i>Can-Seng Ooi and Shevren Lai</i>	
<b>Animation breathes life into Chinese cities</b> .....	171
<i>Vincenzo de Masi and Yan Han</i>	
<b>Communality without collectivity</b> .....	179
<i>Daisy Tam</i>	
<b>High-end luxury retail and the city: A timeline of Bond Street, Fifth Avenue, Omotesando-Aoyama as luxury capitals of the world</b> .....	185
<i>Bhakti Sharma</i>	

<b>Revitalizing Micronesia’s capital city of Hagåtña: Creating historic corridors .....</b>	<b>191</b>
<i>Fred R. Schumann</i>	
<b>Marvellous Melbourne – More than a city .....</b>	<b>197</b>
<i>Sally Webster</i>	
<b>Creative districts: Surry Hills, Sydney .....</b>	<b>203</b>
<i>Sing D’Arcy and Lisa Zamberlan</i>	
<b>The Old charm of Newtown: Exploring cultural diversity in Sydney’s Newtown .....</b>	<b>209</b>
<i>Siobhan Lyons</i>	
<b>Downtown New Bedford, Massachusetts: A case of creative placemaking in the United States .</b>	<b>217</b>
<i>Leila Valoura and Don Burton</i>	
<b>These boots are not only made for walking .....</b>	<b>227</b>
<i>Juan Antonio Serrano García and Paloma Baquero Masats</i>	
<b>A Caribbean creative district .....</b>	<b>233</b>
<i>Marsha Pearce</i>	
<b>Creative Artisans Districts In The Province Of Lima .....</b>	<b>241</b>
<i>Charline Cayeman</i>	

# INTRODUCTION: CREATIVE DISTRICTS AROUND THE WORLD

## EDITORS INTRODUCTION

**LÉNIA MARQUES** (CELTH, NHTV UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, THE NETHERLANDS)

**GREG RICHARDS** (UNIVERSITY OF TILBURG / CELTH, NHTV UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, THE NETHERLANDS)

Creativity has been a “buzz” word that seems to characterise the first years of the young 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although arts and culture have been playing a role in the life and development of cities for centuries, it has been only recently that studies have been considering the role of culture and, in a broader sense, creativity in the life and development of the city. Traditionally, arts and culture were mainly accessible for the elite, restricted to specific cultural locations. Creativity has also long been an important element of the image of various cities (for example, arts and bohemian life are embedded in the image of Paris). However, the more recent development of culture and creativity in cities has been a more diffuse, organic process, sometimes motivated by decision makers and sometimes stimulated by people living in these quarters. Creative districts are increasingly an integral part of the city and they are at the heart of the artistic life, often side by side with bohemian and alternative lifestyles.

Bairro Alto, in the heart of Lisbon, is a district full of history, stories, struggles, creations and bohemia. In December 2013, this historic district celebrated its 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary and provided the catalyst for creating a snapshot of what is happening in creative districts around the world. Having undergone many historical, cultural and social changes, Bairro Alto has been redeveloping recently as a hub for night life, art and creativity in Lisbon. The Bairro becomes then an example of a variety of development processes, features and roles that entail diverse consequences in different places around the world.

The case studies in this volume show that the core presence of creativity in some districts is not new, but has developed along many different trajectories over time. In each era of development, different stories are given a voice, and each phase of development has its own timeline. Creativity becomes part of an organic process of

developing the district, being born, or implanted, and sometimes dying out. Some creative districts stem from medieval city quarters, others emerged in the post-industrial era or were part of the reconstruction of cities in the post-World War II. Some districts are more traditionally orientated towards culture (cultural districts with museums and galleries), while others are mostly connected to 'popular culture', hubs for alternative lifestyles.

Despite the variety of creative district forms and development trajectories, there are some common features. The life of the creative district is anchored in different creative businesses and is highly embedded in the local culture. Creative districts are often linked to alternative lifestyles and subcultures and increasingly they are becoming the place where creative networks are shaped.

The co-existence of these features, along with their diversity, means that these districts are in a permanent state of flux, which is part of their organic development. Although this allows for great flexibility, it also means that, on the one hand, it is difficult to identify particular development stages and, on the other hand, people (artists, inhabitants, visitors) also experience constant adaptive processes. In what we could call the 'pop-up' era, the phenomena observable in these districts are themselves temporary and ongoing. However, this is not simply a superficial or insignificant process. The impacts in the quarters themselves, but also in the cities as a whole, are significant and entail different aspects such as a sense of community or gentrification. Creative districts often provide the space and time in which people come together to experiment with new forms of relationality in 'trusting spaces', allowing people to form new, creative bonds within the network society.

We can often see in different cases that these districts are originally in poor developed areas of cities, sometimes run-down and desolate. Some of these districts are seen as problems that need to be solved (e.g. Surry Hills, Sydney). Often close to the urban centres, ateliers, bars, restaurants and other facilities attracted by cheap rents and whose core activity is based on short term fashions and trends. Often these processes are at the edge of or beyond the law, as in the case of squatting actions for example (e.g. the ruin bars in Budapest). Precariousness is also a keyword when understanding the relationship of these districts to place but also to business and employment. Nothing seems to be fixed or permanent and risks are involved. As Anett

K. Tóth, Barbara Keszei and Andrea Dúll state, it is a ‘romance of transition’, both for people and space. Gentrification often emerges, and although it is often felt that this can threaten the creative district itself, it can be argued that gentrification is after all part of the ongoing process of changes inherent to urban development. Independently of how the creativity became a major feature of the district, whether via grassroots activism or policy-induced, the need for a deeper reflection on urban planning and policy making in these districts is evident.

In the present publication, we present a collection of cases from creative districts in different parts of the world, both as an ebook and as an interactive platform. This publication aims at giving visibility to creative districts that gained a new life from the creative dynamics of the cities around them. The aim is to provide an analytical resource for researchers and students, rather than to provide an exhaustive list of all the creative districts in the world. Each case presented here demonstrates salient features of the dynamic landscape of global creativity and the places where this ‘lands’ in cities. But there are many others. Our journey around the creative districts of the world starts in Bairro Alto and continues towards East, against the clock, travelling through different continents (Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia, America).

### **Acknowledgements**

The editors would like to thank all the people involved in this project, from authors, to photographers and the technical team that made this interactive platform possible. Without your contribution, *Creative Districts around the World* wouldn’t have seen the light of day.

A special thanks to Paul Buchanan, Fleur van 't Slot, Robbert Klaver and Michael Schlejen for embarking on this project.



# LISBON AND THE BAIRRO ALTO

## 500 YEARS

BAIRRO ALTO, PORTUGAL

**JORGE MANGORRINHA** (UNIVERSIDADE LUSÓFONA DE HUMANIDADES E TECNOLOGIAS, LISBON, PORTUGAL)

On the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lisbon's most remarkable neighborhood, the long standing relationship between creative innovation and the urban experience and more recently, the relation between the Lisbon citizen and tourists, must be celebrated. Throughout the *Bairro Alto*, cultural events have been set to take place from April 2013 until the end of the year, both in the historic area of the *Bairro Alto* and in the surrounding areas. These creative celebrations planned to entertain this part of downtown Lisbon include theatre, recitals, tours, bibliographical exhibits, lectures, tribal "farrobodó" folklore-like street markets (present since the XVIII century), an international congress and a lottery, in a neighborhood where the contemporary atmosphere intertwines with History. "Our" Lisbon has the *Bairro Alto*, its origin goes back 500 years. Thus, this is the year to celebrate five centuries of History as well as to update our personal considerations on a neighborhood that with its attributes and issues enjoys the same appeal in this city and has set itself as a row model worldwide, so as to envision a network with other similar microcosms.

It is a fact that the creative expression, in its varied forms, places this neighborhood in parallel with worldly realities, in other words, a great number of historic neighborhoods that with renewed human energy have reinvented their own existence and peculiarities. Will we manage to connect the 500 years of the *Bairro Alto* to the increment of a worldwide network?

A portrait is the record of a moment. In a nutshell, the *Bairro Alto* is a story... and an important reality to bear in mind. New architectures as well as shut and ruined houses. Incredible bars and restaurants and beer bottles for a euro on the street. Memories of the hot 80s... very few! Only from those who lived it. But the *Bairro* renews itself through peaceful mutations and peaceful coexistence, or not so much, refusing to be another city centre neighborhood walking towards desertification and

with significant social and economic losses. The earlier memories take us to records of a *Vila Nova de Andrade*, witness of an experimental time that nourished the glorious government of King Manuel I and its Discoveries enterprise or the Jesuits that settled in the top of *São Roque*, the outer bound of *the Bairro Alto* or even the stately houses – a very coherent architectonic group. This matrix was kept even after the Earthquake and was integrated and respected in the plan to reconstruct the city. The memories of the 1800s everyday are what is left of the intellectuality and bohemia that still exists today, with another outline nevertheless.

Ever since the first geometrical plan for Lisbon was authorized in 1513, when Lopo de Athougua agreed with owners Bartolomeu de Andrade and his wife Francisca Cordovil the division of the *Bairro* in blocks, initially named as *Vila Nova de Andrade*, it became home to artisans and fishermen, and also home to petty politics, intellectual debating and culture in its many expressions. Its architecture went on to be preserved, in its general structures, with few deep changes, even refusing to succumb to the 1755 Earthquake, when in the aftermath wealthy families coming from the *Baixa*, established themselves here building their stately houses and throwing musical parties. Since the XIX it was the setting for important activities, such as the Press and the *Fado* Houses, a very important duo for the bohemia that was to come. In those times, journalists would attend it day and night. *Fado* singers only by night. In the 1980s it transformed itself to welcome numerous commercial establishments that provided the city's Night a new capital, with brand new ideas and trends.

Throughout time, the mark of creation together with different lifestyle experiences have been a constant, despite often times being frowned upon, always subject to popular and liberal thinking and behavior. The *Bairro Alto* is evidence of *avant-garde*.

In the last decades, the *Bairro Alto* has been the heir to that popular experience which went on to intensify itself, despite in an irregular fashion. Grocery shops, taverns, pensions and old time *Fado* Houses either coexist or give way to modern stores or workshops. It is not what it used to be two or three decades ago but still one can breathe the busy day life unsuspected of what goes on by night and vice-versa, for both experiences are so different. The *Bairro Alto* may not be fully captured without the day life scents and the nightlife noises, often source of tensions. The majority of its

inhabitants are the elderly and youngsters. The *Bairro Alto* still manages to be a platform to advertise the work of emerging artists, promoting exhibitions, events and stimulate intellectual debate in an interactive atmosphere, a differentiating selection that provides unique spaces.

The *Bairro Alto* is located in Lisbon's most dynamic area, nevertheless it manages to provide a good sense of intimacy. Beyond the threshold life transfigures from day to night. It is marked by a daytime peace, only thrown, for instance, by heated street chats, packages drop offs or by the crowds rushing to the National Conservatory. On the other hand the night is louder, tense, intoxicating, restless, presently somehow different from its golden years from 20 or 30 years ago. The small shops showcases display a mix of national fashion and international brands. Young residents, Portuguese and foreign, and some of Lisbon's intellectual elite, among some old timers eager to share their life experience, together, they form a 600 000 people community. Through them it is possible to uncover memories and know of brand new concepts that connect this neighborhood to the worldwide forefront. We should jointly celebrate such a meaningful landmark, task which has been carried out by the sisterhood charity *Irmandade da Misericórdia*, the charity *Misericórdia de São Roque*, the Association of *Bairro Alto* Residents, Rio de Janeiro Club, the Pharmacy Museum and the Portuguese Association of Vintage Bookshops.

There is no other *Bairro* like this one [*"Bairro como este não há nenhum"*]. It is known worldwide and it has a birth certificate! This year: "*Bairro Alto*, it's show time!" [*"silêncio, velha Lisboa, vai cantar o Bairro Alto!"*].

# ARCHITECTURE AND SOCIETY IN BAIRRO ALTO: PROSTITUTES, ARTISTS AND STABBINGS; *PALAZZI*, STREETS AND ALLEYS

BAIRRO ALTO, PORTUGAL

FABIANA PAVEL

Celebrations are underway for the five-hundredth anniversary of Bairro Alto's spatial and social identity. When one looks for the guiding thread throughout the existence of this traditional Lisbon neighbourhood whose cultural roots are both highbrow and lowbrow, or for the relationship between its spatial and sociocultural identity, one must inescapably draw a brief history of the neighbourhood's formation in consonance with its chief morphological and social features.

In the last quarter of the fifteenth century, Lisbon was a city of narrow streets where circulation was difficult, and it was insalubrious and incapable of keeping up with the social and economic transformations then underway. It was a city in demographic growth, trying to respond to the new demands of being capital of a sea empire by extending its boundaries.

It found a prime outlet for expansion westward (the area adjacent to the Fernandine wall), where a vast estate existed. The Atouguia and Andrade families (the owners and leasers of these lands) started sub-leasing parcels of land for the construction of new buildings, thus creating the new neighbourhood of Vila Nova de Andrade.<sup>1</sup>

The first stage of urbanisation (1498-1512) was polarised between the Gates of Santa Catarina and "*Cata-que-Farás*". As from 1513 (second stage) the urbanisation had been polarised by the Santa Catarina Gates, leading westwards to the *Santos* Road.

The third stage began in 1553, when the high-lying part of the area became autonomous, and the centre of gravity was displaced to the Alto de São Roque, where

---

<sup>1</sup> Historiography has given as the starting date of urbanisation 15 December 1513. Helder Carita (1999, *op.cit.*), demonstrated the existence of a document from 1498 that moves back the start of this urbanisation.

the Company of Jesus established itself. Thus, that area acquired the name of *Bairro Alto de São Roque* [High Neighbourhood of St Roch] (Figure 1). After the 1755 earthquake<sup>2</sup>, from an urbanistic point of view, the area became fully autonomous as 'Bairro Alto'.

Initially, the subleasers are commoners connected with sea trades. At a later moment, a population of larger means arrived, particularly after the Jesuit establishment at São Roque.

Bairro Alto is held as the city's first large urbanisation, and as a landmark in Lisbon's urbanistic and social history for some characteristics, such as rapid construction, its being a melting pot both socially and architecturally, and its rectangular grid layout, which was extremely modern for the time.

The most important element is the option to make sub-lease contracts based on a key measurement module: the *chão*.<sup>3</sup> This applied to the construction of the characteristic orthogonal grid as to the coexistence of different architectural styles (small buildings for people of poor means standing beside aristocratic palaces) as well as to the social *mélange* of the area.

This key module is featured in the entire grid, appearing in multiples or submultiples. The systematic use of a constant measurement in every block permits a better and more rational organisation of urban space (Figure 2). The urban grid of Bairro Alto is made up of a regular parcelling, based on the *chão* measure, which propagated as time went on from south to north. This layout permitted the implantation of buildings of different sizes and importance, and the subleasing of larger or smaller plots according to the economic capacity of the party interested.

The Bairro Alto area may be regarded as a private plot allotment *ante litteram*, in which speed of execution and maximum exploitation of available space are essential factors. Bairro Alto shows some features similar to private allotments created in the twentieth century such as the lack of gardens and public spaces, maximising the exploitation of land for construction; strict rules for deadlines and methods of construction; attention to ease of use of vehicles (carriages, at the time); good

---

<sup>2</sup> That was a very strong earthquake that destroyed many areas in Lisbon and in its surroundings.

<sup>3</sup> *Chão* [literally, ground]: an agrarian measurement used in the Middle Ages, corresponding to a rectangle of 60 hands' (13.2m) length by 30 hands' (6.6m) width.

environmental qualities such as good lighting in the streets or proper ventilation systems.

These morphological features may have fostered the making of an extremely heterogeneous society in Bairro Alto. Here commingled people of poor means connected with maritime activities, palace servants and tavern keepers, prostitutes and people connected with shady business, besides the bourgeois and families of the high aristocracy. There was always a deep conviviality among all these classes. We note that one of the most important personages born here was the Marquis of Pombal<sup>4</sup>, who in his youth led the Band of the White Capes, the terror of the Bairro in the first half of the eighteenth century.

After the 1755 earthquake, the aristocracy moved out to its suburban estates, leaving their palaces abandoned or subletting them. While the Quake did not seriously affect the architecture of Bairro Alto except for a small area adjacent to today's Camões Square, it did alter, partly, its social mix.

The neighbourhood closed in on itself, at the same time as it became central relative to the city that was growing around it. In the nineteenth century, it became a privileged place for the flourishing of an artistic ambiance connected with some degree of marginality, becoming a noted spot of bohemian Lisbon, where a strong connection existed between the world of prostitution and other illicit activities in the respectable bourgeois world.<sup>5</sup>

The palaces abandoned by the aristocracy offer (in the latter half of the nineteenth century) the ideal installations for newspapers. At the same time, the old carriage houses provide locations for cheap restaurants and taverns. Thus arises a peculiar atmosphere, lively and heterogeneous at all hours of the day and night, in which the conversations of journalists and artists commingles with those of pimps, prostitutes and the *fado* fauna ever ready for crime.

It is important to note that if the newspapers, on the one hand, bring a new flair to the Bairro, on the other hand, they do not alter its base structure, made up of a social class of poor means, largely small traders and artisans with their shop on the ground floor and living quarters above.

---

<sup>4</sup> The Marquis de Pombal (1699-1782) was the prime minister of Portugal at the time.

<sup>5</sup> PAÍS, Machado José, 2008, *op. cit.*.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the newspapers started relocating from the Bairro, seeking larger installations with easier access. Today, only one remains: *A Bola*.

Following the exodus of the press, Bairro Alto resumed an atmosphere of abandonment, regarded with distrust by other Lisboners. Even so, its peculiar social and cultural heterogeneity continued to attract bohemian spirits.

Particularly in the 1980s, the old stables and carriage houses were revamped as Disco spaces and, to this day, Bairro Alto has consolidated its fame as the nightlife area.<sup>6</sup>

The palaces continue in our century to offer spaces coveted by many (property developers, artistic projects, etc.), not only because of the possibilities their ample areas allow, but also because of the Bairro's central location in the city.

This brief chronicle shows that there has always been a guiding thread through the social history of this traditional Lisbon neighbourhood, made up of strongly interconnected and mutually dependent revelry and roguery, side by side with artistic endeavour and the lives of humble people who had their home and business here.

The Bairro Alto of today is quite different. On the one hand, traditional commerce is dying out and being replaced by bars and convenience stores. The night revellers no longer have any direct ties with the Bairro; they merely 'consume' it at weekend nights.

This situation is becoming a big reason for controversy between two local actors: the association of inhabitants and the association of commerce. On the one hand, the inhabitants complain about the negative effects of noise and filthiness of the streets on their well-being. They aim at impeding new bars from opening and at reduced opening times of the existing ones. On the other hand, the existing businesses are against the changes in opening hours of bars and they oppose the existence of convenience stores. These are considered to be 'unfair' competition because they sell drinks at lower prices although their maintenance, hygiene parameters and tax costs are different from a bar.

---

<sup>6</sup> Together with Cais de Sodré and Santos.



Figure 1: Plan of section of Bairro Alto, Lisbon, Portugal, showing the main streets, buildings and stages of town development. No scale. Source: Fabiana Pavel.

Besides this controversy, due to its history and central location, Bairro Alto is now being ‘consumed’ by property developers through the construction of luxury



condominiums and ‘charm’ hotels. The dubious use of the term ‘rehabilitation’ seeks to utilise the history of Bairro Alto as a marketing instrument, while there is nothing antique in the buildings but their facade.

Luxury condominiums are products targeting the upper middle class, just as the palaces of 1500. The condominiums, however, are closed, which entails non-relationship with the neighbourhood – they are like isolated islands, contrary to the old aristocratic palaces. In some cases (for example, Convento dos Inglesinhos), the residents have been trying to fight these condominiums. However, the critical awareness towards this situation has not yet developed a great deal.

This text has affirmed that there is a strong, distinct social and morphological identity in Bairro Alto, living through centuries, adapting itself to the socio-economic situations of each historical moment, yet remaining its true self, making the Bairro a historically cultural neighbourhood.



Figure 2: Plan of a section of Bairro Alto, Lisbon, Portugal, showing building measurements. Source: Fabiana Pavel.

While there are at present some venues and projects that promote the social and cultural aspects typical of the area, there is also a strong tendency to ‘consume’ that same identity, using it to sell luxury venues, nightlife spots, restaurants and *fado* houses devoid of the charisma and quality of yesteryear.

The old population is given scant possibilities to preserve its identity,<sup>7</sup> «in accordance with its own dynamics of reproduction and change». It is not feasible to regard «the conservation of the local identity» as an «anachronistic folkloric survival» since such an identity is a «factor – if not indeed a condition – of active social protagonism».<sup>8</sup>

If the phenomena of gentrification underway persist, we risk having a Bairro Alto transformed into an open-air museum for visitors, where we may only dine, listen to *fado* or have a drink before going back home.

---

<sup>7</sup> For example, the Gabinete Técnico Local (GTL – Local Technical Bureau) has done much work in favour of the residents.

<sup>8</sup> COSTA, 1999, *op. cit.*, p. 472.

## References

- ARAÚJO, Norberto de - *Peregrinações em Lisboa*. XV Vol. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1937).  
Lisbon: Veja, 1993.
- BARATA SALGUEIRO, Teresa – “Lisboa, metrópole policêntrica e fragmentada.”  
*Finisterra, Revista Portuguesa de Geografia*, XXXII, (63). Lisbon: 1997, pp.179-190.
- CÂMARA MUNICIPAL DE LISBOA - *Livro das Posturas Antigas*. Lisbon: Câmara Municipal  
de Lisboa, 1974.
- CARITA, Helder - *Bairro Alto Tipologias e Modos Arquitectónicos*. Lisbon: Câmara  
Municipal de Lisboa, 1990.
- CARITA, Helder – *Lisboa Manuelina e a formação de modelos urbanísticos da época  
moderna (1495-1521)*. Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1999.
- COSTA, António Firmino da - *Sociedade de Bairro. Dinâmicas Sociais da Identidade  
Cultural*. Oeiras: Celta Editora, 1999.
- CASTILHO, Júlio de - *Lisboa Antiga, O Bairro Alto*. Vol. 5 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1906).  
Lisbon: Oficinas gráficas da CML, 1954-1966.
- FRANÇA, José-Augusto – *Lisboa Pombalina e o Iluminismo*. Lisbon: Bertrand Editora, 3<sup>rd</sup>  
edição, 1987 (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1983).
- PAÍS, Maxado José – *A Prostituição e a Lisboa Bohemia. Do século XIX a inícios do  
século XX*. Porto: Ambar, 2008.

# GENTRIFICATION AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN BAIRRO ALTO: PRELUDE TO A CREATIVE DISTRICT

LISBON, PORTUGAL

LUÍS MENDES (CENTRO DE ESTUDOS GEOGRÁFICOS, INSTITUTO DE GEOGRAFIA E ORDENAMENTO DO TERRITÓRIO DA UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA, PORTUGAL)

Focusing on Bairro Alto's case study, this paper argues that gentrification as a trend of (re)investment in the city's historical centre is rooted on a reconfiguration of the social structure in the scope of a post-modern urban condition, which is increasingly associated with consumer culture, the aestheticisation of social life, but especially with a movement of cultural heritage. This movement is characterised by discourses and projects that advocate the rebuilding, preservation and revalorisation of diverse vestiges of the urban past, which are essential to reinvent the feeling of community and group cohesion that are crucial to assert the identity of a creative district.

Located in the pericentral and western area of Lisbon's downtown, Bairro Alto is one of the most traditional and popular neighbourhoods of Lisbon's historical centre, with its valued architecture and urban heritage where more than 500 years of history have unfolded. It had its origins in the 16th century, in the kitchen gardens and vineyards of a great estate that resulted from an allotment intervention. At that time, a new idea of city, as modern and rational, was asserted by the clarity of the geometrical tracing that took advantage of the good natural conditions of the place. From an architectural point of view, Bairro Alto is still nowadays an area of morphological coherence, characterised by great utility between the cohesive physical structure and a rich and heterogeneous urban image<sup>1</sup>.

Bairro Alto presents a social urban environment that is ethnically mixed and tolerant, refusing the conventional suburban normativity and the canons of the revanchist city. This environment attracts what is usually addressed as marginal gentrification. This movement corresponds, in general terms, to less privileged cohorts

---

<sup>1</sup> Matias Ferreira, V.; Calado, M. (1992), *Freguesia de Santa Catarina (Bairro Alto)*. Lisboa: Contexto Editora.

of the new middle classes that present a significant cleavage between high academic and cultural capital and low economic capital. These are individuals who are underemployed or temporarily employed in a precarious situation, but continue to prefer the central areas of the city to reside, becoming leading gentrifiers, presumably attracted by the non-conformist lifestyle offered by these areas. Single women, students, artists, gay and lesbian communities, and monoparental families are included in these groups<sup>2</sup>. There is a clear correspondence between the concept of marginal gentrifier and these individuals' preference to appropriate and reside in the city centre, what Richard Florida has called 'the creative class', and the privilege that this attributes to open, tolerant and plural communities<sup>3</sup>. Tolerance and diversity are key aspects to harnessing identities so they contribute to overall vitality and do not cause conflict and fragmentation<sup>4</sup>.

The distinctive urbanism of gentrification in Bairro Alto, as a critical and emancipatory practice, is the fact that marginal gentrifiers privilege diversity, tolerance, and the freedom of expression of different cultures and lifestyles, but also the architecture, heritage and urban specificity that characterise the identity of the historical centre, as in other traditional neighbourhoods of the city, such as Alfama or Mouraria. However, the difference between these areas and the Bairro Alto is that the latter has revealed typical features of a creative district since the beginning.

This is understood as a liminal emancipation space, as opposed to increasing social, cultural and lifestyle homogenisation and uniformity of suburban spaces and modern urbanism<sup>5</sup>. Its cultural heritage is very rich and that derives especially from the unique character of its urban forms. The image of its streets is built in a great variety of details, related to different architectural solutions that result from long-lasting sedimentations and from the corresponding stylistic evolution.

Bairro Alto's social mix has granted the neighbourhood a local and urban culture with specific characteristics, creating a great variety of expressions and cultural

---

<sup>2</sup> Mendes, L. (2008), *A Nobilitação Urbana no Bairro Alto: Análise de um Processo de Recomposição Socio-Espacial*. Tese de Mestrado. Departamento de Geografia da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa. Lisboa. (policopiado)

<sup>3</sup> Florida, R. (2002), *The Rise of the Creative Class. And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. Nova Iorque: Basic Books. Florida, R. (2004), *Cities and the Creative Class*. Nova Iorque: Routledge.

<sup>4</sup> Landry, Ch. (2008), *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*. Londres: Earthscan.

<sup>5</sup> Rodrigues, W. (2010), *Cidade em Transição. Nobilitação Urbana, Estilos de Vida e Reurbanização em Lisboa*. Oeiras: Celta Editora.

manifestations. At an earlier stage, Bairro Alto was occupied in the south by modest people linked to the sea and swiftly became a sought after place for the clergy and nobility who built a great number of palaces, convents and churches here. The other face of Bairro Alto, marginal and with its nightlife, gained its reputation from the constant armed robberies, conflicts and fights, making this area known for its bohemia and riotous populations. The ludic and inviting reputation that characterises the neighbourhood has also been shaped in the past decades through the existence of a great number of famous restaurants and neighbouring taverns – nowadays bars and pubs – and the places of cultural sessions, where famous literates, artists, politicians and journalists got together.

Despite being a repository of rooted and old manifestations and cultural traditions, Bairro Alto has in the past few years endured profound transformation of its social fabric with the arrival of new dwellers with distinctive lifestyles, as well as with the introduction of new commercial spaces aimed at new audiences who seek alternative cultural activities and practices. It is within this framework that the concept of gentrification appears as a process through which some groups have become central to the city as they have turned the city into a central place for themselves. They have done so not only from the point of view of a privileged residential location, but also through its usage, especially through its appropriation as a mark of social centrality (promoted by territorial centrality), the symbolic power that it assigns, and the social distinction it allows. We refer, in particular, to the so-called “new middle classes”, the main agents of a recentralisation movement that rediscover in the historical and/or architectural value of neighbourhoods the capacity to reinvent themselves at social and cultural levels. Yet, the city’s old neighbourhoods had been understood until recently as obsolete, outdated, non-practical, and unable of guaranteeing acceptable living conditions under contemporary circumstances. However, these have nevertheless, and increasingly so, provided the most adequate answers to the criticisms aimed at the new models proposed by modern urbanism and architecture. For instance, Ley (1996) argues four main factors that justify the residential location in the inner city, over the residence in the suburbs: the fact that the price of housing in those neighbourhoods be relatively acceptable taking into account the price commonly practised in the rest of the metropolitan area, the

possibility and potential of a long-term investment (especially with the current revaluation of those areas), a central location that facilitates access either to local employment, either to a more diversified offer of cultural and leisure services, and finally, the importance of architectural and historic character of the neighbourhoods. In this perspective, such as supporting other authors, the choice of residence in the old quarter implies either a choice in favour of economic benefits (and autonomy associated with ownership) or a choice of location in relation to centrality<sup>6</sup>.



Figure 1: Location of the area studied – Bairro Alto, in Lisbon's Metropolitan Area. Source: Author's elaboration (2008)

<sup>6</sup> Ley, D. (1996), *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

In the same way as other urban spaces, Bairro Alto is currently being subjected to a heritage quest that has been understood as a (post-modern?) reaction to the disappearance of “traditional ways of living”, to social atomisation, to the acceleration of modern life, to the contemporary unrootedness and hedonistic individualism, as well as to the space-time compression produced by globalisation. These phenomena homogenise urban landscapes and thus stimulate the desire of spatial distinction through local difference and identity distinctiveness. Nevertheless, it is certain that the refunctionalisation of this urban past for the creative class shifts between reactivation, reinvention and idealisation. It reveals the principle of cultural heritage since it may constitute both the discovery of something that already existed (but because it has ceased to be integrated in everyday life practices is rediscovered for new functions – a second life) and the manifestation of processes of invention, staging and simulation of local uniqueness and historical continuity.

When the reinvention of a past urbanity is referred to, it is important to stress the idea that gentrification, as it is presented and practised nowadays, is a “product” created by (and for) some of the highest social classes, serving their distinctive urges and social reproduction<sup>7</sup>. Besides, the reinvention of community feeling and group cohesion also serves the essential condition for Bairro Alto’s identity as a creative district as it stimulates consumption demand, leisure, tourism, and housing by specific cohorts of the population. This demand then promotes the appearance and sustainability of highly competitive and deeply spatialised clusters of cultural activities based on the agglomeration/centralisation of creativity and on the inter-relationships established between the different agents. The cultural activities that stand out in the neighbourhood these days are associated, on the one hand, to the historical clusters in the area (such as antiques, bookstores and the press and graphic editing), and the traditional small craft activities (bookbinders, restorers) that still manage to maintain their activity. However, on the other hand, the new cultural industries (fashion, nightlife, design, traditional commerce)<sup>8</sup> are increasingly highlighted.

---

<sup>7</sup> Hobsbawm, E.; Ranger, T. (1983), *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Jager, M. (1986), Class definition and the aesthetics of gentrification: Victoriana in Melbourne, in N. Smith; P. Williams (eds.), *Gentrification of the City*. Londres: Allen & Unwin, 78-91.

<sup>8</sup> Costa, P. (2007), *A Cultura em Lisboa. Competitividade e Desenvolvimento Territorial*. Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa. Costa, P. (2009), *Bairro Alto – Chiado. Efeitos de Meio e Desenvolvimento*



In conclusion, gentrification and cultural heritage go in tandem in Bairro Alto and create the ideal conditions to the formation, empowerment and support of a creative milieu that acts, on the one hand, as a collective space of aestheticised emancipation and, on the other hand, as a way of preserving the traditional identity and collective memory of this historical neighbourhood of Lisbon.

# THE UNUSUAL PATH OF 'RURAL URBANISATION': THE CREATIVE TRANSFORMATION OF PONTA DELGADA, THE AZORES

THE AZORES, PORTUGAL

**EMESE PANYIK** (CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PORTUGAL – UCP, BRAGA)

**CARLA MIGUEL** (CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PORTUGAL – UCP, BRAGA)

**ROSA VILAÇA** (CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PORTUGAL – UCP, BRAGA)

## 1. Introduction

While towns in continental Portugal struggle to emerge from the shadow of the two major cities, Lisbon and Porto, Ponta Delgada, the administrative capital of the Archipelago of the Azores has successfully leveraged its geopolitical position to derive economic, political and commercial benefits which transformed the once rural town into a vibrating cosmopolitan city. Located in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean almost half way between Europe and the United States, the Azores Islands have played a strategic role in the transatlantic transport and trade routes from as early as the Age of Discoveries (see Figure 1). Even today, the Azores remains subject to constant political negotiation due to its location on the boundaries between Portuguese and American spheres of interests, particularly with regard to the shared coordination of the Lajes Air Base since World War II.

The once small agricultural and fishing village of Ponta Delgada is now the most populated city of the Islands and a leading settlement in terms of economic activity. While back in the 1960s children used to rush down to the beach in between two classes to catch octopus for lunch, today, we are witnessing the dramatic changes induced by the inauguration of the post-modern multifunctional 'recreational marina'. This complex integrates a large-scale maritime terminal with an extensive leisure area that incorporates a pool, gardens, an underground car park, pavilions for cultural and sports events, galleries and a multitude of restaurants and shops.



Figure 1: The location of the Azores. Source: <http://www.europa-turismo.net/portugal-acoers.htm>

It has been widely accepted that creativity is closely linked to regeneration, as it often serves as a source of inspiration for creative transformation. The growing pressure for structural change on deprived rural or industrial areas may give rise to new, innovative ideas of development or alternative ways of restructuring. These creative elements are deeply rooted in the unique historic, geographical, social, cultural and economic characteristics of the area, which are, in turn, transformed into strategic leverage by creativity. Within this context, the present chapter aims to identify what factors have contributed to the creative transformation of Ponta Delgada and which are the unique aspects of this path of modernization. In order to answer these questions, it explores how the city’s specific characteristics have been used as a source of creativity in the urbanisation process of Ponta Delgada.

**2. The historic roots of creative transformation**

Ponta Delgada enjoys a prominent status as the administrative capital of the Regional Government for almost four decades. This privilege has been, however, gained historically by economic and political merits of the settlement earned throughout the past centuries.

Historically, the urbanisation of Ponta Delgada can be described by three milestones of transformation, which put the present political privileges and the large-scale creative investments into perspective. First, the rural village of Ponta Delgada became relatively early a growth pole of urbanisation soon after the Great Discoveries by the inclusion of the Americas in international commerce. The village became a prominent exportation partner of agricultural products, and by the 19th century, the city exerted control over the entire citrus exports to the United Kingdom. Second, on the basis of this pivotal role in international commerce, Ponta Delgada took over the intercontinental distribution of Atlantic navigation between four continents: Europe, America, Africa and Asia. Lastly, as a result of this evolving role the village was granted the status of a city in 1546 by King D. João II.

Undoubtedly, the ocean coast has always been a driver of urban transformation not only in Ponta Delgada but in the entire archipelago as well. The first agglomerations formed along the coastline as the international trade activity attracted considerable foreign-owned businesses. However it was only in the 20th century when the different districts that spread across the coastline have become integrated by a main avenue and by new circular roads that linked the scattered city districts (Figure 2). Centuries later, in 1976, the first shopping centre was erected also in front of the sea and named as the “Sun-Sea Tower”. Most recently, the new marina complex gave new functions to the seacoast. However, just as in the case of the Algarve in the south of continental Portugal, it was the opening of the international airport in Ponta Delgada that permitted the substantial growth of international tourism in the Azores.

### **3. Changing sectoral pattern of local economy as a pathway to creative industries**

While agriculture and fisheries have always been the pillars of economic activity, the expansion of the service sector in the second part of the 20th century became the main driver of urban concentration. After 1976 when the Azores became an autonomous region of Portugal, various public institutions have been established, including the University of the Azores. This new model of development led to the slowdown of the industrial sector and the deterioration of city areas where most industries were located. The expansion policy of agricultural production and monoculture farming centered on dairy products and beef converted the island

into an extensive grassland and dragged people into the main urban center: Ponta Delgada. Today, the city experiences the decline of agricultural production in parallel with the rise of a new alternative: tourism.



Figure 2: Coastline of Ponta Delgada in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and today. Source: Collection of the Public Library and Regional Archive of Ponta Delgada; Municipality of Ponta Delgada; <http://acoresapenoveilhas.blogspot.pt> by Nuno Ferreira

Although the number of arrivals is the lowest in the Azores as compared to the other regions and airports of Portugal (less than half million arrivals in 2012 ), and low-cost companies do not operate in the archipelago, local initiatives play a major role in expanding not only the national but also the international tourism flows. This has been evidenced by the fact that the Regional Tourism Organisation of the Azores announced to prepare a timetable of all

local events in 2014 together with the local entities and distribute it among the tourist operators of the main outbound markets.

Local events are considered as a major driving force of boosting tourism. In Ponta Delgada, the religious events look back to a long history: the feast of the Holy Christ of Miracles , which is the second largest religious festival in Portugal and the feast of Devotion to the Divine Holy Spirit are both 500 years old. Today, these festivals successfully integrate religious rituals with local folk art exhibitions and performances, including handicrafts made of basalt, sea shells and fish scale, jewelry design and local gastronomy. Typical local dishes, such as for example the Soup of the Divine Holy Spirit are distributed freely among the visitors. More recently, but with no less popularity, the annual “Walk & Talk” festival attracts growing number of visitors. Organised for the first time in 2011, the festival is dedicated to public art, gathering national and international artists and involving local communities in the co-creation experience. The activities consist the renovation of facades, street art, performances, concerts and workshops with the aim to create a new space for dialogue in arts, helping to position Ponte Delgada creatively in contemporary arts and introducing the city to its public and stakeholders.

Another creative tourism initiative is the “Festa Branca” or “White Party”, which was, for the first time organised in Ponta Delgada, during the inauguration of the city’s Coliseum Micaelense in 2006. For eight consecutive years, the Coliseum dresses in white hosting the event that has become the biggest summer festival in Ponta Delgada. In addition, a new event that has emerged in 2013 is the “Noites de Verão”, or “Summer Nights”, which spans virtually the entire summer from the beginning of July till mid-September. It hosted a Gourmet Market, which allowed local producers and businesses to promote their products, thereby contributing to the sustainability of the high-quality gourmet segment.

#### **4. From whale hunting to whale watching**

Whale hunting was one of the main sources of income of the population from the middle of the 19th century for more than hundred years, having driven the construction of several factories. Due to the growing environmental concerns in the 20th century, the United Nations established the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling in 1946. As a result

whale hunting ceased in the Azores in 1984. Despite the loss of income and the closing of factories, Ponta Delgada saw a unique opportunity boosting the regional economy by transforming hunting into the observation of whales. In only five years the end of whaling gave way to observation and research. These activities have ensured economic return by creating many companies, have educational aims and induce the flow of thousands of people. Even the captains of the former hunting vessels cooperate actively with whale watchers as tourist guides on the sea. This made the Azoreans to accept and embrace whale watching as an integral part of the Azorean life.

### **5. Urban Park: A creative path to urban sustainability?**

Linking social welfare with sustainable recreation, the concept of the Urban Park in Ponta Delgada serves as a creative example of sustainable management of large-scale, functionless and/or abandoned urban areas. The park was constructed in 2008 and it represents the highest municipal investment in the Azores of all times (Melo, 2007). With a territory of 50 hectares it is the biggest park not only in the city but in the entire archipelago as well, which involved the plantation of thousands of trees and altogether 53 species. The park was created as part of the sustainable development strategy of the city. It assumes complex functions in addition to pedestrian and bicycle routes, including a golf training zone, a multifunctional pavilion, lakes and areas designed for hosting events. Special attention was given to using traditional materials and preserving the current natural and architectural landscape.

### **6. Doors to the sea: 'Portas do Mar'**

The relation with the sea has played a crucial role in the transformation of the city's main avenue into a brand image. The "Portas do Mar" or "Doors to the sea" was a grandiose project inaugurated in 2008, with the aim to reconstruct the seafront of Ponta Delgada in a way to combine a modern maritime terminal and ferryboat rank with a leisure and commercial area. In order to develop a design suitable to create a city symbol, the project was developed by the well-known Portuguese architect, Manuel Salgado. As it can be seen on Figure 3, the multifunctional 'recreational marina' follows a post-modern, minimalist design which has become a new attraction and reference in tourism of the islands. This is in line with the main

goals of the city's urbanisation plan which aimed at the touristic and recreational utilisation of the seafront areas (Municipality of Ponta Delgada, 2000). Within this context, the main profile of the complex is catering, with an emphasis on local gastronomy. For example, the restaurant Anfiteatro, which belongs to the local Hospitality Vocational School, combines the traditional with contemporary cuisine. The importance of this recreational marina can be shown by the fact that in 2011 it hosted the event where "The seven wonders of Portugal" were announced, among them the "Lagoon of the Seven Cities" ("A Lagoa das sete Cidades") pertains to the area of Ponta Delgada.



Figure 3: The seafront of Ponta Delgada in the late 19th century and today. Source: Collection of the Public Library and Regional Archive of Ponta Delgada; <http://olhares.sapo.pt> by Helder Freitas.



## **7. Conclusions**

It is notable in the case of Ponta Delgada, that throughout its history the city has creatively leveraged its geographic assets, primarily its maritime location, and converted misfortunate historic events into political or economic advantages that boosted the modernisation process of the city. After the original capital of the Azores had been devastated by an earthquake in 1522, Ponta Delgada, the already flourishing merchant town was elevated to the status of a city. After bombardment during World War I, a naval base was established in the city which gave way to the rapid development of air transport. More recently, whale hunting was substituted by whale watching as an alternative to one of the oldest local economic activities.

The city's urbanisation has always been intimately related to the sea; in the past, when the first agglomerations were established along the coast; in the present, when a new seafont marina complex has become the main drive for the diversification of services and tourism development, and most likely it will remain in the future as well when sustainability issues will prevail. Ponta Delgada was the first city in Portugal to develop a local Agenda 21, dedicated to urban rehabilitation of its historic centre, and it created the largest urban park of the islands within this agenda. The actual trends of urbanisation suggest that future sustainable strategies will involve integrated land and sea use planning based on the diversification of service provision, and the emerging creative industries in the city play a strategic role in this regard.

## References

Melo, B. S. (2007) Parque Urbano de Ponta Delgada: Maior investimento camarário de sempre,

Correio dos Açores. Retrieved 03/2013 from

<http://www.correiodosacores.net/index.php?mode=noticia&id=1301>.

Municipality of Ponta Delgada (2000). Plano de Urbanização de Ponta Delgada e Áreas

Envolventes. Retrieved 03/2013, from <http://cm->

[pontadelgada.azoresdigital.pt/site/frontoffice/default.aspx?module=article/article&ismenu=](http://cm-pontadelgada.azoresdigital.pt/site/frontoffice/default.aspx?module=article/article&ismenu=1&id=81&ismenu=1&menuleft=0&idterceironivel=140)

[1&id=81&ismenu=1&menuleft=0&idterceironivel=140](http://cm-pontadelgada.azoresdigital.pt/site/frontoffice/default.aspx?module=article/article&ismenu=1&id=81&ismenu=1&menuleft=0&idterceironivel=140).

# ALAMEDA DE HERCULES

SEVILLA, SPAIN

GUIDO CIMADOMO

PILAR MARTÍNEZ PONCE

Alameda de Hercules, built in 1574 over the earlier known *Stink Pond*, was until the Romantic era the favorite place for the aristocracy of Seville to meet: a tree-covered promenade, with more than 1,700 trees, fountains and columns taken from an ancient Roman temple. From the 19th century, with the expansion to the south of the city and the creation of new aristocratic parks, Alameda had started to decay, becoming an unsafe place during the day and especially at night.

During the 1960s this neighborhood already lost all its enchantment; buildings and villas were demolished and replaced by smaller and more cost-effective apartments, and any cultural activity disappeared, replaced by insecurity, prostitution, drugs, etc.

Only in the 1990s, with the European support of the Urban Plan Project, the situation changed again, not only making the whole district a safer place to live, but also realising the infrastructures needed to dynamically revive the area. The central piece of this process was the renovation of the Alameda de Hercules, a project that despite its conception as a hard square, with the once prosperous trees reduced to a few lines of poplars, made the revitalisation of the area possible. An attractive place for neighbors and tourists to enjoy its bars, cultural activities, and a number of shops that distinguish themselves because of the alternative characteristics of its objects and products.

This regeneration made possible a renewed interest to live in the district for a new profile of people, mostly professionals (lawyers, architects, professors, etc.), artists and white-collar workers. The peculiar aspect that we can observe in this district is that gentrification has not appeared here like in many similar cases around the world, probably thanks to a particularly open character that could be defined as “street culture.” Here everybody is enriched by the experiences of others because the city of Seville is like a village, and each one expresses his way of life that is accepted as natural, and at the same time influences his neighbors, no matter what his social or economic status. This heterogeneous mixture of cultures facilitate these exchanges: it is easy to hear spoken English, German or Gipsy. We can identify the street (*la calle*) as the main element that is used by everybody, and is considered as the extension of one’s own living room. A place to talk, have discussions, where new ideas arise and are started: whether they are original, utopian, brilliant or meaningless, it does not really matter.

The most relevant aspect to understand this neighborhood is undoubtedly the stratification of activities that coexist and evolve, where the newest are an evolution of the historic ones, but do not exclude the latter. For example, we can still find the historic typology of *corrala*, wide spaces for art in the courtyards of the biggest buildings, but also new buildings that offer a range of residences and spaces for new modern activities, jewelry, artists and cooking labs, offering the possibility to live and work in the same building.

The open-air spaces are also the setting for multiple public activities, periodically celebrating, amongst other things, puppet shows, dance festivals and sports activities or organic food markets. But in the same places, and often at the same time, we can also attend activities organised by private people like birthday parties, collective t'ai chi trainings, or the Thursday Market, the oldest in the city dating from the 13th century, when Fernando III conquered the city and where it is possible to find antiquities, second-hand objects and where haggling is a must.



Figure 1. XXXIII International Puppets Festival : Las hazañas del caballero de la Mancha by Compañía El Carromato.  
Photo: Pilar Martínez.

The urban morphology of the district, with old and new squares, narrow streets and public courtyards, is a great stage to films, and we can either come across the making of a Hollywood production or a film being developed in the streets and bars we were talking before. So we can find Tom Cruise and Cameron Díaz on the set of *Knight & Day* (2010), local director Santi Amodeo's *Who killed Bambi?* being recorded, or some Bollywood production that showed interest in establishing more Indian audio-visual recordings in the city. Local actors, directors and scriptwriters are gaining a position in this hard business thanks to original ideas that cannot be developed in more traditional and conformist environments, and the support of the Sevilla Film Office.

Voluntary associations have an important role in the life of the district, gathering the neighbors to share their personal interests but also lobby for public interests such as the conservation of the city's heritage. In this way it was possible to save relevant industrial buildings, like the *Fabrica de Sombreros* or archaeological sites from the real estate agents' and developers' pressures. The use of these spaces for public activities is really important, like in the case of green spaces or vegetable patches that open to the neighbors, in a dense urban built environment that has its origin in the Middle Ages and cannot offer many green spaces to its inhabitants. Other buildings of the early 20th century, great examples of the regionalism or rationalism styles, are, however, mostly abandoned, waiting to be rehabilitated, recover their ancient glory and offer new settings for coming activities. These same voluntary associations face the globalisation challenges and the politics established by the multinational companies that are imposing rules at all levels: a few months ago in the Pumarejo square, one of the hottest spots during the Republic Period, a new market was set up, where all kind of handicrafts, but also time and professional services like babysitting, nursing or caring for the elderly, or repair and maintenance jobs are bought and exchanged with a new symbolic coin, the Puma. It is based on the complementary coins system LETS CES, a public domain exchange system, not run by any entity with interests far from the communities in which it operates. A share of the total amount of the service or good is paid with this coin based on the mechanism of exchange, which ensures that simply keeping track of who receives what from whom, it is possible to create an environment of openness and transparency, building community and fostering local production and consumption. It is a way to reclaim social values that our contemporary society is forgetting like improving the relations between neighbors, empowering the neighborhood, and retaining the richness created among the residents.



Figure 2. Claim against the construction of a new parking. Photo: Pilar Martínez.

In such a district artistic activities are widely intertwined with the life of the neighborhood. The few official galleries (a kind of activity that is disappearing from the city) are being substituted by bars, shops and bookshops that offer an informal space to artists in which they can present their works, keeping up a creative tension that positively influences the community's daily life at every single hour.

A varied mix of people, from the traditional to the most modern, come together in the Alameda district, generating new activities and new shared and participatory ways to experience the city. If Seville is known for being traditional, this district is really different from the rest of the city, and without a doubt the most dynamic and creative of them all.

# THE OUSEBURN VALLEY

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

JAMES WHITING (UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND, UK)

## Introduction

The Ouseburn Valley in Newcastle upon Tyne has developed from being one of the earliest zones of industrial production in England to, in recent decades, a creative hub for the city of Newcastle upon Tyne and the wider north-eastern region of England. This case study offers an overview of the development of this creative quarter, and then offers some discussions on how changes in this bohemia in recent years are viewed ambivalently by some of the earlier artist settlers in the Valley. Through this discussion we are able to see how gentrification trajectories in the Ouseburn Valley, understood as processes of commercialisation and regulation, challenge the place meaning of the Valley to earlier artist 'settlers' as a space of non-regulated or lesser regulated artistic and lifestyle expression. Changes in the Valley that are related to gentrification processes are its increasing popularity as a specific location in Newcastle's night-time economy; increasing focus on the Valley, on behalf of the local authority, as a centre for economic growth fuelled by creative industry; tourism in the Valley; and larger numbers of creative businesses and residential dwellings in the Valley and immediate surroundings leading to inflation in property prices and rents.

## The Ouseburn Valley

The lower Ouseburn Valley lies around a mile to the East of Newcastle upon Tyne city centre. The industrial age architecture of the Valley is a legacy of the area's role in the early industrial revolution in Newcastle, some of it dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Valley used to be a centre of glassmaking, pottery, flax manufacture, lead working, tanning and, due to its proximity to the River Tyne, coal transportation and warehouses for the export of the city's produce (Morgan 1995). Due to changes of scale and location of industrial production in the region, the Valley's decline predates the wider general decline of Newcastle and the wider Tyneside area. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century areas in direct proximity to the Valley were used as tipping grounds, and due to unsanitary living conditions, residential

clearances in the Valley were conducted in both the 1930s and 1960s. A mixture of general neglect and landscaping over the rubbish tips in the area meant that by the 1970s and early 1980s the area was a mixture of dilapidated industrial age architecture, urban green spaces and small-scale auto shops, transportation firms, manufacturing enterprises and breakers yards. A number of the Valley's pubs had also survived the earlier exodus of industry and residents.

### **Artist Settlers and the Valley as a Bohemia**

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw the opening of a city farm in the Valley, followed by the creation of an artists' cooperative – 36 Lime Street Studios – in the old Cluny Whisky warehouse building in the centre of the area, which also incorporated a theatre space. Artists, attracted by the low rent offered by the area and the appeal of the post-industrial urban aesthetics and the greenery of the landscaped sections of the Valley were joined by a practice and recording studio in 1990, and these years also saw the emergence of a festival in the Valley (Ouseburn Trust 2012). In 1988 the East Quayside Group was established, an advocacy body consisting of local residents, artists and the church that sought to preserve the unique industrial heritage and greenery of the area from the machinations of the Tyne and Wear UDC's regeneration of the adjacent Newcastle Quayside<sup>1</sup> into a centre of leisure consumption and business services provision with a 'glass and chrome' waterfront aesthetic (Langley and Robinson ND). The early 1990s also saw the creation of a heritage group in the area, partly formed in reaction to fire settings in the Valley that the founding members saw as attempts by unscrupulous property developers to raise certain of the industrial edifices to the ground to create space for new development. The mid-1990s saw the transformation of the East Quayside Group into the Ouseburn Trust, a charitable organisation tasked with the preservation of the Valley's character and the sustainable regeneration of the area (Ouseburn Trust 2012).

The period since the Millennium has witnessed an increasing momentum of change in the Valley (Ouseburn Trust 2012). The Valley's profile as a centre of leisure consumption and as a centre for creative industries has been raised considerably, and in the year 2000 the local authority granted the area a conservation status due to its architectural and

---

<sup>1</sup> See Byrne (1999) for an overview of Tyne and Wear Urban Development Corporation (TWDC) and Wilkinson (1992) for discussions of the Quayside more specifically.



environmental qualities. In 1999 the Cluny Bar and art gallery opened, in the same building as 36 Lime Street Studios; a venue promoting alternative music, and it was expanded in 2004. This period also witnessed the opening of a number of studio art galleries including the Mushroom Works (2004), the Biscuit Factory (2006) and the Artworks Gallery<sup>2</sup> (2006), as well as a number of public art projects in the Valley, signifying that the 'artistic mode of production' (Zukin 1989) had arrived in Newcastle, and that the 'creative class' (Florida 2002) were alive and well in this northern English city.

The development of the Valley as a creative district with strong elements of leisure, tourist and heritage development<sup>3</sup> was strongly supported by Newcastle City Council in this period (Newcastle city council 2003; 2012), and it is clear that this once neglected and polluted area of the city was now, through creative industries, to play a key role in urban regeneration; by the early 2000s the area was also seen by some as an 'alternative' nightlife drinking circuit in Newcastle (Chatterton and Hollands 2001). Recent years have also witnessed the opening of a centre for the children's book *Seven Stories*, the expansion of a stables and horse-riding school in the area and the renovation and reopening of Byker City Farm as Ouseburn Farm. In 2009 a barrage was opened on the Ouseburn River (Newcastle City Council 2008), allowing for the water level of this contributory to the Tyne to be controlled – and raising suspicions amongst some that the area was being primed for 'waterfront development'. In 2012 a large space for technologically oriented creative industries was opened – the Toffee Factory. Although residential development in the Valley has been limited, such is the appeal of the area to creative workers and broader groups of users that a new housing development is being planned for the Valley (Proctor 2013).

---

<sup>2</sup> The Artworks Gallery has since closed for financial reasons brought on by flattening demand due to the financial crisis. It was a gallery run on the premise of affordable display spaces for artists, with the gallery taking the full rent for space only when an artist had managed to sell a work. One artist interviewed as part of my research project lost money and work in the liquidation. The previous owner of the gallery – himself an artist – has since relocated to a small town near Newcastle upon Tyne and has set up a small gallery space; mainly to display and sell his own work.

<sup>3</sup> See Richards and Wilson 2007, and Richards 2011 for broader accounts of the growing attractiveness of creative districts to tourists and leisure users.



The Ouseburn Valley, left to right: 36 Lime Street Artists' cooperative and studios; a view of the Valley from Byker Bridge; greenery and animals in the Valley. Source: Author.

### **Artists' Perceptions of Change**

Smith (2002) suggests that although artists are often seen to be central (and unwitting or unwilling) agents of place change, and gentrification or regeneration trajectories of urban areas (see Clay 1979; Zukin 1989; Caulfield 1989; Ley 1996; 2003), their views of these processes are often ignored. More recently, artists have been corralled into a segment within a very broad definition of a 'creative class' (Florida 2002), even though this conceptual category may be ill-defined (Peck 2005), and may ignore the differences between artists and other 'creative workers' (Markusen 2006), as the former are often bearers and promoters of romantically inflected *critical* discourses and practices in the modern world (Markusen 2006; Blanning 2010; Siegel 1986). Participant observation and interviews in the Ouseburn Valley suggest that many artists in the area are ambivalent or critical of the developments that the location has seen in recent years, as commercialisation, through the development of the leisure economy and property speculation, and regulation through increased interest on behalf of developers and the local state have become more prominent. These changes have curtailed the opportunities for autonomy, spontaneous self-expression and 'freedom' that the earlier dilapidated Valley, not yet under the gaze of developers and the council, offered to counterculturally inflected artists. Some earlier settlers to the Valley have also experienced displacement, due to inflation of rent space and change of land use directives.

Although many of the artists in the Valley, especially ones with experiences and memories of the place stretching back to the 1990s and in some cases the 1980s or even

late 1970s, suggest that development in the Valley has been beneficial in terms of clearing pollution away from the area (left behind by lead-working and other industrial processes), and the growth of a much larger community offers opportunities for networking and work, there is also a sense of 'loss' in many accounts of change. For many working artists in the Valley, the greenery of the location, the presence of animals (due to the stables and the farm), the river, and the presence of industrial age architecture are still appreciated. These features clearly demark the Valley as a place of distinction in opposition to the commercial centre of Newcastle and the 'glass and chrome' edifices of the regenerated Newcastle Quayside and bestow a sense of place on the Valley. This sense of place that is often contrasted by the Valley's users and workers with a 'generic' (Florida 2002) or non-place (Augé 1995) that is perceived to be present in other parts of the city. Although sharing a general dislike of 'generic' consumption-scapes and mass produced modern architectures, critiques that respectively are shared with the broader 'creative class' (Florida 2002), and previously held views of artists in relation to modern planning and suburbs (Ley 1996; Kaufman 2004; Giles 2004; Kenyon 2004), interviewees clearly stated that they have ambivalent attitudes towards the development of the Valley as a place of popular leisure consumption and creative industries.

The gentrification or regeneration of the Valley was seen to have heralded a new form of inhabitant, a creative worker more aligned to business philosophies than the 'traditional' critical-romantic ideoscapes of modern artists. One artist, interviewed as part of my doctoral research<sup>4</sup>, suggested that he didn't like 'all the 'suits' coming into the Valley these days", whilst another commented, ironically, that the Valley was a good place if "you need to get an advertising firm or a graphic designer". Another respondent suggested that a "different tier of creative worker" has come into the Valley more recently, on that was perhaps "less idealistic", whilst one of the earliest 'artist settlers' suggested that "it's all about money [in the Valley] these days". The 'commercialisation' of the Valley was also linked to the growth of the area as a popular leisure resource – especially for drinking in the Valley's pubs. Although many respondents still greatly valued the pubs in the Valley, there were concerns, in the words of one interviewee that "the masses are coming down here now", and that elements of antisocial behaviour commonly associated with certain areas of

---

<sup>4</sup> I gained my PhD in late 2012, graduating in July of 2013.

Newcastle city centre were beginning to enter the Valley. One respondent, with a long association with the Valley, suggested that the Ouseburn Festival, once, in their view a festival focused on “grassroots community building” was now “odious ... money-making” and intimated humorously “I call it the Boozeburn Festival!”

As well as a more commercial ethic entering the Valley, many artists with longer associations with the area also commented on increasing regulation. Regulation, due to greater interest in the space on behalf of developers, and importantly the local state, was seen to have grown in a number of ways. Pressures on banal activities such as car parking charges (where, in the older ‘emptier’ space of the Valley there used to be none) were commented on, as were health and safety regulations that were now required for the staging of events at the festival. A number of respondents commented on the practice of ‘fire setting’ at summer solstice, that had been a fairly frequent practice in the Valley. It wasn’t deemed possible these days for in the words of one of the interviewees “the police would be here in 5 minutes!” The conservation status awarded by the local authority in 2000 was also viewed ambivalently by one respondent who suggested that making impromptu fences or minor changes to the landscape was not possible anymore; “the Do-It-Yourself spirit has gone” commented another. One early settler suggested that bureaucratic machinations over development, although necessary due to the increasing pressure on space in the Valley meant that the ‘thick bonds’ of a fairly autonomous artistic community in the Valley had to a degree been weakened; the past may have seen the Valley as a dirty, polluted post-industrial space but it also contained the possibilities for, in their words, “lots of crazy anarchic stuff” to occur.

## **Conclusions**

This brief look at the development of the Lower Ouseburn Valley in Newcastle upon Tyne has shown how a derelict post-industrial space in a provincial English city has, through recent decades, transformed from a zone inhabited by a small number of artists, to being a focus for property development, creative industries and leisure consumption. In a broad sense then we can see that the development of the Ouseburn Valley echoes the well-worn theoretical path of ‘stage theories’ of gentrification; artists forge a new sense of desirability and safeness to previously dilapidated urban areas, and then broader groups of users and also larger amounts of capital investment and property development/speculation follow.

This case study though gives voice to the views of artists on the merits of such processes, where they have often, in the past, been ignored or assumed. This chapter has also pointed to how working artists can often have ambivalent views towards other 'members' of 'the creative class', and as such supports work by Peck (2005) and more specifically Markusen (2006) in problematizing this category. We have also seen how processes of gentrification or regeneration may affect the *desirability* of a place in the eyes of artist settlers. Even without the much more serious threat of displacement, places like the Ouseburn Valley that have become more commercially orientated and more regulated due to processes of gentrification can threaten the 'ontological' values of 'freedom', 'authenticity' and 'self-expression' so valued by modern artists.

## References

- Augé, M. (1995). *Non-places: Introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity*. Verso: London.
- Byrne, D. (1999). Tyne and Wear UDC – turning the uses inside out: active de-industrialisation and its consequences. Ch 5. pp. 128-145. In Imrie, R. and Thomas, H. (Eds). *British Urban Policy*. SAGE: London.
- Caulfield, J. (1989). Gentrification and desire. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*. 26, 617-32.
- Chatterton, P. & Hollands, R. (2001). *Changing our 'Toon' – Youth, Nightlife and Urban Change in Newcastle*. University of Newcastle: Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Clay, P. (1979). *Neighbourhood Renewal: Middle-Class Resettlement and Incumbent Upgrading in American Neighbourhoods*. D.C. Heath: Lexington. pp. 30-33 In Lees, L., Slater, T. and Wylie, E. (2008). *Gentrification*. Routledge: London.
- Florida, R. (2002). *The rise of the creative class: and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life*. Basic Books: New York.
- Giles, J. (2004). *The Parlour and The Suburb, Domestic Identities, Class, Femininity and Modernity*. Berg: Oxford.
- Kauffman, E. P. (2004). *The Rise and Fall of Anglo America*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass.
- Kenyon, A. M. (2004). *Dreaming Suburbia: Detroit and the production of post-war space and culture*. Wayne State University Press: Detroit.
- Langley, B. and Robinson, P. (No Date). *Sustainability and Regeneration in the East End of Newcastle*. No publisher or place of publication.
- Ley, D. (1996) *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City*. OUP: Oxford.
- Ley, D. (2003). Artists, Aestheticisation and the Field of Gentrification. *Urban Studies*. Vol. 40. No. 12. pp. 2527-2544
- Markusen A. (2006). Urban development and the politics of a creative class: evidence from a study of artists. *Environment and Planning A*. Vol. 38. No. 10. pp.1921-1940.
- Morgan, A. (1995). *Bygone Lower Ouseburn*. Newcastle City Libraries and Arts: Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Newcastle City Council (2003). *Regeneration Strategy for Lower Ouseburn Valley*. Newcastle City Council: Newcastle upon Tyne.

- Newcastle City Council (2008). *Ouseburn Barrage: A Newcastle City Council Regeneration Project*. Newcastle City Council: Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Newcastle City Council (2012). *Ouseburn Regeneration and Action Plan*. Newcastle City Council: Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Peck, J. (2005). Struggling with the creative class. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 29. No. 4. pp.740-770.
- Proctor, K. (2013). 'Ouseburn Valley homes are given the go-ahead'. *The Journal*. 07 January 2013. Accessed 25 March 2013. <<http://www.journallive.co.uk/north-east-news/todays-news/2013/01/07/ouseburn-valley-homes-are-given-the-go-ahead-61634-32555892/>>
- Richards, G. and Wilson, J. (2007) Tourism development trajectories: from culture to creativity? Ch.1. pp.1-34. In Richards, G. and Wilson, J. (Eds.) *Tourism Creativity and Development*. Routledge: London.
- Richards, G. (2011). Creativity and Tourism: the State of the Art. *Annals of Tourism Research* Vol. 38. No. 4. pp. 1225-1253.
- Smith, D. (2002). Extending the temporal and spatial limits of gentrification: a research agenda for population geographers. *International Journal of Population Geography*. Vol. 8. pp. 385-394.
- Wilkinson, S. (1992). Towards a New City? A Case Study of Image-Improvement Initiatives in Newcastle upon Tyne. In Healey, P. et al. *Rebuilding the City: Property Led Urban Regeneration*. London: Spon.
- Zukin, S. (1989). *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Rutgers University Press. New Brunswick.

# EAST-WEST IDENTITIES AND CREATIVE FUSIONS IN LONDON'S 'ASIAN QUARTERS'

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

STEPHEN J. SHAW (CITIES INSTITUTE, LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY, UK)

This paper discusses districts in London whose reputation rests on the creative drive of residents with cultural roots in the Indian sub-continent. As in other cities that are gateways to immigration and settlement, their colourful cityscapes are promoted as vibrant and exotic places to visit. A positive outcome is that former associations with the poverty and hardships experienced by many immigrant communities in the comparatively recent past have been overwritten with more optimistic place-narratives. The main case study of Brick Lane showcases *Banglatown: London's curry capital*, and celebrates the contribution of British Asians to the life of the contemporary city. However, it also highlights new tensions that may arise. Two further case studies of Green Street, Newham and Southall Broadway illustrate alternative strategies for development and promotion of creative districts associated with Asian communities in London.

Robertson (1992: 173-4) emphasises some inherent ambiguities in the evolving concept of 'glocalisation': the co-presence of *universalising and particularising* tendencies of local-global exchange that may feature *altruistic as well as commercial* characteristics. As Lin (2011: 48-50) points out in his discussion of the 'power of ethnic places', the former includes social movements that make reference to universal Human Rights that protect the identity of particular groups. These, in their turn, have inspired 'roots' movements that have played a leading role in 'discovering' the traditions and continuing creativity of ethnic minorities in urban neighbourhoods, such as Los Angeles Chinatown. Commercial drivers of local-global exchange include intermediaries, who diversify a co-ethnic customer base for goods and services, adapting selected products to the tastes of mainstream majority culture, other ethnic minorities, and in some cases international tourists.



In recent years, there has been a greater questioning of adaptations that reinforce stereotypes and 'package a racialized construct tuned to multicultural consumption' (Jacobs 1996: 100). In contrast, there is increasing interest in innovative interactions *between* cultures (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). For example, the City of Birmingham in the UK has capitalised British *Bhangra* music and dance, and cuisine that features the *Birmingham Balti* and *halal Chinese* (Henry et al. 2002). Further, the 'creative' turn of leisure and tourism has brought a shift away from passive consumption, blurring boundaries between production and consumption (Richards and Raymond 2000; Richards and Wilson 2006). The significance of these trends is explored in the cases below.

Brick Lane in Spitalfields - less than two miles (three km) east of the City of London's financial quarter - has been a hub for the commercial, social and religious activities of successive waves of immigrants. As the long established Jewish community moved away in the 1970s, the neighbourhood accommodated newcomers from Bangladesh. At first a mainly bachelor society, many of the young men found work in textile factories, but global competition led to closures and rising unemployment. Further, the street attracted unwelcome visitors from race-hate groups, and violent scenes of conflict were broadcast through the news media. Somewhat against the odds, by the mid 1990s a handful of Bangladeshi-owned cafés were attracting non-Asian customers and a few adventurous tourists. The area also attracted artists and designers from the majority culture and counter-cultural followers who gave the street a certain *shabby chic*.

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH), in partnership with public, third sector and commercial agencies, gave strong support to the emerging visitor economy and 'creative' industries, and secured Government funding from the 'Single Regeneration Budget' for area-based development and promotion (Shaw 2012). By 2002 there were over 40 curry restaurants whose customers were 'overwhelmingly White', with around 70% in the 25-34 age group' (Carey 2002: 4). Further developments included design studios and exhibition space in a converted brewery, boutique style clothing shops and nightclubs; streetscape enhancements included ornamental arches and lamp posts with 'Asian style' motifs (Shaw 2008; 2013). Place promotion included re-branding of the street as *Banglatown*, a new rival to London's

West End Chinatown, and two 'multicultural' festivals were established: the Brick Lane Festival (autumn) and *Baishakhi Mela* (spring).



Figure 1. Brick Lane: London's 'New East End' (1). Source: Author.

The transformation of Brick Lane dramatically improved popular perceptions of the area. The mix of design studios and boutiques, curry restaurants and other evening entertainment attracted higher-spending visitors, generated badly-needed employment, and encouraged investment in neglected commercial buildings. Nevertheless, the regeneration strategy proved deeply controversial. The 'Restaurant Zone', stimulated by business grants and relaxation of planning controls, led to something of a gold rush; pioneering innovations in ethnic cuisine gave way to serial reproduction of a successful formula. Discounting of menus and street canvassing of prospective customers by waiters suggested over-supply of an undifferentiated product. Local opinions became polarised when a group of restaurateurs lobbied LBTH to give the visitor economy a further boost by creating a pedestrian mall for outdoor dining and drinking, but the proposal was dropped after a stormy public meeting.



Figure 2. Brick Lane: London's 'New East End' (2). Source: Author.

Extensive consultation on the future of *Banglatown* in the early 2000s highlighted much wider concerns of residents, small businesses and community organisations over the presence of high spending, non-Asian 'tourists'. Neither the restaurant trade, nor the fashionable 'designer' scene had much connection with the low-income communities in adjacent social housing to the east of Brick Lane: two very separate 'worlds' depicted in Monica Alli's (2003) novel *Brick Lane*. The unintended consequences of the *Banglatown* project include issues which have required attention by LBTH and other public agencies over the past decade (Shaw 2011, 2012, 2013):

- a) Noise, nuisance and crime associated with the night economy, including drug dealing and prostitution;
- b) Loss of convenience shops serving the local community;
- c) Displacement of local residents, especially older women of Bangladeshi origin, from the public realm of Brick Lane and surrounding streets;

d) Inappropriate juxtaposition of the 'party zone' and worship at the London *Jamme Masjid* (Great Mosque) in Brick Lane.

Six miles (nine km) east of central London, residents in the neighbourhoods around Green Street, London Borough of Newham, were predominantly White working class. However, following closure of nearby docks and factories in the 1970s, this population began to move away and the area became more ethnically mixed. Asian entrepreneurs expelled from Uganda became key agents that revitalised the commercial street and by the 1990s pioneers among them were developing successful jewellery businesses targeted at wealthier Asian customers across London (Shaw et al. 2004). By the early 2000s, Green Street became more widely known as the 'new Asian Bond Street', famed for its innovative fashion clothing and jewellery that fuses Eastern and Western influences, and which attracts both Asians and non-Asians to the locality. Unlike *Banglatown*, its promoters eschewed the idea of associating Green Street with one minority, nor did they wish to create a 'curiosity' (Shaw and Bagwell 2012). Instead, streetscape enhancements such as murals symbolise 'togetherness', while street festivals foreground the area's cultural diversity e.g. Afro-Caribbean and Central European music (Shaw and Bagwell 2012: 44-5).



Figure 3. Brick Lane: London's 'New East End' (3). Source: Author.

Southall Broadway, London Borough of Ealing, is eleven miles (seventeen km) west of central London, and close to Heathrow Airport. From the 1960s, job opportunities attracted immigrants, the majority of whom came from the Indian Punjab. Unfortunately, like Brick Lane, the locality became a focus for racist intimidation and violence. Nevertheless, Southall has developed a strong local economy, and today, it is an important shopping and entertainment centre with a colourful array of food, jewellery and fabric shops for Punjabis and other minorities. The 'Southall experience' also attracts some visitors from the mainstream majority, e.g. for *Little India* walking tours by a well-known cookery writer, and to purchase



spices. Nevertheless, a campaign in the 1990s to brand it '*Punjabi Bazaar*' was unsuccessful. Instead, the *Southall Town Centre Strategy 2002-12* has promoted it as an 'international gateway for excellence in multiculturalism, commercial development', linked through the airport to Asia's rising 'tiger' economies. Major players include and Noon Foods and Sunrise Radio, symbols of a very different enterprise to those visited on the *Little India* tour (Shaw and Bagwell 2012: 46-7).

Figure 4. Brick Lane: London's 'New East End' (3).

Source: Author.

As Landry and Bianchini (1995: 28) commented '[s]ettled immigrants are outsiders and insiders at the same time... they have different ways of looking at problems and different priorities. They can give a creative impulse to a city'. The creative districts described above illustrate the significance of global-local exchange

initiated by ethnic minority residents of gateway cities such as London: transnational communities who maintain close links with their homelands. Comparison of Brick Lane, Green Street and Southall Broadway, and their respective development over the last 30-40 years, illustrates the unintended consequences that may arise, and which need to be addressed. It highlights dissatisfaction with well-worn stereotypes and the significance of creative intercultural fusions that appeal to diverse co-ethnic, mainstream and other visitors. Increasingly, 'creative tourists' seek satisfying experiences that involve them, and which offer deeper insights into local-global influences that endow a sense of place. Above all, sustainable development of creative districts in ethnic minority neighbourhoods requires the goodwill and long-term commitment of 'host' communities: local residents, firms and other stakeholders who provide the drive to innovate and adapt.



Figure 5. Brick Lane: London's 'New East End' (3). Source: Author.

## References

- Ali, M. (2003) *Brick Lane*, London: Doubleday;
- Bloomfield, J. and Bianchini, F. (2004) *Planning for the Intercultural City*, Stroud: Comedia;
- Carey, S. (2002) *Brick Lane, Banglatown: A Study of the Catering Sector, final report*, Research Works Limited, Hendon, London: prepared for Ethnic Minority Enterprise Project and Cityside Regeneration;
- Henry, N., McEwan, C. and Pollard, J. S. (2002) 'Globalisation from below: Birmingham – post-colonial workshop of the world?' *Area*, 34 (2), pp. 117-12;
- Jacobs, J. M. (1996) *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City*, London and New York: Routledge Jacobs 1996: 100);
- Landry, C. and Bianchini, F. (1995) *The Creative City*, London: Demos;
- Lin, J. (2011) 'The Power of Ethnic Places: Cultural Heritage and Community Life', London and New York: Routledge;
- Richards, G. and Raymond, C. (2000) *Creative Tourism*, ATLAS news (23), 16-20;
- Richards, G. and Wilson, J. (2006) 'Developing Creativity in tourist experiences: A solution to the serial reproduction of culture?' *Tourism Management*, 27, pp. 1209-1223.
- Robertson, R. (1992) *Globalisation: Social Theory and Global Culture*, London: Sage Publications;
- Shaw, S. (2013) 'Ethnic Quarters: Exotic Islands or Hotbeds of Transnational Innovation', pp. 339-345, in M. Smith and G. Richards (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Cultural Tourism*, London and New York: Routledge;
- Shaw, S. (2012) 'Faces, Spaces, and Places: Social and cultural impacts of street festivals in cosmopolitan cities', pp. 401-415, in S. Page and J. Connell (Eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Events*, Routledge: London and New York;
- Shaw, S. (2011) 'Marketing Ethnoscapes as Spaces of Consumption: Banglatown - London's Curry Capital', *Journal of Town and City Management*, Volume 1, number 4, March-May, pp. 381-395;
- Shaw, S. (2008) 'Hosting a Sustainable Visitor Economy: Messages from London's Banglatown', *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal*, Volume 1, Number 3, December/January, pp. 275-285;

Shaw, S. and Bagwell S. (2012) 'Ethnic Minority Restaurateurs and the Regeneration of "Banglatown" in London's East End', pp. 34-51, in V. Aytar and J. Rath (Eds.) *Selling Ethnic Neighborhoods: The Rise of Neighborhoods as Places of Leisure and Consumption*, New York: Routledge.

Shaw, S., Bagwell, S. and Karmowska, J. (2004) 'Ethnoscapes as Spectacle: Re-imagining Multicultural Districts as New Destinations for Leisure and Tourism Consumption', *Urban Studies*, 41 (10), pp. 1983-2000.



# CUSTARD WITH THE COLOURFUL TASTE OF CREATIVITY

BIRMINGHAM, UNITED KINGDOM

PETER HORSTEN (NHTV BREDA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, THE NETHERLANDS)

PETER VAN DER AALST (NHTV BREDA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, THE NETHERLANDS)

## Revitalising Birmingham, transforming Digbeth

The Big City Plan, launched September 2010, sets out how the city centre of Birmingham will be redeveloped and revitalised over the next 20 years. The plan identifies five key areas of development potentially worth £10 billion. Aims of this ambitious plan are to increase the size of the city core by 25%, to improve transport connectivity and to provide more than 5000 new homes and 50.000 new jobs. Digbeth is one of key areas, with ambitious plans as the (re) development of Bermeo Tower, Warwick Bar and Birmingham Coach Station and visions on transforming the historic water infrastructure of the old canals and river Rea into a kind of “Water City”.

## Digbeth

Digbeth was the first centre of industry in Birmingham and became one of the most heavily industrialized areas in town. As in many cities it became run-down with abandoned and derelict buildings and untidy spaces. Only a few are monuments, most are not attractive awful buildings. Over the past decades Digbeth started regenerating the old industrial buildings into apartments, retail premises, offices and arts- and leisure facilities. Today the area is becoming a hub for digital media, music, games, arts companies and charity organisations, where the historic buildings give home to this growing creative sector. This is complemented by a diverse nightlife scene and festivals.

Digbeth is also known as the Irish Quarter. Many Irish once worked there digging the canals in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Beside the old Dubliner (rebuilt in 2008 after fire) there are many local Irish pubs and the traditional St Patrick’s Day Parade is held here. From this cradle of industry world famous iconic brands like Typhoo Tea and Custard originated. These old icons became the breeding ground for the future of Digbeth. Thypoo Wharf is considered to become a mix of residential, retail, business and leisure

opportunities. In this article we focus on the role of the other icon: the Custard Factory, which can be considered to be the main driver in the regeneration of Digbeth.

**The Custard Factory**

With the decline of the manufacturing industry in Western Europe, change was needed. Birmingham strongly bet on tourism, leisure and creative industries. As a result of this new scope some interesting places developed where the creative industry could flourish. The redevelopment of the Custard Factory can be seen as an iconic example for many developed creative hotspots in old factories worldwide afterwards and a blueprint of the regeneration of Digbeth as a whole.

The Custard Factory is located approximately half a mile from the city center. It was built 100 years ago by Sir Alfred Bird, the inventor of custard. Once over a thousand people were working at the Custard Factory, but by the early 80's custard lost its attraction and the factory fell derelict.



Figure 1. Photo: Peter Horsten & Arend Hardorff



Figure 2. Photo: Peter Horsten & Arend Hardorff

Developer Benny Gray bought the Custard Factory in 1988. He saw himself as 'a landlord for creative industries'. He owned several projects in London and wanted to invest in Birmingham. He had dropped his eye on the office tower The Big Peg in the Jewelry District. Gray could only buy this if he would take over the Custard Factory as well. Custard is a household name in Britain, but it is so tasteless and colourless it hardly appeals to the imagination. As an opposit to gray Birmingham, where concrete and highways pollute the city image, Gray painted the Custard Factory in bright colors. He wanted to create an open, diverse and creative environment, matching the lifestyles of creative workers and artists. Gray realized that the attraction of a creative hotspot lies in the presence of a diverse mass of creative people. Creating possibilities to connect with other creative people and stimulating inspiration became major focus. 'A spot is as good as the people who come up to us with good ideas' stated central management of the Custard Factory.

The Custard Factory became the first area in Birmingham for the creative industries and 'took Digbeth by the arm'. From the start the success was overwhelming. Step by step the factory was restored into an attractive surrounding with both production and consumption places, green and open spaces, fountains and sculptures. This area really appealed to the creative talent of Birmingham. What began with nineteen studios for artists, became in 25 years a cluster of several buildings, containing more than 500 creative professionals. Looking at the surrounding area more then 5000 people work her. The Custard Factory now includes an entirely new environment with mutually reinforcing buildings, courtyards and functions. It combines affordable studios and offices, a theatre, skate board ramps, event and exhibition spaces, antique shops, meeting rooms, dance studios, holistic therapy rooms, music venues, art galleries, bars and restaurants and gives home to a dynamic community of artists and small creative enterprises.



Figures 3 and 4. Photo: Peter Horsten & Arend Hardorff

### **Creative business**

Gray started with refurbishing the Scott House (a big open building with great natural light and high ceilings at the heart of the factory, which already housed some creative initiatives at that time) as a breeding ground where artists and small businesses could rent cheap studios. The first phase of development was a success, the Custard Factory was recognized as a healthy environment for creative and cultural start-ups. Subsequently a new building, The Green House, was built. The Green Man at the entrance is the god of fertility and symbolises the underlying principle of this building, housing organisations of up to 4 employees. Tenants are expected to leave this building within five years and to move on to expand in a larger space elsewhere. In the end also a developer like Gray wants to make profit. Because of the high occupancy Custard Factory succeeded in this, even within the creative industries.

The Custard Factory has a diversified rental policy. Artists pay less. Charities receive 80 percent discount on the rent. In addition there are many funds that contribute to rent for poorer parties.

The management keeps a close eye on the competition within the Custard Factory. Michael Porter stated that competition has a salutary effect. Competition improves performance and quality, especially when there is an interaction in one another's network. However, too much competition can have a fatal effect. In the Custard Factory, there's a balance between players in the local, regional and national market.



Figure 5. Photo: Peter Horsten & Arend Hardorff

Benefits of being in this creative community are, besides cheap rent, the facilities, the presence of supporting organisations and the inspiring climate; the numerous possibilities to connect to other creative people and build a creative community. Within the creative industries boundaries blur between work and leisure. Because these functions flow into one another in time and space, the gathering of a critical mass of people, both diverse and kindred, is essential to professionally co-create or just to spend time with privately.

The creative cluster in Digbeth shows the benefits of a mix of companies. Because the complete creative chain (creation, production and consumption) are represented work and leisure comes naturally together. Besides that, creative products are often combinations of specialisations, requiring different kind of knowledge and skills. Also the co-existence of starters and larger, established companies is an advantage. The presence of major players is significant for the growth of new companies. Major players feed small players with orders and their image positively affects the entire cluster. Major companies also benefit from relationships with small players and new talent. They make them flexible and offer innovative power.

## Split image

Is it that easy? Of course not. Around 2006 the original buildings had been furnished for artists and young businesses that were looking for a low-rent location and the level of facilities had been adapted to this. Management faced a dilemma. The success of the Custard Factory had his effect on the tenants. A lot of them got more, bigger and higher clients. So the basic interior didn't fit everybody anymore. However with better facilities, the prices of the starters locations and workshops would rise and become priceless for the major group of starters and small businesses. Only limited investments could be made to keep it financially feasible for this core group, much to the dissatisfaction of the growing bigger players. Some of them left the Custard Factory at this time.

A split image emerged. The public saw the area as a space for interesting experiments, but at the same time as a place which suffered from a lack of professionalism and where partially subsidised work was carried out. Major players left for new areas, which confirmed this image even more.



Figure 6. Photo: Peter Horsten & Arend Hardorff

One company decided to rent a custom made building in the surroundings of the Custard Factory. In this way it could build its own professional image, but still benefited from

the Custard Factory's vibe. Aware of this example the management changed his strategy and made Custard Factory a bigger part of the Digbeth District. Buildings in a larger area of Digbeth were bought by the Custard Factory management and furnished for the major players. Tailor-made agreements during the preparation phase turned this into an operationally viable situation, where the larger players again gave the entire area prestige and ensured the necessary business. In this second phase the Custard Factory started delivering spaces in a higher segment, for example the Fazeley Studios. This originally pastry cream factory was transformed into admirable daylighted studio's, which can be used for numerous creative applications. Much attention is paid to the big spacious communal areas that are ideal for meetings, entertainment and networking, an important aspect in the diverse, cooperative creative industry.



Figure 7. Photo: Peter Horsten & Arend Hardorff

### **Adjustments to maturity**

Although buildings in Digbeth slowly become filled, recession made it more difficult to find new tenants and original plans had to be adjusted. The intention was for example that there would start a high level brasserie at Fazeley. This had to become a USP of the building and attract new entrepreneurs at the upper segment. But because of the crisis, the candidate withdrew and now this works in a bit of counter-productive way.

Also the wished transition from production place to consumer area has been reframed a few times. Although nightlife flourished in Digbeth, especially in the weekend, the area around the Custard Factory insufficient succeeded to become a vibrant leisure place at daytime. At nighttime events are succesfull and the new multifunctional event location for 1500 people was even in recession a good investment. The nearby futuristic Bull Ring mall however isn't really the intended gate to the surrounding areas. Due to the lack of sufficient daytime flow of people, shops are changing rapidly. In the Custard Factory mainly shops with a clear internet turnover, using the 'sexyness' of the area, survived. Meeting place Rooty Frooty dissappeared and plans to invest in a large vintage-market, a hotel and leisure-attractions were more or less abandoned. There maybe will be more ground for retail and leisure as more apartments will be developed in the nearby future. When boundaries blur between work and leisure, delivering the whole package of work, leisure and housing is evident. The lack of sufficient housing made many creatives move to other parts of Birmingham in the past, where they were able to combine work, living and leisure. However, the existing energy makes sure that Digbeth will reach its full potential in the upcoming years.



Figure 8. Photo: Peter Horsten & Arend Hardorff



Custard Factory started as a "loose' business idea that worked. From 'grassroots developments' a new creative community of artists and entrepreneurs arose. With the increasing popularity the concept for this area further developed. Trial and error were part of that. Flexibility is the key in projects like this. The market dynamics are changing constantly and one has to deal with quirky and independent clients. The creative entrepreneur is less bound by ancient laws of place, thanks to the internet. To stay a hotspot, the challenge is to strengthen the creative vibe of excitement, energy and innovation. The magic of this kind of area lies not in "places & spaces" but in the connection between 'creative ideas and creative people'. In 25 years a lot has happened in Digbeth, the principles of Gray stayed unchanged.

This article is based on several visits from 2007 till 2011 to Digbeth. In the context of an international research on creative clusters diverse interviews were made with management of the Custard Factory, programme management Creative Space of City Council and a combination of entrepreneurs and artists within Digbeth area.

This research has resulted in a Colin/NHTV Magazine (Uncover 1: Creative Hotspots (Hardorff, Horsten & Van der Aalst 2007)), Toolkit for creative clusters (CD/Booklet in cooperation with Tilburg City council (2007) and several publications ( MM Nieuws 2008 Vol.10 Nr.6 & MMNieuws 2009 Vol. 11, nr 5).

# THE VEEMARKTKWARTIER: PIONEER IN THE NETHERLANDS

TILBURG, THE NETHERLANDS

**SIMON DE WIJS** (LEISURE ACADEMY BRABANT / NHTV BREDA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, THE NETHERLANDS)

**KRISTEL ZEGERS** (LEISURE ACADEMY BRABANT / NHTV BREDA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, THE NETHERLANDS)

The Veemarktkwartier is a creative district of Tilburg, a medium-sized city with 203,000 inhabitants in the province of North Brabant, the Netherlands. Originally, the weekly cattle market took place here, hence the name of the quarter. The city of Tilburg had to reinvent itself when the textile industry collapsed in the 70's and 80's of the previous century. Since the textile industry had long been the dominant economic sector, the problems arising in this industry led to high unemployment rates and increased governmental spending due to massive demolition of factories causing financial problems for the city. It was forced to develop new perspectives and to transform from an industrial to a postindustrial city (Van Boom & Mommaas, 2009). The Veemarktkwartier is one of the first projects in the Netherlands in which economic and urban development are designed around cultural clustering. At its start, the creed of the district was 'culture as the engine for economic development'. Later on, this changed to 'marketplace for curiosity' and today the creed is 'urban zone for creation and innovation'.

In this article we would like to discuss the development of this creative district and the challenges it currently faces.

## **Pioneering and clustering**

Ideas for cultural clustering as a driver for urban and economic development in the Veemarktkwartier already date from the 1990s when the first creative activity settled in the area and when Poppodium 013 (013 Pop Centre) opened in 1998. A big sprint started in the new millennium with the opening of Villamedia in 2002. The amendment 'CreaTief in Tilburg' (Creative in Tilburg) by ETIN advisors (2004) subsequently worked as a catalyst. Many plans, activities and physical clusters followed. A range of these clusters is now present in the area, all of which have their own flavour, theme, size and history of development. From the beginning onwards, there has been creative activity in Carré (an old hospital) and the

Faxxgebouw (an old bank building) quickly followed. With more than 100 artist's workshops, Carré is the biggest cluster and serves as a breeding ground for artists. Villamedia is a long-time showpiece. This cluster for new media companies has been the symbol for developments in this area since 2002. The concept of grouping together (collectivity) (ICT infrastructure, public areas and lunch) especially acts as an example in the Netherlands. Later, NS16 (mix of artists and creative entrepreneurs), V39 (cluster for the music sector and youth organisations, smartly located opposite O13), Villa Minoretti (internet services cluster) and het Duvelhok (breeding ground for artists) follow. By now, some 250 creative businesses have settled in the area. They are a very mixed group, with new media, audio-visual, arts and music as main creative sectors. The Veemarktkwartier developed rapidly in the first decade of the 21st century into a fine billboard for the city. An important reason for this is that apart from just making plans, there is actual clustering.

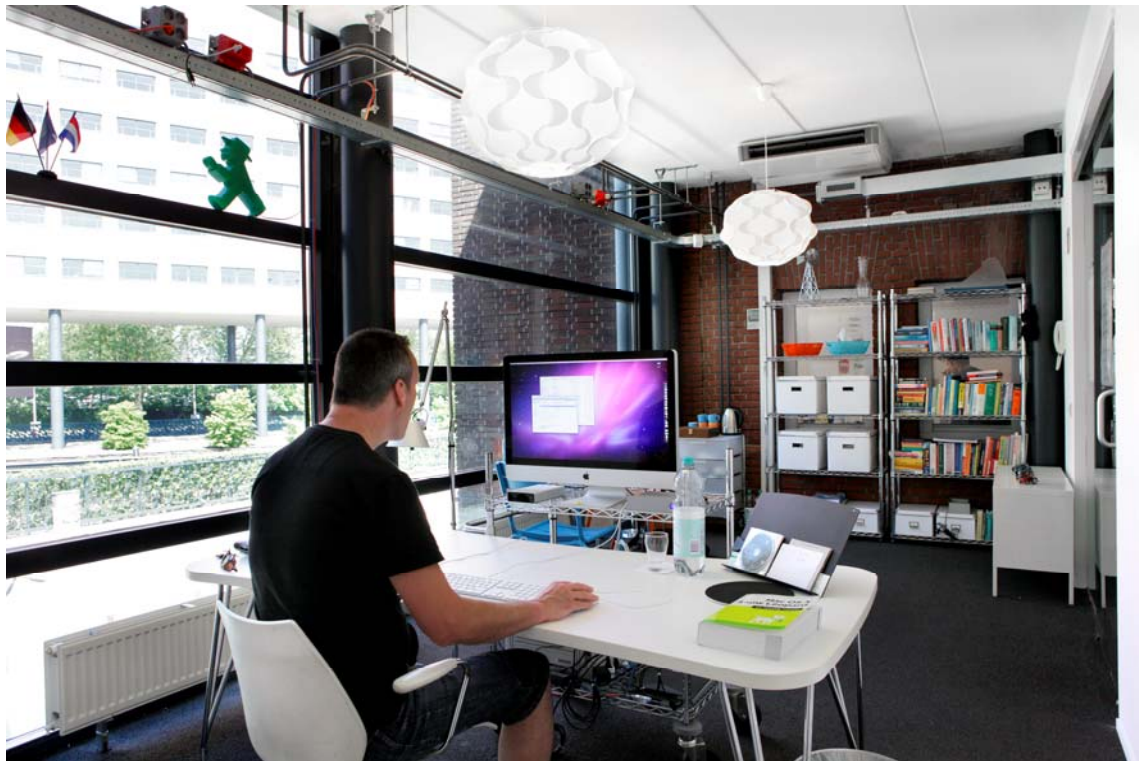


Figure 1. Creative Enterprise Alinea-Doc in Villamedia. Photography: Collection Studio VMK

### **Key figures and cooperation**

Not only physical clustering in buildings is important; it also involves people's networks. Yolanda Mout, director of Studio VMK indicates: "It is not just about the

hardware, but also the software. People, network, connections, social innovation are central." For instance, two entrepreneurs, Jos Kuijsters and Harrie Dona, together with a few public servants for integral development of the inner city, have laid the foundations of what is now developing in the Veemarktkwartier by means of personal effort and strength. Mommaas (2005) nicely phrases the importance of this type of key people: "This project depended and depends on the guts, the inspiration and the will-power of self-willed individuals: strong aldermen, inventive public servants, insistent culture managers, enthusiastic and flexible network agents. It involves many unpaid hours, unorthodox working hours and unregulated emotions. In the end, these kinds of projects rest on mutual enthusiasm and trust, not on models and agreements (p.23)."

The wilfulness and perseverance eventually led to a unique public-private partnership. The above-mentioned forerunners together with the municipality of Tilburg succeeded in finding an investor (Red Concepts, developer of Creative City Zones) for further development. In order to shape the plans, Foundation Veemarktkwartier (representing entrepreneurs and organisations in the Veemarktkwartier), Red Concepts and the municipality of Tilburg entered into a cooperation agreement. Together, the parties came up with a (new) master plan (2007) containing a complete concept for the area.

### **Concept and capital**

The underlying concept for the area foresees a lively mixture between the functions *create* (companies and breeding grounds), *learn* (education and workshops), *experience* (stages, festivals, hotel and catering industry) and *live* (living) for the area. For this, Yolanda Mout underlines the great importance of the presence of organisations that focus on innovation and research such as Tilburg University, Tilburg Innovation Centre and Colin (platform for creative industries).

With the successes in both hardware and software, opportunities arise for important and large subsidies that could boost the further development of the cluster. The European Regional Development Fund attributes a one-time subsidy of €8,500,000. Moreover, the Veemarktkwartier participated in Collabor8 (transnational European project focusing on new clusters of entrepreneurs within the cultural, creative, rural, tourism and recreational sectors) from 2007 to 2012 making another €1,070,000 for the development of the area available. The funds are not solely spent on buildings. Within Collabor8, investments in

programming, networks, knowledge development and creating business are taking place. The subsidies contribute to the (eventual) realisation of a front office: Studio VMK. Yolanda Mout, who has been fulfilling the task of agent in the area for several years, phrases the tasks of Studio VMK as follows: "We take care of profiling the area, providing information, forming a network and supporting cultural entrepreneurs."



Figure 2. Performance Beukorkest in 013. Photography: Anja Dierx

### **Necessity and risks**

The Veemarktkwartier is a pioneer and already came into existence before the 'mass production' of creative clusters. Big and strong steps forward have been made over time. However, since the crisis started in 2008 times have been changing and realism has set in. Hence, some lessons and difficulties that cannot be ignored:

- Everywhere in the Netherlands competing creative areas keep arising. Constant renewal is necessary. An 'innovator' cannot rest on his laurels. For instance, the Villamedia concept, which was great at the start, is now in need of renewal and intensification. Competition for attracting creative entrepreneurs is increasing

even within the city of Tilburg. It looks like new initiatives tend to prefer other (and cheaper) locations than the Veemarktkwartier.

- Despite the large potential of the Veemarktkwartier (its central urban position, public area and mixture of consumption and production), it has the image of a production area or the city centre's backstage.
- The strength of key figures at the same time represents the dependency on these people. What happens when network agents drop out, aldermen are not re-elected or investors see other opportunities in the market? Securing continuity and the body of thought needs to be a high priority.
- Plans need to go beyond what lies in the future. Large-scale plans regularly fall through or new developments have a different effect than planned. Recently, the Veemarktkwartier experienced some blows: developments are postponed, Tilburg University decided not to enter the district because of financial reasons, and cultural landmark Midi theatre went bankrupt. The negative effects of this can be devastating. In this, the balance between software and hardware is important. Whereas large-scale plans often rest on buildings and infrastructure, investments in people and networks could be the central support of urban development more often.
- There is also the issue of dependency on the dominant money stream. Currently, new European and governmental money streams are available for further investments in the area although it is still questionable whether the latest plans will become reality. Still, what will happen after the temporary influx of big subsidies?

### **Sustainability and future**

What is the business model for the future? A necessary bridge that needs to be built is that of creative industries to a creative economy. A stand-alone cluster preliminarily focusing inwards does not provide a sustainable base for durable productivity. The creative cluster should be connected to the wider challenges and developments in the city. In the case of the Veemarktkwartier this means connections with leisure, railway areas, life sciences and the Europe 2020 agenda. This is reflected by the new role Studio VMK has been given by the municipality of Tilburg. Studio VMK should become the studio for the creative industries of

Tilburg. Phrased differently, the power of the Veemarktkwartier is used for the city of Tilburg as a whole and not only for the district. The Veemarktkwartier as the beating heart of the city is supposed to provide energy to different economic sectors. This fits well with the regional economic development plan of Tilburg that focuses on social innovation: new ways of tackling social challenges (see Mulgan et al., 2007). It requires open and dynamic collaborations across existing organisational structures and disciplines. The creativity and innovation of the Veemarktkwartier has the potential to accelerate this. In doing so, Veemarktkwartier can continue its pioneering role with this next step in the development of a cultural district.

**Explore:**

Poppodium 013

: [www.013.nl](http://www.013.nl)

Colin: Creative Organisations Linked In Networks

: [www.colin.nl](http://www.colin.nl)

Interreg programme Collabor8

: [www.collabor8.me](http://www.collabor8.me)

Real estate developer Red Concepts

: [www.redconcepts.nl](http://www.redconcepts.nl)

Studio VMK

: [www.veemarktkwartier.nl](http://www.veemarktkwartier.nl)

Cluster Villamedia

: [www.villamedia.net](http://www.villamedia.net)

**Authors contacts:**

Simon de Wijs, [wijs.s@nhtv.nl](mailto:wijs.s@nhtv.nl)

Kristel Zegers, [zegers.k@nhtv.nl](mailto:zegers.k@nhtv.nl)

## References

ETIN Adviseurs (2004). *CreaTief in Tilburg*. Tilburg: ETIN Adviseurs

Mommaas, H. (2005). De creatieve stad; het fragiele evenwicht tussen economie en cultuur.

In: Mommaas, H., K. Nauta, H. Horsten and L. Knippenberg (eds). *Zoeken naar nieuwe wegen, kansen voor duurzaam Brabant*, Themaboek Telos 2005. (pp. 15-26). Tilburg: Tilburg University

Mulgan, G., S. Tucker, R. Ali and B. Sanders. (2007). *Social Innovation. What it is, why it matters and how it can be accelerated*. London: The Young Foundation

Van Boom, N. and H. Mommaas (2009). *Comeback cities: transformation strategies for former industrial cities*. Rotterdam: NAI



# FASHION DISTRICT ARNHEM: CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS UPGRADING A DEPRIVED NEIGHBOURHOOD

ARNHEM, THE NETHERLANDS

**DANY JACOBS** (ARCCI, ARNHEM CENTRE FOR CREATIVE ECONOMY AND INNOVATION, THE NETHERLANDS)

**EWAN LENTJES** (ARCCI, ARNHEM CENTRE FOR CREATIVE ECONOMY AND INNOVATION, THE NETHERLANDS)

**ESTHER RUITEN** (CITY OF ARNHEM, THE NETHERLANDS)

*The Arnhem Fashion District, which started in 2005, offers workspaces, shops and places to live for fashion designers. More than fifty fashion designers and other creative entrepreneurs have located their business in this neighbourhood. For a few years most of the fashion chain has been present: design and sales of designer clothes and accessories, a model agency, a fashion photographer, stylist, small-scale production facilities (sample workshop) and a fashion incubator (Arnhem Mode Incubator) which mainly supports start-up entrepreneurs to develop their business skills.*

## **How the Arnhem Fashion District was developed**

The Arnhem Fashion District started in 2005 as part of an urban upgrading process with the objective to bring liveliness and economic activity back into the deprived neighbourhood Klarendal. This old workers' neighbourhood with more than 7,000 inhabitants, not far from the city centre, did not have a good reputation for a long time. Since the 1970s, it had become a depressed area: high unemployment, low incomes, little schooling and drug-related problems. Its lively shopping axis gradually fell silent.

An area like this is in general, however, quite popular with students and artists, and Arnhem has a lot of them. Therefore, upgrading this part of the city complied with the city's wish to better promote the famous Fashion Design department of the ArtEZ Institute of the Arts together with the fashion reputation of Arnhem itself. Internationally known fashion designers such as Viktor & Rolf and Alexander van Slobbe studied at ArtEZ; fashion labels like *People of the Labyrinths* and *Spijkers en Spijkers* have been based in Arnhem for years and also two larger fashion retail chains (*Score* and *Open 32*) have their headquarters there.

There was also a strong wish to find out how talented fashion designers could be supported to keep them in Arnhem. As a result, the Fashion District was established offering designers a combination of affordable workspaces, shops and living apartments. The whole project was a co-operation between the housing association Volkshuisvesting Arnhem and the City of Arnhem. Volkshuisvesting Arnhem invested twenty to thirty million euros in making the premises they own in the neighbourhood suitable for the designers as well as in buying real estate at locations that were important 'stepping stones' in the neighbourhood. The City of Arnhem invested in reconstructing streets and public spaces, as well as projects for coaching and training designers to become more entrepreneurial. As a third party, the province of Gelderland has financially supported the project.

From the start the Fashion District was defined as a project, with the end date pending on a critical mass of entrepreneurs and their ability to become self-organising. This has worked out well, as one can see that since 2011 more and more responsibilities have been taken over by the entrepreneurs themselves, resulting in the association of entrepreneurs in the neighbourhood taking its place as an important new stakeholder. Current attention focuses on bottom-up co-operation with other organisations of entrepreneurs in the area and investment in a marketing strategy for the Fashion District as a whole. As a result, the association organised several fashion-related initiatives, such as regular fashion shows and the exciting yearly Fashion Night. Also, new initiatives such as MoMarket are born in other parts of the neighbourhood. MoMarket will take place every first Sunday of the month, where designers from all over the country will be able to sell their designs.



Figure 1. Property of Volkshuisvesting Arnhem - the Arnhem fashion district Klarendal: before the renovation.



Figure 2. Property of Volkshuisvesting Arnhem - the Arnhem fashion district Klarendal: after the renovation.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

The project was successful for Klarendal. Unemployment has gone down (nowhere in the city more than in this area), the number of jobs has increased, the neighbourhood is safer and private individuals and companies are investing in real estate again. Different surveys indicate that the people from the neighbourhood are finally regaining confidence in their future and

becoming more satisfied with their housing conditions.<sup>1</sup> The National Renovation Platform awarded Klarendal the Golden Phoenix for the best area transformation in the Netherlands and in 2013 the even more prestigious Golden Pyramid State Prize was awarded to this area for its development.

The upgrading of a deprived neighbourhood has been connected with start-up support for fashion designers. Besides, the project has succeeded in keeping more creative talent in the city. More than fifty jobs were created in the creative sector. Since 2009 also a sample workshop, that can organise small-scale production up to 150 pieces, has been located there. It also supported a project – Arnhem Fashion Connection – aiming at a closer co-operation between ArteEZ's fashion department (the fashion *designers*) and the vocational training institute RijnIJssel (the so-called fashion *makers*).

Some people in the neighbourhood were wary about this creative reorientation of their area. But gradually they warmed up to the project as they saw that living conditions are improving. Quite important, however, for the success has been that also other businesses came to the neighbourhood: a few very popular café-restaurants and a cultural centre in former army barracks. This brought another hundred jobs to Klarendal. Recently the fashion and design hotel *Modez* started business with twenty unique rooms, all decorated by fashion and product designers educated in Arnhem – under the guidance of fashion illustrator Piet Paris.

A unique feature in the Fashion District is that one can buy designer clothes and accessories directly from the designers themselves. Moreover, craftsmanship and sustainability are important values of the project. For example, Elsien Gringhuis, one of the designers, develops highly innovative patterns in which waste is maximally reduced. Another, Pauline van Dongen, combines high-tech materials and new technologies with traditional techniques and craftsmanship. In this way the Fashion District offers space for experiments and functions as an open innovation system, a so-called *living lab*.

However, the relative success of the Arnhem Fashion District is not an isolated story. It is an important element of the wider policy of the city to focus on fashion and design as one of its two most promising economic clusters (the other one being energy and environmental technology). This is supported by the province of Gelderland and recognised by the national government. Proof of this ambition is shown in other examples such as the *Mode Biennale Arnhem*, whose fifth edition has taken place in 2013. MoBA presents the state of the art of

---

<sup>1</sup> Municipality of Arnhem (2012) *Wijkprofielenboek 2011*: 22; Municipality of Arnhem (2012) *Leefbaarheid en Veiligheid in Arnhem. Resultaten Veiligheidsmonitor 2011*: 4, 8-19, 28-35, 42-44, 49-50.

innovative fashion design at an international level every two years. During six weeks MoBA 13 informed and inspired a large audience of fashionistas, students, tourists and professionals with exhibitions, fashion shows, workshops, seminars, and an educational programme. Of course there was a close cooperation with the Fashion District, entrepreneurs in the city centre, cultural institutions and the like.

Another stimulating support of the creative economy is that, not only in the Klarendal neighbourhood but also in the city centre, designer fashion shops have been attracted to strengthen Arnhem's fashion signature: apart from Humanoid, Trix & Rees, and Jones which already existed, fashion shops such as Coming Soon, Sjaak Hullekes, People of the Labyrinths and By Maeve have recently appeared on the stage. Another ambition is to make a better connection between the Klarendal district and the city centre by realising a kind of design-oriented corridor between the two areas.

And last but not least, Modekern, the initiative to collect and digitise the archives of Dutch fashion designers for further research and public presentation was recently allotted to Arnhem. Here the fruitful co-operation between Gelders Archief (the Gelderland Archives), ArtEZ, the Museum of Modern Art Arnhem and Premsele, the Netherlands Institute of Design and Fashion<sup>2</sup>, supported by the city of Arnhem and the province of Gelderland, contributes to Arnhem's position as city of fashion and design of the Netherlands.

The Klarendal project also has its weaknesses. From a study we undertook with ARCCI in 2010-2011<sup>3</sup> it appeared that the entrepreneurial skills of most of the designers located in the Fashion District were underdeveloped. This endangered the long-term sustainability of the project. Therefore, it was a nice opportunity that by the middle of 2011 the Arnhem Mode Incubator was launched and started coaching and training programmes for existing and new designers, tackling their lack of entrepreneurial skills. Also the provision of new retail space to fashion designers is now the object of a tougher screening of their entrepreneurial skills and business plans. Finally, as said before, more common initiatives are taken by the Klarendal designers in the last few years to attract more customers to the neighbourhood: fashion shows, the yearly Fashion Night, workshops and tours and participation in the Arnhem Stock Days in which leftovers and unique pieces are sold.

---

<sup>2</sup> From January 2013, Premsele merged with the Netherlands Architecture Institute and the e-culture knowledge institute Virtueel Platform to form The New Institute.

<sup>3</sup> Elshof, Marjon, Kees van het Hof & Kartini Slaats (2011) *Modeontwerpers in Klarendal. Bedrijfsmodellen in kaart gebracht*, Arnhem: ARCCI.

## **Conclusion**

The establishment of the Arnhem Fashion District has been a clear success as far as the upgrading of the neighbourhood and the further positioning of Arnhem as a city of fashion and design are concerned. However, there is still quite some work to be done in order to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the project.

## **Contact details**

Dany.Jacobs@uva.nl

For more concrete information about the Fashion District:

Berry Kessels

Volkshuisvesting Arnhem

b.kessels@volkshuisvesting.nl

www.modekwartier.nl

# THE FINLAYSON/TAMPELLA AREA

TAMPERE, FINLAND

MARIANGELA LAVANGA (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS)



Figure 1. Finlayson. Source: Mariangela Lavanga.

Tampere is the third largest city (204,337 inhabitants) in Finland, and its region (490,000 inhabitants) is the second main economic hub of Finland. The key branches of industry are technology and forest industry, with Nokia being the largest private employer. Tampere is not a capital city like Helsinki or a heritage city in the traditional sense like Turku, the former capital of Finland. During the 19th century, Tampere became a major industrial centre for textile, metal and paper factories, nicknamed ‘the Manchester of the North’ and ‘the Beautiful City of Factories’. The city is located on the Tammerkoski Rapids between two large lakes, connected by a canal overlooked by old factories, paper mills and smokestacks. Today, the contrast between the perfectly restored industrial heritage and the water environment makes the urban landscape unique.

The Finlayson/Tampella old industrial area marks the urban spaces of the city centre. For more than a century, the Finlayson site was ‘a town within the town’,

closed to outsiders. The structural change in industry in the 1970s meant a gradual transformation of the use of the industrial buildings and the beginning of a planning process for the area's redevelopment at the end of the decade. At the beginning, the idea was to demolish the industrial buildings and to invest in high quality architecture. As a consequence, several buildings were destroyed raising questions on the preservation of industrial heritage. By the 1980s the value of industrial heritage started to be realised. The reuse of the old factories was then carried out in conjunction with a general plan for the city centre. The aim of the new plan was to create a stimulating urban quarter containing all kinds of city-centre activities without destroying the cohesiveness and uniqueness of the existing industrial buildings. The industrial sites were reused and integrated to the city centre from the point of view of function, traffic and urban design.

The Museum Centre Vapriikki, which moved to the Finlayson/Tampella area in 1991, contributed enormously to the revitalisation of the site and to the improvement of its image, while being at that time its only non-industrial activity. A



Figure 2. Tampella. Source: Mariangela Lavanga.

further boost for this museum quarter came when the City received 10 million euro investments from the government to prepare itself for the European Summit in



1999. Institutions such as the Rupriikki Media Museum, the Aamulehti newspaper and the School of Art and Media from the Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) were offered convenient working space and moved to the Finlayson buildings, contributing to the regeneration cycle of the place.

Today, the Finlayson/Tampella area houses, apartments, offices, over hundred companies, theatres, a movie complex with 10 screens, restaurants and cafés with over 3,500 seats, shops, new museums and the Mältinranta Artcenter, operated by Tampere Artists' Association. An average of 9,000 people visit the site every day. The range of mixed uses and activities support and reinforce each other and it is not limited to the pattern of the normal working day - an exciting evening and nightlife adds an additional stream of economy. Many annual events are organised by some of the businesses, museums and school present there, alone or in close collaboration with other local institutions. Among the most important events, there are the Tampere International Short Film Festival, the Literature Event and the MindTrek Conference – International Digital Media and Business Festival. In addition, smaller events such as book shows, poetry readings, interviews and small exhibitions give a further contribution to make this part of the city alive day and night, all year long.

Since 2008, the Finlayson/Tampella area has also housed Demola, a publicly funded innovation platform that connect universities and businesses for developing projects in the fields of technology, services, digital media, games and social innovation. The companies are offered the opportunity to test their product development ideas with students from the three Tampere universities. In this way students can participate in real projects with real businesses. Every year Demola executes some 100 projects with some 400 students. Up to 85% of the projects' results have been commercialised.

Demola was part of the *Creative Tampere* programme, the largest regional creative sector business development programme in Finland running between 2006 and 2011. The City of Tampere financed the programme with around 7 million euros as seed money. The City of Tampere acted as a facilitator while the implementers were businesses, research and educational institutions, associations and other organisations. The overall volume of the projects was over 35 million euros. Creative Tampere was a very broad co-operation programme, with the aim to increase

innovation. The programme was divided into three mutually supporting segments: the Creative Industries, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Attractive City. Apart from Demola, Creative Tampere has stimulated new ways of working like LUKE (a development programme for creative businesses), Voimala (new way to learn entrepreneurship for young people), and YES-kummit (entrepreneurs as godfathers for schools). Since the beginning of the Creative Tampere programme, growth in the creative industries has been fast compared to other industries and compared to the rest of Finland. In addition, the financial crisis of 2008 did not affect the creative industries as much as other industries. Creative Tampere is often mentioned as a 'best practice' in Finland and abroad and it received an award for exemplary development of Finnish innovation and invention from the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Projects that have been started through the programme have also been nominated and won awards both in Finland and abroad. The work done within the Creative Tampere programme will be continued with the new Avoin (Open) Tampere programme, started in 2012.

Thanks also to the recent projects developed under the Creative Tampere programme, the Finlayson/Tampella area has become the hotspot for the new creative businesses. The Hub Tampere opened in 2010 and it offers workspace for entrepreneurs who are members of the Hub global network. In the coming years the regeneration of a former sock factory into a building for creative industries will be completed; the idea is somewhat different from the Hub as it will offer workspace but also it will allow visitors (non-members) to enter the building.

The new uses within the Finlayson/Tampella area had strong impacts on the structure, functions and appearance of Tampere. All in all, they have supported the recovery of the identity of the city. Citizens seem to have adopted the transformation of the Finlayson/Tampella area as an extension of the old industrial city. What used to be walled industrial areas, restricted to the industrial community, have been transformed into urban spaces with a public and open character. The cultural investments allowed the (re)definition and reinforcement of the city's identity and its participative and inclusive character. At the same time, cultural investments produced benefits in terms of improvements in city image. Both processes reinforce themselves in a positive cycle.

Its industrial image has not prevented the city from developing into an active cultural and creative centre. Tampere is today renowned for being a festival city (over 30 well-established festivals per year), the theatre capital of the country, and an important educational centre in arts and culture, hosting several museums, the biggest city library in Finland, the Tampere City Library (2.3 million customers in 2010), and the largest concert and congress centre in Scandinavia, the Tampere Hall. Residents make up the main proportion of cultural consumers; and a substantial percentage of the municipal budget is allocated to cultural accessibility, art education and youth centres. The role of universities has been fundamental for the (re)development of the city. Their embedded nature and commitment were and are very strong. Innovative research and education and cooperation between companies and universities have maintained and further developed the competitiveness of the region's industry. The merger between the old economy and the new one with the development of globally competitive high-tech products in traditional fields, the support of higher education institutions and the strong cultural investments have provided Tampere with a solid knowledge industry. The preservation and reuse of the industrial buildings is a constant reminder of the fact that industrialisation has never ended in Tampere, making the city a hub of high technology, higher education institutions, culture and creativity. The new economic and industrial policy programme for 2012-2018 – Open Tampere – aims at strengthening those relations, using “innovation factories” as spaces, communities, operational models to keep developing open innovation environments that allow cross-pollination and innovation between the different actors.

## References

- Creative Tampere, 2011. Creative Tampere 2006-2011 Final Report. Tampere: Creative Tampere [online] Available at: <<http://www.luovatampere.fi/arkisto/CreativeTampere.pdf>> [Accessed 28 March 2013]
- Demola, 2013. What is Demola? [online] Available at: <<http://tampere.demola.fi/about>> [Accessed 28 March 2013]
- Lavanga, M., 2006. The Contribution of Cultural and Creative Industries to a more Sustainable Urban Development. The case studies of Rotterdam and Tampere. In: ACEI, 14th International Conference on Cultural Economics (ACEI). Vienna, 6-9 July 2006.
- Lavanga, M., 2009. Becoming a sustainable creative city. Cultural industries and urban (re)development in Tampere. In: F. Eckardt & L. Nyström (Eds.), Culture and the City. (Future Urban Research in Europe, 3) (pp. 217-239). Berlin: BWV - Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag.
- Open Tampere – Minds Wide Open, 2013. The Program [online] Available at: <<http://www.avointampere.fi/en/the-program/>> [Accessed 10 September 2013]
- Tampere Region Economic Development Agency Tredea Oy, 2011. Tampere Facts & Figures 2011. Tampere: Hämeen Kirjapaino Oy. [online] Available at: <[http://www.tredea.fi/@Bin/137214/Facts\\_figures\\_2011.pdf](http://www.tredea.fi/@Bin/137214/Facts_figures_2011.pdf)> [Accessed 28 March 2013]

# CREATIVE DISTRICTS OF HELSINKI – TWO DISTANT RELATIVES

HELSINKI, FINLAND

PEKKA MUSTONEN (SENIOR RESEARCHER, CITY OF HELSINKI URBAN FACTS, FINLAND)

TARU LINDBLOM (POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER, UNIVERSITY OF TURKU, FINLAND)

Helsinki is a pocket size metropolis on the shore of the Baltic Sea. The inner city is home to just about 300,000 inhabitants, suburbs about the same and neighbouring suburban towns another half a million. When creative industries are discussed, the focus is usually on downtown Helsinki, especially the southernmost neighbourhoods.

These areas are largely responsible for Helsinki's reputation as a thriving creative city. Most of the activities that are commonly linked to creative industries occur there. Just a few blocks in southern Helsinki contain a third of the jobs of the city. The concentration is particularly strong in the case of creative industries – no matter how the concept is understood. Artists and ICT professionals alike are concentrated in southern Helsinki.

In downtown Helsinki, different districts differ fundamentally from each other – even the neighbouring blocks may represent totally different demographics and atmosphere. Creative activities have spread all over. However, there are two districts that should be highlighted, namely **Kallio** and **Punavuori**. These two most important creative areas two or three kilometres apart, share some common characteristics but had been quite distant from certain perspectives – until very recently.

What distinguishes Kallio from Punavuori is their history; how it is present, how it is presented and on the other hand, what is the symbolic meaning of history. Structurally, the areas are also relatively different. Still, these two neighbourhoods are also very similar to a certain extent. They share similar kind of working class history and are now both lively in the creative field. Also, they are both forward-looking, urban spirited and beautiful in a crude unconventional way.



Figure 1. Good Life Coffee – a small independent café that sells coffee from small roasteries. Coffee is prepared by the best Finnish barista of 2011. The address in the middle of the greyest Kallio is shared by recently opened very famous bar/restaurant. This small corner of Kallio has changed rapidly during the past year.

*Photo: Heidi Taskinen, City of Helsinki Urban Facts*

The district of Kallio, literally “the rocky hill”, together with its surroundings is an extremely interesting case and is such in a very classic way. Like many creative areas around the world, Kallio is also a former workers’ area that has been the first Helsinki home for students and young people for years. Moreover, it is slowly turning into the area that gains interest and praise even amongst mainstream media and discussions.

Kallio is situated just one kilometre northbound from the centre of Helsinki and is separated from the southern city by a bridge. There has been a bridge for more than 350 years at the same spot. The name of this concrete structure, Long Bridge, does not refer to its length – the bridge is not that massive – but rather to its symbolic meaning. The bridge separated the proletariat on the north side from the bourgeoisie on the south side, and to a certain extent, still does.

Kallio attracts young people, and in addition to a tolerant and lively atmosphere there are structural reasons for this. Flats are small and rents, if not low, are still lower than in the areas in the most southern parts of Helsinki. Despite rapid changes, from the viewpoint of some statistical measures Kallio still remains behind the areas on the other side of the bridge. To give some examples, its education level in general is lower, unemployment is higher and consequently the

proportion of residents benefiting from social welfare is higher in Kallio. In addition, bigger apartments suitable for families are nearly absent, which has slowed down the evident gentrification process and development in its part.



Figure 2. Brklyn Bakery on one of the main streets of Punavuori, in the heart of the “design district”. The tiny bakery is a sister of Brooklyn Café opened a couple of years ago a few blocks away. There are many independent places like this in Punavuori.

*Photo: Heidi Taskinen, City of Helsinki Urban Facts*

Punavuori is remarkably smaller than Kallio. It is neighboured by characteristically bourgeois areas and the borders are blurred. Thus, the middle-class or even bourgeois ethos easily typifies Punavuori as well. While Kallio seems to be in the early stages of affirming its own creative class-consciousness, Punavuori has gone far, probably partly for the above reasons. It might have even left its trendy years behind. It has a well-established and matured, rather self-conscious image.

The image of Punavuori has changed remarkably during the past decades. Back in the days, and we do not have to go far into history, the proximity of the dockyard and sea made Punavuori the infamous outskirts of Helsinki. There were marine bars, illegal activities and dirty alleyways.

Thus, from this historical perspective, Punavuori resembles Kallio. Both areas were notably working-class quarters, though Punavuori used to be seemingly more decadently associated. The image of drunken, heavily tattooed sailors escorted by skimpily dressed prostitutes is history, no matter how little it had to do with reality even in the past.

A short while ago the second last marine bar was transformed into a restaurant. Now in 2014 there is only one marine bar left, maintaining the area's legendary history alone. Perhaps it will eventually turn into a curiosity that would nicely fit the image of the neighbourhood. Nowadays Punavuori is shamelessly middle-class and it tries to find its role in the battle of "new urbanity" and homogenised city life.

This is to say that the traditional history of the area is no more visible, especially when compared with Kallio. The old Punavuori was so characteristically distinct that the change is severe. Unlike Kallio, today's Punavuori is not connected with its colourful history any longer. Now, when people think of Punavuori they think of its advertising agencies, bakeries and high estate prices – and, on the other hand, new urban activities, festivals, street life and parties usually occupying its street. Punavuori has traditionally been a place where people go to enjoy these new manifestations of urban life – however much they have changed their shape. It is still central although the area might be losing its role as an eminent leader. And it is losing it to Kallio and its surroundings. Just to give an example, an iconic record store just closed its doors in Punavuori only to be reopened as a new landmark in Kallio.

Stereotypically, people who live in Punavuori and in Kallio want to stay there. Everything is near, moving from place to place is easy, so cars are not needed. Urban activities are always readily available and networks can be reached easily whenever needed. If Kallio is not a backwoods anymore, Punavuori is not dull. It has struggled to remain energetic. When thinking of the amount of people working in the creative field, Punavuori is still the most important area. Relatively old buildings and city structures based on post-industrial city planning provide space for enterprises of different sizes. Even though some important companies have packed their open-plan offices and moved to the north, most of creative activities still occur in Punavuori or in nearby blocks.

Bigger advertising or creative agencies cannot work in the centre of Kallio due to a lack of space. And due to a lack of bigger apartments, many, especially bigger families have been 'forced' to leave. However, there is also a countertrend we have witnessed increasingly over the years: families stay in Kallio and choose to live in more cramped space in order to stay in the core of the action.



Kallio is the laboratory where different layers collide and where urbanism occurs in different light every day. Depending on the “gaze”, the eye of the urban stroller confronts everything from despair to passion on the same street corner at the same time. For example, a long line of unemployed people queuing for free bread may sprawl in front of the steps of a trendy brunch restaurant and next of a children’s playground.

Despite being one of the most vibrant and diverse areas of Helsinki, tourists and occasional visitors rarely come to Kallio. There is nothing to see in a traditional touristic sense. For someone who is looking for urban soul and hidden beauty of the city, Kallio is an oasis. The legacy of the past decades, when the Long Bridge really separated two worlds from each other, remains here. The proletarian history is present everywhere and this very fact is the most important thing separating Kallio from Punavuori, currently the somewhat commoditised “design district” of Helsinki just on the other side of the city centre.

The spirit of Kallio is unique. Even though there are elements that are surely trendy, its authenticity has not faded. It seems that you can be genuinely unaware of trends in Kallio. This, however, does not mean that Kallio is a backwoods. Not at all. In Kallio, the newer somewhat homogenised urban phenomena have not yet surpassed the older layers. Time will tell what will happen to the area as we know it today and have known it for decades. On the northern side of the Long Bridge you can see low life every day; in gateways leading to flats with the most rapidly rising estate prices in Helsinki. In Punavuori low life belongs to the movies. In Kallio, you may not want to walk alone at night. In Punavuori you can establish a pop-up restaurant that is open only at night.

Kallio is home to some services and small enterprises that seem to belong there better than anywhere. The public sauna is one very good example. There are a couple of traditional public saunas in the heart of Kallio. There used to be dozens of these in Helsinki but nowadays all the public saunas can be found from the northern side of the Long Bridge. Even the brand new Design Sauna is in Kallio.

Kallio represents the unconventional creative district. Creativity in Kallio is somewhat hidden whilst in Punavuori everything appears just before your eyes. You can hardly see “creativity” when walking across the Kallio hill in the winter. Creative enterprises, agencies and people working in the creative sector seem to be somewhere else. There are only few characteristically trendy bars, restaurants or shops. Buildings are mainly grey. Instead, there are shops where you can buy toilet paper for one euro. There are also bars where the price of a pint is barely half the price of a pint in Punavuori.

Nevertheless, the whole city is changing fast and so is Kallio. A couple of years ago it was impossible to get a decent espresso in Kallio. Now there are cafés that sell coffee roasted the same morning in a nearby micro-roastery. Fresh pasta can be bought from a small factory established in an old abattoir just a small walk away from Kallio. Small eateries and wine bars are established here and there. There are many examples. There is nothing special in cafés or bakeries per se, but when brought to Kallio, they represent a totally new era. That is probably because they are somewhat out of place there. The contrast is so big and so visible. The change is the evident result of gentrification in which process Kallio is in a different phase at the moment. Probably Kallio is finally reaching Punavuori. Or maybe it has gone past already and become the new birthplace of the “cool”.

Kallio is a neighbourhood that draws strength, apart from its history, from its people. The social networks and neighbourhood associations establish festivals and maintain flower plantings in parks. Kallio seems to be proud of itself. These characteristics attract creative people to Kallio and to nearby areas. Many creative people who live in Kallio also work there – and vice versa. Many are self-employed or they run small companies. These are not visible to the street. The only hint that something is happening beyond the surface is a constant buzz. In addition, the statistics tell about where people of certain professions live and work.

What will happen in the future? It is likely that the outskirts of Kallio will become more interesting. Due to structural reasons, it is also likely that the ethos of the proletariat will remain. From the perspective of urban planning, Kallio is also remarkably more demanding. The spirit of the area spreads further from Kallio itself and this makes the area quite big and diverse.

Punavuori, instead, will probably become even more middle-class. New initiatives will be born both in Kallio and in Punavuori; the former representing the more underground level. The closeness of the city centre will keep the money flows coming into Punavuori. Setting up a small restaurant or shop for niche markets would still be remarkably more risky in Kallio.

The dynamics between the creative areas can and should be approached structurally especially in the context of a small city such as Helsinki. This has not been the case in Helsinki where discussion has been rather superficial. It seems clear that both Kallio and Punavuori provide creative professionals with the best possible environment. The areas do not compete with each other. Instead, they complement each other. The fact that the city centre separates these areas is probably a big blessing for this city’s great urban diversity.

# NEW LIFE OF NEW HOLLAND IN A CLASSICAL CITY

## NEW HOLLAND, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

**VALERY GORDIN** (DR. SC, FULL PROFESSOR, NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA)

**MARINA MATETSKAYA** (CAND. SC, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA)

**MARIYA DEDOVA** (POSTGRADUATE STUDENT, NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA)

Since the early 1700s, when St. Petersburg was founded by Peter the Great, the city had been continuously developing as an industrial and military centre of Russia. In recent decades the city has been undergoing de-industrialisation and demilitarization processes that are typical of many post-Soviet cities. Today restored industrial and military objects are found side by side with well-known museums, cathedrals and other sites of the city with incredible cultural heritage. A city quarter named New Holland is located within walking distance of the Mariinsky Theatre, the Yusupov Palace and the St. Petersburg House of Music. The Museum Quarter, the territory of the residential quarter in the historic city centre comprising nine museums and exhibition halls, bounded by Moika, Kryukov Canal Embankment, Horseguards Boulevard and St. Isaac's Square is located in the immediate vicinity of New Holland. In the foreseeable future this territory will become a part of a great tourist cluster in the city.

New Holland is a man-made island in the centre of St. Petersburg which was called like that because of the Dutch shipbuilders were invited by Peter the Great to create his model city on reclaimed swamps. The island has been under naval control from the moment of its erection. The huge territory of approximately 7.8 hectares was used for storing lumber for shipbuilding. Rows of red-brick barracks and warehouses were constructed for this purpose; a basin for testing ships as well as a naval prison in a rounded form nicknamed The Bottle were also designed on the island. In the early 1890s New Holland also became a laboratory for experimenting on smokeless gunpowder under supervision of Dmitry Mendeleev. The basin was employed for testing prototypes of Russian battleships, frigates and Soviet submarines. Later, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the navy built a radio station at the island, from which Vladimir Lenin announced the start of revolution in 1917. During World War II New

Holland was heavily destroyed by artillery attacks. After the war tumbledown architectural buildings were left deserted until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



Figure 1. New Holland. Source: Metro News ([www.metronews.ru](http://www.metronews.ru))

The idea of converting the island into a cultural centre was firstly claimed by architect Veniamin Fabritsky in the 1970s. However, the renovation of the island was firstly initiated only in 2004, when the ownership rights were transferred from the navy to the city of St. Petersburg. After the tendering process Russian developing company ST New Holland in cooperation with celebrated British architect Norman Foster was to create a complex of modern art galleries, a theatre, hotel, shops, apartments and restaurants on the island directly connecting it with Nevsky Prospect, the Mariinsky Theatre and the Hermitage Museum by new bridges. The project ran into financial difficulties and a new investor represented by Roman Abramovich's Millhouse Company acquired a right from the city to redevelop the island in 2010. The current concept of the island is being implemented by the American architectural firm WORCac aiming at creating "a city within the city" with a variety of cultural programmes.

The redevelopment project is to be ready in 2017, but already in 2011 the island was opened to the public and instantly became popular among citizens and tourists representing a creative approach towards urban space development. During summer time most of the space is transformed into a green lawn with deckchairs, place for yoga, skate pool, fitness classes or frisbee playing. Stationary decommissioned shipping containers scattered all over the island are used as kitchens for a few cafes run by St. Petersburg's restaurants, open

library regularly replenished with donated books, sport ground for playing table tennis, computer-equipped club and art gallery hosting temporary exhibitions of contemporary art. The summer programme is also saturated with various outdoor events such as music or poetic concerts, theatre performances, cultural festivals, thematic days for children and their parents, various workshops and markets.

Over the summer of 2012 the island attracted more than 200,000 visitors compared to 130,000 visitors in 2011. Most frequent visitors are aged between 18 and 25 years. According to a representative of the Iris Foundation that runs the island during the reconstruction period all activities taking place on the island is a marketing research aiming at learning public opinion for future development of the investment project. However, despite its temporary character Summer in New Holland has become one of the most popular projects in the creative industries initiated in recent years. The high popularity of the project can be explained by the possibility for visitors to spend their time outdoors.

Currently there are more than ten creative spaces in St. Petersburg offering various types of activities, but all of them are located in revitalised buildings of former factories or other abandoned industrial sites. The low number of urban parks and absence of organised creative activities make New Holland a unique example of outdoor cultural space in the city with five million inhabitants.



Figure 2. Summer in New Holland. Photo: Mariya Dedova

One of the main features of the project is private ownership meaning that regeneration development strategy is formed by the current investor New Holland Development, a division of Millhouse Company. It is the investor who provides different types of services for a whole row of customers. The first group of customers are visitors of the island, both residents and tourists. They are offered various opportunities for creative leisure activities. The second group is represented by the local government interested in providing public space for common use. It is worth mentioning that entrance to the island is free of charge as well as the greater part of activities provided, but to enter the island you need to pass face control. The third group is formed by artists who get a chance to use the island to present their artworks. The managing foundation stays very open to ideas of contemporary artists. Finally, there is a large number of particular customers interested in specific events. If it is a handmade market, independent designers are offered an outlet for their entrepreneurial activities. If it concerns a painting workshop for children, both parents and children receive creative educational services. Thus, a plethora of available services makes this island be a centre of attraction among active parts of population.

However, in our view, the creative character of the present concept of the island development ignores the history of the quarter. Being a place for recreation and cultural activities, the identity of the territory is obscured. Right opposite the island, on the far bank of the canal, there is one of the oldest Russian museums and one of the world's largest naval museums, Central Naval Museum. It seems that creative New Holland would enhance its attractiveness by cooperating with the museum. Such cooperation would help to develop the identity of the space that, in its turn, would foster the formation of St. Petersburg's brand as a sea capital which is currently not being attributed and articulated enough.

## References

- Mendick, R. and Rosser, N. Roman Abramovich to spend £250 million on St. Petersburg art museum project, *The Telegraph*, 28 November, 2010. URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/8164981/Roman-Abramovich-to-spend-250-million-on-St-Petersburg-art-museum-project.html> (Accessed 15.03.2013)
- Minner K., WORKac to Redesign St. Petersburg's New Holland Island, *ArchDaily*, 3 August 2011. URL: <http://www.archdaily.com/156067/workac-to-redesign-st-petersburgs-new-holland-island/> (Accessed 15.03.2013)
- Museum Quarter. St. Petersburg URL: <http://www.museum-city.ru/> (Accessed 12.03.2013)
- Tyomkin, A. Abramovich wins New Holland tender, *The St. Petersburg Times*, Issue 1626 (87), November 16 2010. URL: [http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action\\_id=2&story\\_id=32950](http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=32950) (Accessed 15.03.2013)
- Work Architecture Company: New Holland Island, St. Petersburg URL: <http://work.ac/new-holland-island-st-petersburg/> (Accessed 14.03.2013)
- Wrathall, C. St Petersburg's Cultural Revolution, *Financial Times*, August 10 2012. URL: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/71dc9640-dcc0-11e1-99f3-00144feab49a.html#axzz2PDUTwsBQv> (Accessed 15.03.2013)
- Ахмедова, А. и Ковтун, Н. "Красное знамя" продадут за долги его владельца (Akhmedova, A., Kovtun, N. "Krasnoe znamya" sold for the debts of the owner), *Деловой Петербург*, 14 August 2012. URL: [http://www.dp.ru/a/2012/08/13/Krasnoe\\_znamja\\_prodadut/](http://www.dp.ru/a/2012/08/13/Krasnoe_znamja_prodadut/) (Accessed 10.03.2013)
- Новую Голландию этим летом посетили более 200 тысяч человек (More than 200,000 people visited New Holland this year), *Фонтанка.ру*, 6 September 2012. URL: <http://www.fontanka.ru/2012/09/06/160/> (Accessed 10.03.2013)

# A POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION – FROM A FACTORY TO A CREATIVE QUARTER

RIGA, LATVIA

**IEVA ROZENTALE** (UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS)

**TIMURS TOMSONS** (ASSOCIATION OF CREATIVE QUARTERS AND SPACES, RIGA, LATVIA)

Evolved from an artist commune to a creative quarter, the recent development of the former VEF<sup>1</sup> territory illustrates what bottom-up initiatives can do for regenerating post-industrial areas in countries where such initiatives are neither common, nor planned. Its emergence has been and still is largely dependent on the enthusiasm and initiative of the ‘creatives’ inhabiting this space. Consequently, the evolution of VEF can be approached in two ways. On the one hand, it is a creative quarter in development, which enables monitoring how artistic acts can induce the clustering of other activities around them. On the other hand, its appearance can be further interpreted as an anticipated advance following the shift from the Soviet system to a democracy in Latvia.

VEF was the biggest manufacturer of electrical and electronic products in the former USSR. Established in April 1919 VEF entered the world market with the development of the world’s smallest camera at this time – Minox. In the 1960s and 1970s two out of three phones in the USSR were produced by VEF. By that time the factory had grown to occupy a sizeable territory. After the re-establishment of Latvia’s independence in 1991 and the opening of Western markets VEF could not compete anymore due to the declining quality of its goods and services (Rikards, 2009). These developments left a massive abandoned territory in Riga’s urban space, which is now in the course of transformation into a rather classic post-industrial creative district in a less conventional geopolitical setting.

The occupancy of this industrial heritage by local artists can be considered as a consecutive process in the development of the post-Soviet cultural environment. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Latvian acronym for Valsts Elektrotehniskā Fabrika (State Electrotechnical Factory)



VEF cultural quarter grew from an initiative of few artistically minded people aimed at creating a place for alternative art forms to develop and at connecting Riga's art scene with that of the rest of the world. The first artistic performance in the abandoned factory was organised in May 2008 by a group of artists who desired to provide the Latvian contemporary artistic scene with a more global outreach by inviting some foreign experts. After a few performances organised in this abandoned territory, there was only one enthusiast left - Kaspars Lielgalvis. He founded the contemporary art centre *Totaldobže*, which is now the core of this quarter's art life. Within the context of the economic crisis, which struck the country exactly in 2008, this territory offered a cheap and big rental space for his ideas to be realised. While the creation of an alternative art centre was the primary goal of Kaspars Lielgalvis, very soon he realised that it is impossible without the development of the whole quarter (Lielgalvis, 2013; Ozola et al., 2011).

Today *Totaldobže*, created in 2010, is a private multifunctional cultural centre with a main focus to create an ongoing platform for interdisciplinary art and educational projects. It currently organises interdisciplinary artistic workshops, performances and improvisations events for both local and foreign artists. The centre also has two concert halls and it holds for a development objective the expansion of its residency programmes as well as a transformation into a larger artistic and creative laboratory and working station. The centre is continuously participating in many local and European projects both for the sake of its main artistic activities and for the quarter development. In addition, it has received the annual cultural award White Sparrow for fostering the popularity of contemporary art (Lielgalvis, 2013; *Totaldobže*, 2010).

The creation of *Totaldobže* further triggered the settlement of other activities in this abandoned district. Even though the district is still in its infancy, its evolutionary progress since 2010 makes it a very interesting case. While the creative and related activities do not occupy the whole territory, it is becoming a more and more vibrant centre of both artistic creation and alternative leisure activities, particularly during the warm months of the year. At the moment VEF encompasses artistic residences, fashion, photography and silkscreen studios, art gallery, extreme sports centre, café, an entertaining horror leisure track, a dance school and some enterprise offices.

Furthermore, there are ongoing informal discussions between the inhabitants of the quarter and the potential investors about the creation of an IT cluster in the district (Lielgalvis, 2013; Totaldobže, 2010; Ozola et al., 2011; Rīgas Radošie Kvartāli, 2013).



©DidzisGrodzys

Notwithstanding the discussions of the potential development scenarios the future of the VEF quarter and likewise the other creative quarters of Riga is not at all clear. In 2014 Riga is European Capital of Culture. The city's creative quarters are presented under the RIGA2014 programme Survival Kit – a contemporary art festival that gives them a space for creation. The organising agency of RIGA2014 is currently the only governmental institution that recognises the creative quarters as an important cultural player of the city. While the development process of this quarter shows the importance of such creative spaces in the improvement of the quality of the city's cultural life and its overall livability, it is not yet recognised as such by any of the important local governing institutions and other stakeholders. Thereby, led by the arts centre with the support of the rest of its 'inhabitants', the creative district is currently very actively engaged in positioning itself as a prime case of urban regeneration and artistic development. Additional lobby activities will have to be done during the year of ECoC (Lielgalvis, 2013).



©Totaldobže Art Centre

Apart from the issues related to the political agenda, the representatives of the district have to deal with several other problems. Firstly, as a result of privatisation the territory is divided between many owners. It is therefore very difficult to create a common development plan and to negotiate long-term contracts and strategies. Moreover, they face a number of difficulties related to the general development of the city such as very poor road infrastructure, transport links, access to heating and other physical components of the systems needed for the operation of the quarter. Thirdly, while enthusiastic, the district representatives engaged in positioning the clustered activities as a creative quarter often lack qualified personnel, legal expertise and political know-how, e.g with respect to lobbying at a municipal level (Lielgalvis, 2013). In order to solve these problems, the VEF quarter as an entity has joined an umbrella organisation uniting similar territories located in Riga - Association of Creative Quarters and Territories. Its mission is to create a general development strategy for all the creative quarters, offering the city new prospects of sustainable and socially responsible urban development through culture-led regeneration.

Notwithstanding the difficulties mentioned, the situation is constantly improving somewhat. These improvements manifesting in the district have also changed the mindsets of the real estate owners and other stakeholders a great deal with regard to the necessity of such processes. There is a growing overall willingness to cooperate and support the cause. To conclude, we believe that this story of the evolution of VEF's quarter illustrates a greater trend and also the necessity of bottom-up creation of creative districts in parts of the world where culture has not yet been, as we showed, put on the political agenda as a tool for developing livable urban environments.

## References

Lielgalvis, K. (2013). *Interview with the founder of Totaldobže and the representative of the quarter*. Interviewed by Timurs Tomsons and Ieva Rozentale [in person] Riga, Latvia, 28 March 2013.

Ozola, E., Groskaufmanis, M. and Zibarte, I. (2011). *Riga's Creative Quarters*. [e-book] Riga: Rīga 2014.

[http://www.meetriga.com/userfiles/files/lesutitie/RRK\\_online\\_small\\_spread.pdf](http://www.meetriga.com/userfiles/files/lesutitie/RRK_online_small_spread.pdf)

Rīgas radošie kvartāli (2013). *VEF*. [online] Retrieved from:

<http://radosiekvartali.wordpress.com/category/rigas-radosie-kvartali/>

Rikards, N. (2009). *Ieskats VEF vēsturē. [An insight into VEF's history]*. [online] Retrieved from: <http://www.bedre.lv/index.php?id=read&show=225>

Totaldobže (2010). *About*. [online] Retrieved from: <http://www.totaldobze.com/about/>

# THE CREATIVE HEART OF BUDAPEST

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

**ANITA ZATORI** (CORVINUS UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST, HUNGARY)

**MELANIE SMITH** (UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY)

*In Budapest, downtown parts of districts VI and VII are arguably the capital's creative pulse. This includes the historic Jewish Quarter, Király Design Street, and Szimpla, the world's first so-called 'ruin pub'. Within a relatively small space within walking distance of one another are some 220 architectural monuments, 180 restaurants, 31 ruin pubs, 25 hotels, 15 galleries, and 22 design shops. The area is home to a diverse range of residents of all ages and backgrounds and is visited by many Budapest residents and tourists who enjoy its vibe.*

---

Walking from the centre of the city towards Deák Square, and behind the fascinating sight of UNESCO World Heritage Andrassy Avenue, one can find oneself in a district characterised by narrow streets and an unusual area of strange contrasts. While some streets are full of life and never sleep, others are basically deserted. A mixture of luxury apartments, houses owned by the local government, and empty half-ruined buildings make the district appealing and mysterious at the same time. This district is made up of two city parts – the bigger one is constituted by inner Erzsébetváros (Elizabeth Town), and the smaller one by inner Terézváros (Teresa Town). Sometimes it is referred to as the Historical Jewish district, or Multicultural District, or district of cultural and alternative nightlife, which is “the city’s most dynamically developing part”[2], “the creative heart of the city”[3], and/or where “something exciting happens all the time”[1]. This 1 km<sup>2</sup> area is a real meeting point of cultures and lifestyles.

The district has always had a special place in Budapest’s history. Until the 19th century, it could be found just outside the city walls of Pest. Markets were held here, and Király Street was a typical commercial street filled with shops run by rich merchants. One of the first theatres was established in the neighbourhood in Hackler House at the end of the 18th century. According to Kálmán Mikszáth, a contemporary writer from the 19th century: “Since the beginning of time it has been the centre of night life. Bustling, lively, and noisy.” (Sárközi, 2006:10).

Budapest's Jewish population has always lived in the area, which resulted in both glorious and horrific historical milestones. In 1859, the biggest synagogue of Europe (currently the second biggest in the world) was built on Dohány Street, and in 1944, the walls of the Jewish Ghetto were erected in the vicinity of the impressive Synagogue. Dob Street, a dark, narrow street winding through the district, is well-known as the main street of the historical Jewish Ghetto, and it is located parallel to Király Street. Its rejuvenation only began during the previous decade. Mostly tiny streets connect the three main veins (Király, Dob, and Dohány Street), some of them hiding forgotten pieces of cultural heritage of old synagogues.



Figure 1. Király Street. Photo: Anita Zatori.

The district's glory faded after WWII. The area was mostly neglected by local authorities and city planners during the Communist era, when the apartment houses became state properties, and no renovations were undertaken. Since the nineties, the district has seen several property transaction scandals, which happens to be one of the reasons why some abandoned historical apartment buildings could not be reconstructed until now. The derelict condition of some buildings meant that the property prices were significantly lower in this area than in nearby downtown areas, especially the illustrious

Andrássy Avenue, which has always been seen as the most exclusive in the city, but even in the majority of other neighbouring inner districts (e.g. Districts V and VI). The latter fact enabled several community groups and art movements to settle in the district, which spiralled into a trend, and creativity began to bloom.

This was one of the main antecedents why a cutting-edge concept was born in the district, the phenomenon of now world-famous 'ruin pubs.' These ruin pubs are located in abandoned buildings or on vacant lots, and are characterised by thrift-shop decor. At first, these venues and any subsequent investments tended to be temporary and uncertain, but once ruin pubs became popular, a new style of interior design was born. The owners of abandoned buildings and lots also benefited from the growing popularity of ruin pubs, since they could easily sell or rent out their properties. The number of ruin pubs has mushroomed, with each venue having its very own, unique design. These peculiar pubs represent an authentic and characteristic element of Budapest's culture and nightlife, and attract a large number of foreign and domestic visitors.

Szimpla Kert (Szimpla Garden), established in 2002 by converting an old factory into a huge open-air cinema and pub, was the pioneer of this concept. Szimpla Kert is a cultural reception space of offbeat art genres, and as a civic organisation it is constantly supporting initiatives for urban sustainability. As a unique, never-before-seen pub, it became popular within a blink of an eye among locals, expats and tourists – "it represents an intercultural meeting point"[1]. While it was established „without material source, mostly by the power of idea"[1], the gist of its concept is to offer freedom and a creative space, and to encourage interactions. Moreover, it promotes itself as a "frame creating innovator", and this innovative frame has attracted so many people that ruin pubs have mushroomed in the area. Szimpla has not only been a pioneer, it also brought visitors and vibe to Kazinczy Street, as the first highly popular venue on the street. The concept embodied in ruin pubs plays an important role in the lifestyle of a generation of like-minded people, so many decided to settle down in this district. "It became a lifestyle to attend ruin pubs"[1]. Szimpla gives home to a wide variety of arts and civil movements, it has its own theatre company, regular exhibitions, concerts, art workshops, and movie screenings. Moreover, the pub itself is a piece of art – each room is characterised by a different atmosphere and thus by a distinguishable style of not-so-commonplace interior design. On Sundays, a farmers' market

with the partial aim of charity takes place at Szimpla, while another organisation, Lumen runs a vegetable incubator programme meant to popularise vegetables grown in courtyards.

The prestigious VAM Design Centre is located in the district, and the recently renovated, fascinating Gozsdu Udvar Court accommodates many hospitality businesses - e.g. Kolor, a club giving home to Vírus Est, a non-profit, weekly series of thought-provoking presentations boasting the slogan „the idea infects”. The district hosts several art workshops and exhibition spaces (such as the art students’ den, Telep), small theatres (such as Spinoza Café, loved by tourists and locals alike), bars with various cultural programs (e.g. Mika Tivadar, Gozsdu Manó), and community-creating venues (like Siraly). The idea to bracket the district’s creative initiations and to encourage cooperations while catalyzing new ideas originates from Siraly’s community, from Marom Klub Association. Quarter6Quarter7, organized twice a year, is a festival centred around Jewish religion, culture and identity. However, it aims to involve all cultures and nationalities, locals and non-locals. It provides a creative space to participate in design workshops (e.g. to create a subjective city map), workshops about empty properties and square renovation ideas, concerts, exhibitions, sports events, and guided walks provided by BUPAP about the district’s history, myths and culture with an educational purpose.

Királyutca-Designutca Cluster (in English: Király Street – Design Street), is a local business network initiation (as a member of TOCEMA Europe), the sibling cluster of KultUnio (which covers the whole district), with a goal to bring back the old fame and interest of Király Street and to increase the neighbourhood’s commercial magnitude by revitalising the empty shops and brand building. Design-themed markets and similar events are organised a few times a year, and a special card was recently introduced which enables free services and discounts for customers. They were among the initiators of the big firewall painting on one of the corners of Király Street, which was realised within the course of the Colourful City programme; a movement based on the building- and firewall-decorating concept of Victor Vasarely. Another pair of large-scale paintings appeared in the district recently, and many more empty and functionless firewalls are offering this opportunity. There is also an unusually high number of organisations and civil movements offering a platform for value co-creation, just to name a few – KÉK, Klauzália, Lakatlan, Fogasház.

Three organisers, platforms of local life and culture were asked to express their opinions regarding the district’s creativity factor and potential. [1] Gábor Kátai, PR manager



of Szimpla Kert, [2] Klára Murányi, chief organiser of the Quarter6Quarter7 Festival, and [3] Regina Papp, editor-in-chief of We Love Budapest. All three think alike about this issue, and all agreed on the high creativity factor of the area. Moreover, they all pointed out the increasing number of creative entrepreneurs and initiatives. "The city gains creative energies from this small territory"[2] , while the district attracts "people who are looking for opportunities"[3], because "it enables solutions which do not necessarily require financial investments"[3]. The district is a place "where innovations are born"[1].



Figure 2. Quarter6Quarter7Festival. Photo: Gyozo Horvath.

„Nothing is rootless... the functions are intact"[1] – the district was a vibrant area in the past, a meeting place with an intensive pulse, and after a dark past full of hardships, the district has come to life again, and boasts a colourful, multifarious image. The district, due to its undeveloped and neglected situation, offered space available for creative expression and self-fulfilment. The impression of belonging to no-one leads to an impression of belonging to anyone and everyone. It infers creativity of individuals, creativity of communities, artists and young professionals, but also cohesion of residents, networking of business entities and civil movements.

Király Street and its vicinity was chosen as a prioritised project area by the Budapest Municipality for a five-year-long period, from 2011 to 2016. With the support of local governments, a preferably joint network of investors and all the stakeholders of the district, the area might overcome its flaws of ruined buildings, neglected streets and empty parcels. As more and more investments are realised, the district might blossom into a more liveable

and aesthetically more pleasing area although careless plans of development might rid the district from the unique vibe and creative atmosphere of the present.



Figure 3. The painted firewall. Photo: Anita Zatori

**Sources:**

Sárközy, M. (2006): *A Király utcán végestelen-végig*. (All along Király Street). Kortárs Könyvkiadó, Budapest.

[1] Interview with Gábor Kátai, PR manager of Szimpla Kert, Budapest, 11 April 2013.

[2] Interview with Klára Murányi, chief organiser of the Quarter6Quarter7 Festival, Budapest, 10 April 2013.

[3] Interview with Regina Papp, editor-in-chief of We Love Budapest, Budapest, 10 April 2013.

# FROM A JEWISH QUARTER INTO A CREATIVE DISTRICT

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

**ANETT K. TÓTH** (MA IN COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES AT BUDAPEST UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMIC, HUNGARY)

**BARBARA KESZEI** (PSYCHOLOGIST, ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATOR, STUDENT AT DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY, EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY)

**ANDREA DÚLL** (PHD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY, EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY)

## Introduction

The seventh district of Budapest once was home to the Jewish community, but World War II left the once flourishing Jewish neighbourhood with abandoned houses and poorly-maintained buildings, which were squatted in the early 2000s by ruin pubs and subsequently attracted and were populated by underground artists and cultural creatives - now the area hosts subcultural<sup>1</sup>entrepreneurs, creative communities and a lively nightlife concentrated around the unique venues of the city called „ruin pubs”.

This paper aims to illustrate the present dynamics and characteristics of this creative urban environment through a case study of grassroots, small-scale fashion designers and retailers. By focusing on these space users and their relations we intend to give insight into the buzz that whirls around in this area and to reveal part of its fascinating socio-cultural history at the same time, since the present creative ecology feeds upon its unique past.

Our goal was on the one hand to put down the factors and the reasons behind the location decisions of the small-scale fashion designers and retailers and to find out what makes the “special appeal” and the “magnetic atmosphere” of the district. On the other hand we also examined Budapest’s 7<sup>th</sup> district from a relational perspective (Zhong, 2012) to get a glimpse of the interconnectedness and the creative symbiosis of the district. In order to map these

---

<sup>1</sup>We use the term subcultural to refer to those entrepreneurs who produce for and satisfy the needs of a niche market, defined by a certain look, sound, style, or identity. (For a detailed discussion of subcultures, see Hebdige, D. (1979) *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*)

informal relations among the representatives of this alternative cultural production, we used snowball sampling<sup>2</sup> combined with semi-structured interviews as our method.

Even though we have focused only on a narrow sector, through the connections these actors identified - as further credible representatives of this creative sector - a lively and far reaching world unfolded with diverse actors such as ruin pubs, restaurants, festivals and community organizations.

In accordance with an identified research gap (Zhong, 2012), we also believe that the most efficient way to introduce a creative district is by focusing on its space users, who contribute significantly to the atmosphere of the district, which make up a “creative milieu”. (Hall, 2000 cited in O’Connor, 2010). By taking alternative, grassroots businesses and subcultural entrepreneurs as the centre of our research, who once began as part of the localised scene, we can illustrate the distinctive and local bias that makes every creative district around the globe different, since they “thrive on easy access to local, tacit know-how – a style, a look, a sound – which is not accessible globally.” (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999:14)

In the creative district of Budapest this local style is highly influenced by ruin bars, which in the early 2000s were the common playground of underground scenes, now they are the flagship of city marketing and urban planning. And since the micro-businesses examined by us have grown from the soil that these ruin bars have planted, before we demonstrate the present dynamic of the district, we have to understand its past.

### **Romance of transition**

According to Ongjerth (2013)<sup>3</sup> these ruin bars “were the mix of a workshop, a showroom and a partyplace, and they have worked along a community concept, which brought a new quality in the wide range of services.” The first ruin bar, Szimpla<sup>4</sup> was opened in 2001 in an old, derelict building and soon other bars have followed. The countless empty buildings gave space to unemployed creatives, who started their own, community based enterprises here. The

---

<sup>2</sup>See the appendix for the list and a short introduction of our interviewees.

<sup>3</sup>The cultural manager of Szimpla and the founder of Fogasház.

<sup>4</sup>Szimpla means simple in Hungarian, but since the socialist era it’s also the common name of a type of coffee.

consumers and the visitors of the bars were often friends of the owner, so they often had a distinct subcultural profile.

Due to their uncertain and unpredictable future (both financial and political) they only operated on short-term contracts so they always had a transitional feeling, which was described by Ongjerth as “the romance of transition”. This was reflected in the “design” of the places which consisted of old pieces of furniture, often gathered from the street and from evacuated buildings and the walls were covered with graffitis, which made them the perfect “playground for adults” (Ongjerth, 2013).

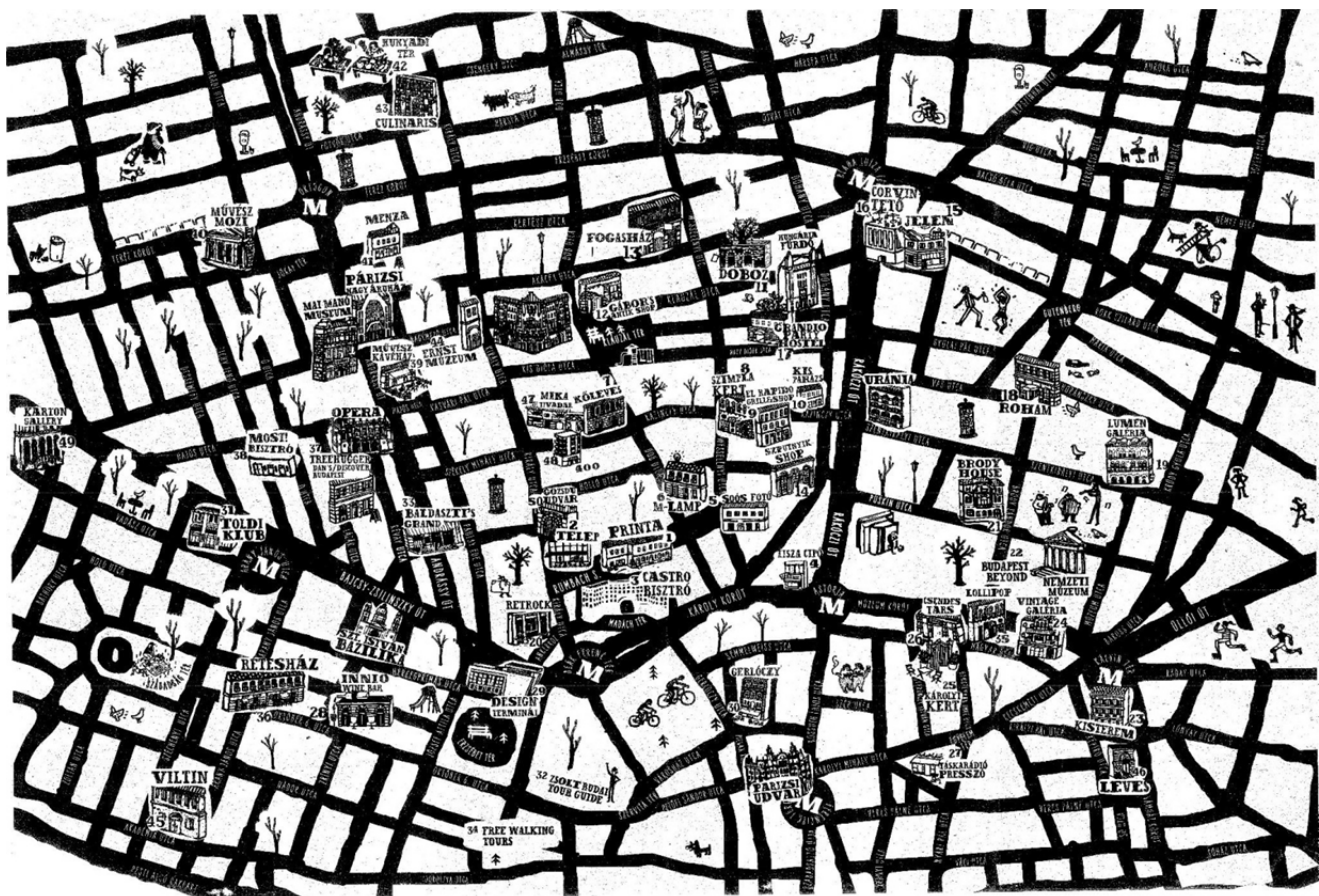


Figure 1. Map of the creative district and its surroundings. Source: Printa.

Although these places required small financial investment, the operators “often invested considerable personal time and effort into the design and rebuilding of the physical space”, and they were involved directly in the management of the venues, and maintained a personal and intimate relationship with the consumers, which resulted in a friendly, welcoming environment.

Due to the above mentioned actions the space users were able to develop place attachment, a strong feeling for the place, so these bars would serve as a second home. Therefore place identity could become a decisive feature of the district. (Dúll, 1996) An example of expressing the importance of this network is the map created by Printa (see picture below) to satisfy the needs of tourists looking for such places.

The evolution of the ruin phenomenon and the special atmosphere of these venues has even been conceptualized under the term of “guerrilla hospitality”. (Lugosi et al., 2010) Their common features - entrepreneurial cultures that thrive by exploiting their physical and social ecology and by mobilising local networks and resources - distinguished them from the traditional, purely functional and operational venues such as bars and cafés. So, instead of taking only an “ancillary” position, these ruin bars became „cultural focal points” in the urban fabric, by hosting cultural events, activities, concerts, fashion shows and partys, and had a strong commitment towards community actions. (Ibid.) This commitment is intensively present among the venues who opened before the “post-ruin bar era”<sup>5</sup> and therefore they can be assessed as subculturally credible actors. For instance the Negyed6negyed7 festival and Lumen both emphasize this with the involvement of the locals in their programs, which is inspired by the district.

### **Case studies**

In our case studies we examined subcultural entrepreneurs who were also important members of the ruin bar scene. They were either one of the costumers, visitors of these bars, or they were directly involved in their activities. For example Szputnyik, which is a vintage and designer boutique, had a pop-up-store in a ruin bar called Fogasház, and the gallery of Chimera project started from the upper floor of Telep, a bar which was run by their close friends. By being part of this subcultural network, they got to know the niche market demands and they could start to adress these demands by making their own stores, but they kept the characteristics of the ruin bars and became some kind of “hybrid form” of guerrilla hospitality. (Lugosi et al. 2010)

---

<sup>5</sup> With this term we refer to the ruin pub boom in 2005, when several pubs have been opened, exploiting the popularity and copying the design of ruin bars.

Just like in ruin bars, the owners of the shops also have a personal attachment to the place: they are directly involved in the shop's management and try to develop a more intimate relationship with costumers. As the owner of Printa (which is also a concept shop, a gallery, a screen printing studio and a café) put it: "We are standalone among the galleries, since this is a commercialized gallery. Here people can shop and have a coffee at the same time – so they don't feel uncomfortable".

They also try to balance between "the necessities of a commercial enterprise with the desire to mobilise credible, alternative forms of sub-cultural capital" (Ibid: 3093). They sell for a mostly foreign clientele, who "don't shop in malls, but can appreciate handmade, designer items" (Siberia, Retrock). They offer carefully selected, often self-made pieces, that reflect their subculture and the urban environment around them. Printa for example has its own collection inspired by the 7<sup>th</sup> district, consist of t-shirts, mugs, and even a map, a so called alternative version of the "I love Budapest" souvenirs.

These shops not only dip inspiration from the district, but also talents. They are searching for artists and designers, who will fit into their distinct profiles at local art fairs, galleries, or selecting from the ones who approach them from the street.

### **Locational decisions**

Indeed, when we asked about the reasons why they moved in the 7<sup>th</sup> district, the concentration of talent and the aesthetics and cultural meanings of locality were mentioned as an important factor. (See Zhong 2012)

Since the 7<sup>th</sup> district is in the city centre, in the old Jewish district which attracts thousands of tourists every year, it wasn't a surprise that the prestige, the centrality and popularity of this location and its relatively cheap rental prices were among the most important factors as well. Also, given the networked nature of the district described above, factors such as the networking opportunities (*"Even if you just go out to grab lunch, you are going to meet someone who is working in the industry"* - Szputnyik), or the cohesion of the cluster (*"The guys from Chimera project borrowed our ladder when they painted their gallery"* - Printa), or the closeness to partners and consumers (*"We would definitely support the concentration of shops*

*with a similar profile. Tourists would know that they have to come to that particular area to shop and they could stroll from shop-to-shop without going to the other part of town for that particular shop. And this would have a positive effect on our income as well.”* -Retrock, Szputnyik) were also mentioned.

Naturally, beyond the obvious, we wanted to investigate the implicit environmental reasons that could also stay behind the formation of creative clusters. Budapest’s most characteristic housing type is the tenement building. The layout of these buildings contains an enclosed inner yard which has been highly favorable for the temporary and transitional ruin bars.<sup>6</sup> Another fortunate advantage is that these yards can be easily covered and „autumnised”, i.e. make suitable for the autumn and winter season. Due to the district’s jewish and merchant past, the existing storefronts and workrooms can nowadays be used by small-scale fashion designers.

The 7<sup>th</sup> district’s unique feature that it is located in the center of city, it had the opportunity to accomodate flourishing ruin bars and in the meantime it also offers the opportunity to create shops. These transactional characteristics with the creative people made this district the creative district of Budapest.

### **Final thoughts**

By „playfully commenting on urban decay”<sup>7</sup> the ruin bars of Budapest turned the ruined, decayed buildings into an aesthetic feature, that has determined the special atmosphere of the district. These characteristics and the appeal of the district doesn’t seem to face any changes in the near future despite the fact that shops and bars are in a continuous motion. Neither does the networked, cooperative relationship between these actors. As Anna Zaboeva, the russian designer of Siberia put it: "I get to know the people who move in, and we become friends."

---

<sup>6</sup>Lugosi et al., 2010

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.:3090



## References

- Dúll A.(1996): A helyidentitásról. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*,4-6, 363-390.
- Hall, P. (2000): Creative Cities and Economic Development. *Urban Studies* 37(4), 639-649. Cited in O'Connor, J., Gu, X. (2010): Developing a creative cluster in a postindustrial city : CIDS and Manchester. *The Information Society*, 26(2), 124-136.
- Hebdige, D. (1979): *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. Routledge, London
- Leadbeater C., Oakley K. (1999): *The Independents: Britain's new cultural entrepreneur*. Demos, London
- Lugosi P., Bell D., Lugosi K. (2010): Hospitality, Culture and Regeneration: Urban Decay, Entrepreneurship and the 'Ruin' Bars of Budapest. *Urban Studies*, 47 (14), 3079-3101.
- Ongjerth D. (2013):Az öfenntartó közösségi helyek története Budapesten. Retrieved from <http://prezi.com/ih64ksnwoxr/az-onfenntarto-kozossegi-helyek-tortenete-budapesten/>(Accessed on 10.04.2013)
- Zhong, S. (2012): Production, Creative Firms and Urban Space in Shanghai. *Culture Unbound*, 4, 169–191.

## Appendix

List and short introduction of our interviewees in the order they were identified as credible representatives in the course of our snowball sampling:

- Chimera project (since 2011) Contact between fine art, subculture and contemporary urban cultures <http://www.chimera-project.com/>
- Printa (since 2010) Design shop, gallery, screen printing studio and café.  
<http://www.printa.hu/>
- Szputnyik (since 2009) Vintage and designer boutique  
<http://szputnyikshop.blogspot.hu/>
- Siberia (since 2009) Uniquely designed shoes <http://www.facebook.com/SIBERIAshop>
- Retrock (since 2001/2012) Vintage, one-piece creations and designer clothes  
[www.retrock.com/](http://www.retrock.com/)
- Telep (since 2010) Bar and gallery <http://www.facebook.com/TelepGaleria>
- Negyed6Negyed7 (since 2008) Festival in the 6th and 7th districts  
[www.negyed6negyed7.com](http://www.negyed6negyed7.com)
- Lumen (since 2012) Greengrocery and Community Service  
[www.facebook.com/lumenzoldseg](http://www.facebook.com/lumenzoldseg)

# TRANSFORMATION THROUGH THE REVIVAL OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

THE ZSOLNAY QUARTER, PÉCS, HUNGARY

EMESE PANYIK (CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PORTUGAL, BRAGA REGIONAL CENTRE, PORTUGAL)

## 1. Introduction

Just as industrial mass production of modern times, old factory facilities and products of vanished technologies have always attracted visitors around the world. Industrial tourism embraces both: visits to modern factories as well as to industrial heritage locations. Today, operating sites from chocolate manufacturers to power stations and automobile factories to textile producers open their doors to the public as industrial tourism offers numerous advantages to industry players: the diversification of their activities, the generation of extra income, the improvement of their image, the attraction of more employees and last but not least proximity to their customers which allows them to have a better understanding of their needs (Barnes, 2010).

Despite being a recently coined term, industrial tourism finds its roots in the Industrial Revolution at the turn of the 19th century, which substituted manual labour with mechanised production and changed the manufacturing process forever. The Industrial Revolution left a rich industrial heritage not only in its birthplace, England, but also across Europe. Examples such as the Blaenavon industrial complex in Wales or the Zollverein Coal Mine Complex in Essen are UNESCO World Heritage sites. However, most of the old industrial heritage sites in Europe struggle with maintenance issues. Their rehabilitation is one of the most challenging tasks of urban revitalisation due to the volume of investment and architectural transformation such large-scale properties require. The *Manufaktura* regional shopping centre in Łódź, Poland, transformed from the prominent 19th century textile factory by the French commercial real estate developer Apsys group, was, for example, the largest single retail asset investment in the Central Eastern European region in 2012 (Apsys, 2012).

In this regard, the aim of this chapter is to explore the challenges and practices of urban transformation through the revival of industrial heritage. The case context is an old industrial district of Pécs city in Hungary, which has evolved from the internationally known prestigious Zsolnay Porcelain Manufacture during the past one and a half centuries. The unique characteristic of this factory is that it serves as its own reference point: the building complex, as well as various other prominent buildings in Pécs and in Budapest were built using the pyrogranit ceramics and the eosin glazing technique both invented by the Zsolnay family. Following its golden age at the turn of the 20th century, the factory fell into decline during the socialist era after World War II. It was only revitalised on the occasion of the city being elected the Cultural Capital of Europe in 2010, which has become one of the largest projects of industrial revitalisation in Central Europe (Takáts, 2009). The chapter follows the dramatic transformation of a depressed and abandoned industrial area into a new 'city pole' by the establishment of a new cultural complex centred around the Zsolnay factory.

## **2. Pécs: The borderless city**

Despite not being a metropolis with millions of inhabitants, Pécs is facing the same problems of urbanisation as most large European cities. Located in the south-west of Hungary, 20 kilometres from the Croatian border, Pécs is the fifth largest city of the country with about 150,000 inhabitants (Figure 1). Pécs has always been a multicultural city throughout its 2,000 years of history and a home for numerous ethnic minorities. Its location and multicultural character have been the source of inspiration for the motto of the city used as the European Capital of Culture in 2010: 'The borderless city'.



**Figure 1. The location of Pécs, Hungary.** Source: <http://expandingeurope.pt.e.hu> (photo by: Péter Proksza), [www.graphicmaps.com](http://www.graphicmaps.com)

The origins of the city's rich historic heritage can be traced back to Roman times when the city was established in the beginning of the second century. By the fifth century it became an early Christian centre, leaving behind a necropolis complex which is today a UNESCO World Heritage site. In addition to the early Roman ruins, there is also significant Turkish heritage from the Ottoman era. The cultural profile of the city is rooted in historic traditions: the first university in the country was established in Pécs in 1367 and even today its successor is the largest university in the country with about 30,000 students.

### **3. Old city districts: The dilemma of reconstruction**

Today, Pécs is divided structurally into a historic city centre and a surrounding suburbia. The latter comprises garden cities of middle-class inhabitants that gradually left the city centre,

combined with active and inactive industrial areas. The suburbia has three city poles which function almost as “cities within the city” located in different directions from the historic city centre: to the West, a garden city established in the 1960s for miners' families working in the nearby uranium mine; to the South, a large garden city built in the 1970s to alleviate the housing shortage and to the East, the Zsolnay factory, and its surroundings, which is the oldest of all.

Established in 1853 the Zsolnay manufacture was a success story of industrialisation due to its various innovations: the non-freezing pyrogranit and the eosin ceramics were emblematic elements of Art Nouveau on the turn of the 20th century. The factory rapidly expanded and the Zsolnay brand became known not only in Hungary but also in the European market. After WWII the factory was nationalised and used for mass production of common tableware goods, which restrained the utilisation of the sophisticated, artistic techniques and degraded the Zsolnay brand (Rádóczy, 2010). After the collapse of the socialist regime in 1989, the condition of the factory became unstable, and as it can be seen in Figure 2, the buildings of the factory complex deteriorated considerably throughout the decades of decline. The situation was only resolved in 2005 when the factory became the property of the Municipality of Pécs. This provided the opportunity for the city leaders to define the strategy of reconstruction and incorporate the project in the forthcoming application of Pécs city for the Cultural Capital of Europe in 2010.

What was the direction of development defined by the project management? Often, the urbanisation efforts to restructure the historic centre and reduce the outflow of residents have negative side effects. Past experience shows that reconstruction for tourism purposes can distort the original character of the district creating an 'artificial atmosphere' of a museum. Similarly, commercial and business purposes may also lead to the partial or total loss of the unique attributes (Takáts, 2009). As old industrial districts that were once attached to the city are shutting down, large and quickly amortising 'islands' remain in between old and new districts.



Figure 2. Detail of the Zsolnay factory complex before reconstruction in 2011. Source: Zsolnay Örökségkezelő Non-profit Kft.

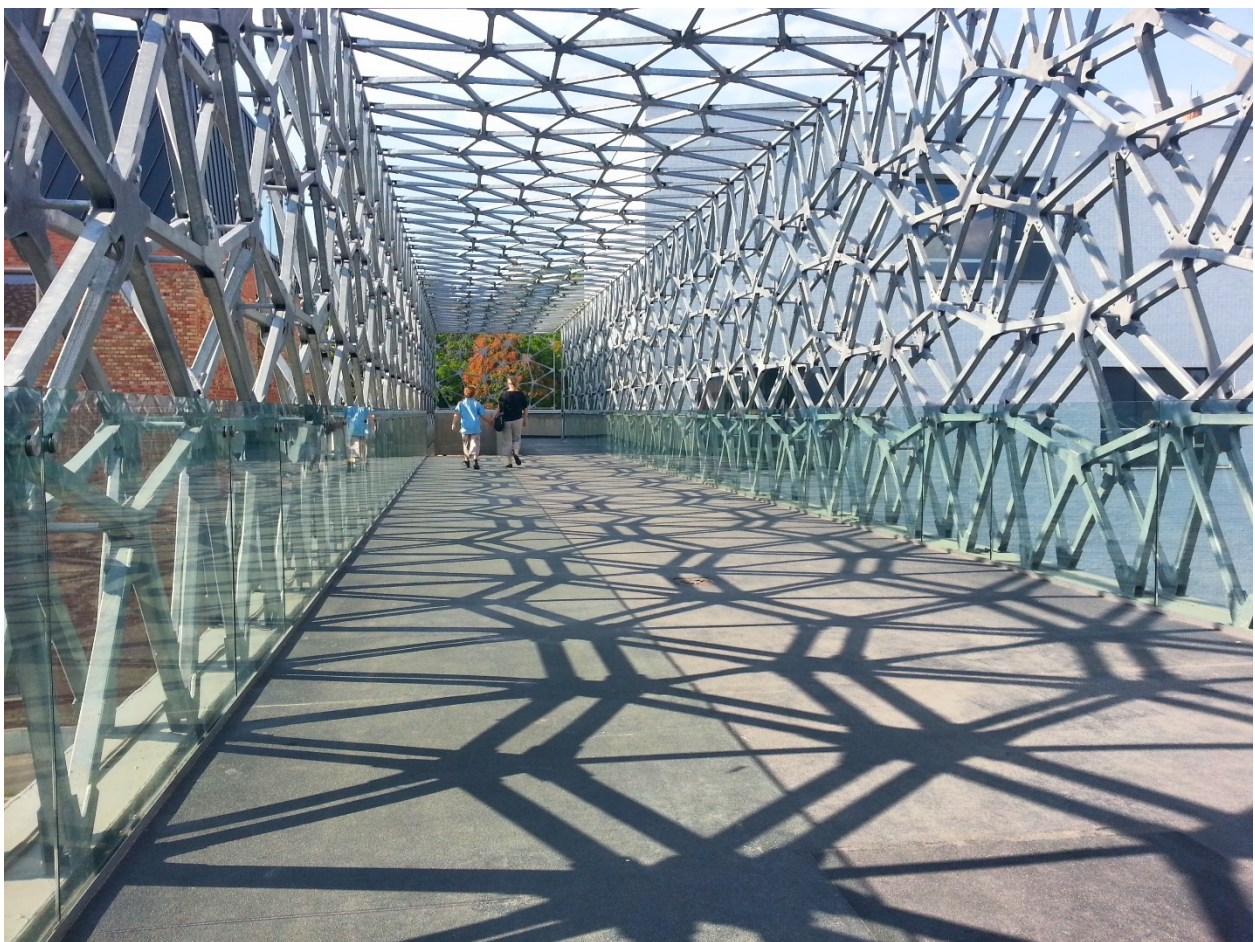
#### **4. The Zsolnay Quarter as a decisive element in the success of Pécs city's application for Cultural Capital of Europe**

The objective in the present case was the revival of industrial heritage by integrating it in the existing rich cultural heritage of the city. Earlier, the main street of the city ended at the border of the city centre, which separated two sharply different districts. People walking on the main street left from the main square and ended in a roundabout at a large open area in the outskirts. Although the Zsolnay Quarter is not located right in its neighbourhood, this spacious area provided the opportunity to erect landmark cultural institutions which served as 'stations' on the extension of the main street.

The three key institutions that function as the pillars of the project are the Music Centre named after Zoltán Kodály, the Conference Centre and the Regional Library and Information Centre which integrated the material of most of the formerly existing libraries in Pécs. In order to link these key sites to the historic city centre and to the Zsolnay Quarter, landscape elements

were developed and reconstructed: bicycle and pedestrian routes, parks, squares and a long-abandoned lake which served as a bath until the early 1980s and was left unused during the past three decades.

In order to emphasise the integrating role of the quarter, a bridge was erected above the principal highway which crosses the Zsolnay Quarter and separates the city centre and the suburbia. Pedestrians can walk across the bridge from the direction of the three main institutions to the main factory complex. The virtually transparent, artistic bridge has become the symbol of the quarter (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. The bridge of the Zsolnay Quarter.** Source: Author

The deteriorated or functionless buildings built in the socialist era were demolished and only the valuable factory buildings were reconstructed. The current production was moved to a smaller section of the factory which is now open to the visitors: the production process and



hand-painting techniques are presented (See: Figure 4). Thus the visitors are introduced directly to the Zsolnay brand, thereby creating a marketing effect that the factory alone, using traditional marketing methods and its own resources, could never be able to achieve. The Zsolnay heritage was organised into three permanent thematic exhibitions. The Zsolnay family and factory history is presented in the oldest building where the 'Zsolnay legend' was born. Two other collections are displayed separately: one from the early pink era exhibiting pink pieces from the experiments of the founder Vilmos Zsolnay, and another from the Golden Age of the factory.



Figure 4. The Zsolnay Quarter in 2013. Source: Author

The remaining buildings were given new cultural, educational and commercial functions.

This shows that the transformation of the new quarter was driven by the city's greatest strength, the cultural character, which manifested in the relocation of various cultural institutions to the new city pole, including the city's puppet theatre, Youth Centre, and the University Theatre. Furthermore, the artistic character and creative development could be witnessed by the fact that the only Faculty of Arts of the country, which belongs to the University of Pécs,

was moved to the Zsolnay Quarter. Hence the future generations of artists will get their first visual learning experiences (the so-called imprinting process) from the Zsolnay brand (Komor, 2010). The site also provides an opportunity for the introduction of the city's artists, through the main festival of the quarter, which is held in the off-season in May every year. The first Zsolnay Festival in 2012 had 60 programmes while a year later more than 140 programmes attracted 10,000 visitors. This included new initiatives led by local artists such as the "Factory Tourists" performance series, "the Zsolnay Factory Capriccio - Our City" photo competition (inspired by Bohumil Hrabal's world-famous romance entitled Cutting it short, in Hungarian: Sörgyári capriccio) and the Arts Market.

The new city pole is, however, more than just a cultural and arts complex. It also includes an interactive scientific exhibition for children and a planetarium, a hostel, restaurants, wineries, cafés and a shopping street where traditional handicrafts such as chocolates, candies, ceramics and leather products can be purchased by the visitors.

Moreover, the Zsolnay Quarter holds a symbolic meaning not only for the residents but also for the visitors. Located on the eastern border of the city it represents a cultural gateway to the East. In fact, Pécs city itself is located on the cultural periphery of Western and Eastern cultures, which put the project in perspective. Not only it allows for multipolar cultural development by balancing the central role of the capital, Budapest, but also contributes to the integration of central-eastern arts and the Balkan cultures into the international cultural networks.

## **5. Conclusions**

For almost two decades after the collapse of Socialism in Hungary in 1989, the situation and ownership of the once illustrious factory had been unresolved. The reconstruction plans were put on hold until the project became the core element of the winning application of Pécs city for the European Capital of Culture in 2010. The final choice on the city among various other candidates both in Hungary and abroad can be attributed to a long-matured project which put the urban development priorities (city district reconstruction) into a holistic perspective (conjunction of West and East, Centre and Periphery in European culture), within a future-forward strategy of urban decentralisation.

Despite this success, however, the title awarded could not have been sufficient to finance the monumental project of a city district reconstruction. It was therefore co-financed by the operational programme of the New Hungary Development Strategy for the 2007-2013 financial period. In order to stabilise the challenging number of a quarter million yearly visitors as required by the feasibility study, the programme organisers and marketing management play a key role in extending the high season and providing year-round activities. To this end, art fairs, handicrafts markets and concerts are held on a regular basis, targeting all age groups. In winter, a large backyard is transformed into a skating rink.

More recently, similar processes of urbanisation could be observed in other city districts of Pécs. In the southern commuter town called 'Kertváros' (which means 'garden city'), a new event and conference centre has been built and the Municipality of Pécs introduced, for the first time in 2013, the 'Kertváros Day' dedicated to the residents of the district. In addition, the 'University Days of Pécs' was moved to the former and also abandoned leather factory. This suggests that the urban planning model of the Zsolnay district, which targets the establishment of jobs and the growth of visitor flows as opposed to the mere extension of residential areas seems to have a multiplier effect on urban dynamics.

### **Acknowledgement**

Special thanks to Balázs Arató from the South-Transdanubia Regional Library and Information Centre, Pécs.

## References

- Apsys (2012). Manufaktura deal of the year. Retrieved in 03/2013 from:  
<http://en.apsysgroup.com/manufaktura-deal-of-the-year-183.htm>.
- Barnes, J. (2010). Industrial tourism: An Introduction. *Tourism Insights*. Retrieved in 03/2013 from:  
<http://www.insights.org.uk/articleitem.aspx?title=Industrial+Tourism%3A+An+Introduction#References>
- Komor, I. (2010). The Zsolnay Cultural Quarter. In: *The Cultural Quarter as an Urban Development Strategy*. Európa Centrum Kht: Pécs.
- Rádóczy, L. (2010). The Specialty of the Architectural Rehabilitation of the Zsolnay Factory. In: *The Cultural Quarter as an Urban Development Strategy*. Európa Centrum Kht: Pécs.
- Takáts, J. (2009). *A határtalan város. Pécs Európa Kulturális Fővárosa 2010*. Projektkönyv. Európa Centrum Kht.: Pécs.

# REVITALISATION THROUGH CREATIVITY

SAVAMALA, BELGRADE, SERBIA

MILICA ILINCIC (UNIVERSITY OF GIRONA, SPAIN)

## Introduction

In almost every metropolitan city it is common to encounter a corner or a district where there is a greater concentration of arts and culture, creative activities and organisations, as well as bars and restaurants. These so-called bohemian quarters traditionally represent gathering points of a city's cultural elite, intellectuals and artists, and provide a perfect backdrop for idea exchange and, in numerous cases, the birth of radically new socio-cultural and artistic movements. Moreover, such places have always been magnets for visitors and tourists eager to get to know a true bohemian side of the city they are visiting.

Paris has its famous artistic Montmartre, New York's counterculture scene flourishes in Greenwich Village, Bairro Alto is a centre of Lisbon's creativity, and likewise Belgrade has its own creative district called Savamala. Over the years, the historical quarter of Savamala has undergone many changes from being the cultural and social epicentre of the city, and becoming one of the most neglected parts of the city's downtown, to finally regaining the reputation of a bustling centre of Belgrade's nightlife and its artistic and creative production in recent years.

## Savamala and its Former Glory

Savamala is one of the oldest urban neighbourhoods of Belgrade located on the right bank of the River Sava. Its name is derived from the name of the river and the Turkish word 'Mahala', meaning settlement or city area (Belgradian.com, 2013).

Savamala has been developed from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when Prince Milos decided to tear down old dilapidated houses in the area and, in their place, build his residence and other important buildings such as Grand Brewery and Djumurkana (Customs), which is the first theatre in Belgrade (Maksimovic, 1995). Following these, some of the most beautiful buildings of its time were constructed: the academism style Belgrade Cooperative Building, the art

nouveau building of Bristol Hotel, the secessionist Vuco House, the traditional Balkan Manak's house, and others. These buildings still exist today, but are badly in need of restoration.

Parallel with its architectural development Savamala was becoming a bustling quarter of trade and crafts (Milic, 1995). Its main streets, Gavriilo Princip and Karadjorjeva, abounded in elite merchant and artisan shops. Consequently, the area saw the rise of many traditional Serbian cafés, called *kafana*, where people used to meet, discuss business proposals, exchange ideas or just socialise.

In conclusion, Savamala became an important river port, a centre of the city's economic, social and cultural life, populated by rich artisan and merchant city families.

### **The Era of Neglect**

Unfortunately, after the period of flourishing came the time of neglect of once beautiful Savamala. The neighbourhood was heavily damaged during the First and, especially, the Second World War when much of its stunning buildings were turned into ashes. Despite the fact that the area was reconstructed afterwards, its initial glow never returned. In the last few decades, the local government has made no significant investments in Savamala (Savamala Drustvo, 2013). Many of its important buildings that survived the bombing started to decay, particularly, when the main street of Savamala, Karadjordjeva Street, was turned into a transit road through Belgrade and started to be used by heavy trucks and other large vehicles. Thus, the beauty of spacious streets, river bank and many exquisite architectural masterpieces, are hidden behind gray facades and deteriorated buildings, as well as the heavy traffic that constantly pollutes Savamala. Only a few, out of numerous craft shops, managed to survive this period of crisis and resist the pressure of time.

### **The Creative Revitalisation of Savamala**

Luckily, circumstances in Savamala are slowly changing, as a number of initiatives has recently raised awareness of the district's importance and its unused potentials. Local cultural organisations and communities are working hard on reinventing this quarter as the centre of culture, art and design.

It all started in 2007 when the Youth Centre of Belgrade transformed an abandoned warehouse of the former publishing house Nolit into a cultural centre called Magacin ([www.domomladine.org/magacin](http://www.domomladine.org/magacin)), a place for people to meet, watch films, attend lectures and organise exhibitions and performances. The space consisting of an exhibition hall, video rooms and offices was then ceded to artistic associations and organisations for preparing and realising cultural and artistic projects.

Following their steps, in 2009, the cultural centre Grad ([www.gradbeograd.eu](http://www.gradbeograd.eu)) was formed in one of the old port warehouses dating back to 1884. Grad is the result of the cooperation between Cultural Front Belgrade and the Felix Meritis Foundation from Amsterdam, and they are all supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It houses a large gallery, art library, café bar and an art shop. The idea was to create a multifunctional creative space for organising different cultural and social programmes, while keeping the atmosphere of the old Sava warehouse at the same time.



Figure 1. Belgrade Cooperative Building – once one of the most beautiful buildings of Savamala that had long been neglected is now used as a venue of the Mikser festival. Photo: Milica Ilincic

Furthermore, probably the most important initiative taking place in Savamala is the Mikser Festival ([www.mikser.rs](http://www.mikser.rs)), the biggest festival of creative arts in the region. In 2012, this event moved from the Danube industrial area to Savamala. This was due to the district's great need for enhanced visibility and revitalisation through creativity. Numerous venues of Savamala, old, but once beautiful buildings (see Figure 1), industrial sites, cafés and bars, as well as open spaces on the river bank, provided a perfect backdrop for artistic experimentation, dynamic and site-specific inventions, workshops and performances.

The programme covered different fields, from architecture and urban planning to design and visual arts, and involved both regional and international artists as well as upcoming young talent. Consequently, key spots of Savamala have been uncovered and its systematic problems highlighted. Reuse of former industrial sites and activities, such as the restoration of old, rundown street doors through street art (see Figure 2) already infused certain urban transformations. Working in cooperation with the locals, the so-called 'Savamalians', and the municipality, Mikser set itself the long-term goal to give back to Savamala the reputation of Belgrade's socio-cultural melting pot.



Figure 2. Street doors in Savamala restored by street art. Photo: Milica Ilincic.



Recognising the potential of Savamala, the Goethe Institute in Belgrade decided to invest in the restoration of the district through a one-year project called Urban Incubator ([www.goethe.de](http://www.goethe.de)). Incubator started in March 2013 and was conceived as a bottom-up project, in which the future of the quarter would not be created by urban planners, politicians and investors. Instead, artists, architects and activists will join their efforts with the locals in implementing ten different artistic, cultural and social projects. One segment is the development of 'micro factories' by revitalising existing crafts and arts shops that should cause a positive loop and eventually lead to the opening of new shops and galleries. The aim of the Urban Incubator is to initiate the development of Savamala looking at the concept of 'creative city' already implemented in different European metropolises such as Berlin, Hamburg, Amsterdam and Zurich.

Although the initiatives still have not brought any capital investments, they have managed to transform the face of Savamala and reinvent it as a creative city quarter. A greater concentration of arts, creative spaces and events, as in the case of East London (Pappalepore, 2010) or Amsterdam's Jordaan neighbourhood (Richards & Wilson, 2007), brought with it a certain atmosphere, a particular buzz that keeps attracting people to the area. Not only have artists chosen Savamala for their galleries and shops, but now, the area is abounded with cafés, bars and nightclubs making it the centre of the city's nightlife. Moreover, the atmosphere of a place acts as a magnet, increasingly drawing the attention of international artists and tourists (Richards, 2011) eager to experience a countercultural area of Belgrade.

It can be said that the charm of Savamala, thought to be lost, is once again being revitalised and unleashed thanks to its reawakened creativity, its vibrant atmosphere and diversity of its offering.

## **Conclusion**

Utilisation of cultural and creative industries as a means of regenerating deprived city areas has been seen all over the world. Though such culture-driven strategies have shown positive effects in terms of social, economic and physical development, their long-term effects have not yet been confirmed and certain accompanying risks have been noted: insufficient

social inclusion, increased housing costs, low benefits for the local population and decreased social diversity and authenticity (Pappalepore, 2010).

However, a bottom-up approach adopted in the case of Savamala has been advocated as one that can counteract the aforementioned risks. It allows involvement of different stakeholders, primarily local communities and people that inhabit the area and possess greater sensitivity towards the needs for and context of reform (Evans, 2005). The emphasis is put on intangible aspects of culture (Pappalepore, 2010), on maintaining and enhancing the identity of a place (Ploger, 2001) and retaining local authenticity (Gibson, 2005) making such a reform more realistic and sustainable.

For now, the urban transformation of Savamala is visible in a greater concentration of multifunctional creative spaces and cultural events, in attracting creative people to the area and creating an overall lively atmosphere, all of which generally characterise creative districts around the world (Montgomery, 2003). Even though the reputation of Belgrade's creative quarter brought many medium-sized and small enterprises which infused greater tourist and local spending, it has not brought any major capital investment to the area to date.

The next step will be to attract such investments necessary for improving the district's infrastructure, restoration of its neglected buildings, roads and riverfront. The seed for this step has been planted by having the city's officials and the international community pay more attention to the district's importance and its problems. Whether this seed will grow and flourish, allowing a complete revitalisation of Savamala still remains to be seen.

## References

- Evans, G. (2005). Measure for measure: evaluating the evidence of culture's contribution to regeneration. *Urban Studies* 42(5/6), 959-984.
- Gibson, L. (2005). Cultural Planning and the Creative Tropical City. Retrieved March 15, 2013, from <https://ira.le.ac.uk/bitstream/2381/131/1/Lisanne%2520Gibson.pdf>
- Maksimovic, B. (1995). Urbanisticki razvoj Beograda od 1830. do 1941. godine. In *Istorija Beograda* (pp. 247-262). Beograd: Balkanoloski institut SANU.
- Milic, D. (1995). Drustvo i privreda u XIX veku. In *Istorija Beograda* (pp. 209-245). Beograd: Balkanoloski institut SANU.
- Montgomery, J. (2003). Cultural Quarters as Mechanisms for Urban Regeneration. Part I: Conceptualising Cultural Quarters. *Planning Practice and Research* 18(4), 293-306.
- Pappalepore, I. (2010). Tourism and the development of 'creative' urban areas: evidence from four non-central areas in London. PhD thesis, University of Westminster, School of Architecture and the Built Environment. Retrieved December 27, 2012, from <http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/8880/>
- Ploger, J. (2001). Millennium Urbanism - discursive planning. *European Urban and Regional Studies* 8(1), 63-72.
- Richards, G. (2011). Creativity and Tourism. State of the Art. *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(4), 1225-1253.
- Richards, G., & Wilson, J. (2007). *Tourism, Creativity and Development*. London: Routledge.
- Belgradian (2013). Savamala. Retrieved March 28, 2013, from <http://www.belgradian.com/sightseeing/savamala/>
- Savamala Drustvo (2013). Savamala Projekti. Retrieved March 03, 2013, from <http://www.savamala.com/%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%98%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%82%D0%B8/>

# VAROSHA – A CREATIVE MEANING THROUGH THE YEARS

LOVECH, BULGARIA

LILIYA TERZIEVA (NHTV UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, BREDA, NETHERLANDS)

One of the oldest towns in Bulgaria – the city of Lovech – is situated in the Forebalkan area of the Northern part of the country, on both sides of the river Osam. During the Medieval times it was an important military strategic centre and by the 11<sup>th</sup> century used to be called Lovuts, which actually means a town of hunters. That is where the name of the town came from.

During the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> century Lovech was one of the biggest towns and fortresses in Northern Bulgaria and had reached a good economic prosperity. Later on, after the country fell under Ottoman Rule (1396), during the years of the national liberation movement Lovech turned into the revolutionary capital of Bulgaria. The most popular Bulgarian hero Vassil Levski established a revolutionary headquarter in the town. Nowadays Lovech has established itself as a big cultural and tourism centre, attracting visitors mostly for the monuments and the unique architecture buildings, as well for the unique and beautiful natural wonders of the region.

Lovech has a population of 45,000 people and is situated between the hills of Stratesh, Hisarya and Bash Bunar. An old legend says that everyone who comes to the town and drinks water from them stays here forever. It is truly believed by the ancestors that the lilac literally captured the whole Stratesh Park because once it drunk from the water, it fell in love with the nature there. Therefore in the winter days, there is a scent of spring.

Lovech is the place where the architectural and historical district Varosha is located. The basic part of the architectural legacy of the region is related to the construction during the Revival. The old residential district of Lovech – Varosha – was declared an architectural and historical protected area in 1968. 200 historical and architectural monuments of local and national significance are located there. Merchants and people, engaged with handcraft, started living in the region of the Lovech Medieval Fortress - Varosha, in the era of the Bulgarian Enlightenment and Revival. After the Liberation from the Ottoman Empire, the district evolved according to the necessities of the new time.

The streets of the Varosha district are narrow, winding and sometimes unexpectedly in front of them there appears either a thick wall or a house entrance. The houses are rather small and in most cases surrounded by high stone walls. The yards have several levels and are decorated with plants such as lilac and roses. The houses, built in the period 1850-1870, are the best representatives of what is called “the Varosha architecture”. These architecture of these houses is designed like this that they do not have a small shop at the front side since the entire handcraft and trading activity is concentrated on the Merchants’ street and under the Covered Bridge. The Covered Bridge is one of the main symbols of the city. It has been designed by the very famous Bulgarian architect Master Kolyo Ficheto. During the Ottoman times, Midhad Pasha asked the Master to build “something original” – a bridge over the Lovech open market, under which the road between Sofia and Veliko Tarnovo could pass, and at the same time to join the two parts of the town that were divided by the river Osam. The genius builder studied the terrain and came up with a special design. The columns were strong and from stone, the construction above from wood. It was built without nails and joints, without estimation means, without a surveyor’s level and without cement. Similar to the Florentine Ponte Vecchio, the Lovech Bridge had small shops under one roof. The master wanted people to feel that they are on a real market street. The bridge was finished in 1872. It was 10 meters wide with 64 shops. It took almost 30 years after the Liberation wars when the bridge was almost completely demolished (1878), for its renovation to start all over again. In 1925 the original bridge was rebuilt, wooden and covered as it used to be in the old times. Today the Covered Bridge is the link between the Varosha district and the city centre.

The amazing appearance of the architectural heritage of the Varosha district is created by the Lovech Enlightenment House. In the process of its building and its design there can be



seen the skillful combination of the steep and rocky terrain and the medieval characteristics. The façade of the house is usually towards the yard. The ground floor is built with a thick stone wall with small windows for air-refreshment and defense. Above this floor is the living part with either

Figure 1. The district architecture, Creative Commons Bulgaria. Source: MrPanyGoff.

a balcony or a huge terrace. Each house has a stone fence with a height of 2 meters and a massive oak gate. The atelier and the shop of the owner are outside the house, at the city's grand market, which natural prolongation is the Covered Bridge. Today most of the houses are inhabited or used as museums, houses of the generation, vocational handcraft training centres and event or festivity venues.

Point of interest in quarter of Varosha are also the two from the former seven churches which are preserved to the present day - Temple of the Assumption from 1834 and "Sveta Nedelya" church from 1535. These two Churches described as the "melting pot of religion" gather more than 10 000 people every year for the celebrations of Easter.

Varosha hasn't stopped developing; along with the city revival period – becoming Bulgaria's culture centre of the Balkan Mountains and at the same time the economic boost of the automotive industry – the district of Varosha today is a centre of arts, tradition, crafts, creative clusters and culture. More than 10 annual exhibitions and festivals take place there, amongst which the annual "Culture and Art Festival", the musical forum "The scent of the



Lilacs", the rock festival "Together for Folklore and Rock", among others. This turns the old residential district of Lovech into an attractive place for both visitors and residents of the town, whereby the residents themselves organize most of the festivals and annually improve the interaction with both the regular as well as with the new visitors.

Figure 2. A house facade, Varosha district.  
Source: Proud Lovech ([www.gord.bg](http://www.gord.bg))

The municipality of Lovech received in 2012 the Annual Award for Tourism and Culture Development Contribution by the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism because of the revival of and renovation efforts made for the cultural and historical district of Varosha. As the mayor says: "In Lovech we acknowledge and shall apply the message of the famous German theoretician in the field of cultural tourism – Thomas Heinze – "in the world of Internet and Google, His Majesty – the Spectator (especially the Young one) – has all the possibilities for visiting the real cultural and historical site in advance, so our responsibility is

– despite the age, social and religious status – to create a story, a fairy tale, a myth or a legend, told with the means of the contemporary audio-visual technologies to enhance him



or her in really becoming part of it with his presence. “This is exactly what we keep doing in Lovech.”

Figure 3. The covered bridge by night, The Experts, Travel and Hospitality Experts (<http://thexperts.bg/Pokritiat-most-v-Lovech-stava-chast-ot-iniciativa-na-UNESCO>)

## References

- Changova, Y., Lovech – the fortress of the medieval city XII – XIV, 2006, Military editorial
- Tsanev, St, “Bulgarian Chronicles”, 2008, Ciela, Sofia
- Бръняков Б. Действията около град Ловеч през Освободителната война 1877-1878 г.,  
Печатница „ Светлина “, Л., 1928.
- Известия на РИМ - Ловеч, т. I-VIII, Л., Вт., 1992-2011
- Каниц Ф., Градът Ловеч от основаването му до освобождението му, Вт., ИК „Витал“,  
2001.
- Кузманова К. (съставител ), Почетните граждани на Ловеч, Регионален исторически  
музей-Ловеч, ИК „Витал“, Вт., 2009
- Кузманова К., Смесени години. История на Борисовото училище 1893-1945 г., ИК „  
Сафо“, Л., 2003.
- Кузманов Ю., Смесени години. История на училище „Христо Кърпачев“ 1945-1991 г. ,  
Издателство „Инфовижън“, Л., 2012
- Лалев И., Американският девически колеж в Ловеч, Вт., ИК „Витал“, 2001
- Лалев И., Държавно кожарско училище в Ловеч 1928-2008 г., ИК „Сафо“, Л., 2008
- Ловеч и Ловчанско, кн. I., Печатница „Книпеграф“ А.Д, С. 1929; Кн. II. С., 1930; Кн. III. С.,  
1931; Кн. 4., С., 1932; Кн. 5., С., 1934.
- Маринов Х. и колектив, Ловеч-пътеводител, С., 1989
- Миховски М., Църковно-музикална летопис на Ловеч 1854-1994 г., Бл., Издателство  
„Интелект А“ ,1996
- Станимиров С., Нова добавка към „Из черковната история на гр. Ловеч“, сб. Ловеч и  
Ловчанско. Географско, историческо и културно описание, кн. 5, С., 1934
- Стоянов П., Градът Ловеч като център на Българския централен революционен комитет,  
столица на Васил Левски и роден град на поборника Тодор С. Кирков, Вт., ИК  
„Витал“, 2001



# NEW CULTURAL POLARITIES AND THE REVIVAL OF BEYOĞLU IN ISTANBUL

ISTANBUL, TURKEY

JÉRÉMIE MOLHO

*“When I first came here in 1994, I felt very very far from home, like the other side of the world, and now in 2012, I feel very much at home.”*

These words of the jazz star Marcus Miller is reflective of the new aura that Istanbul has gained for foreign artists<sup>1</sup>. Flows of people in streets, music coming from all parts, images and sounds flavoured with a blend of East and West. The media does not need to investigate very long to find the good clichés of the ‘Cool Istanbul’ that has emerged over the last decade.

This image comes with a territorial paradox: on the one hand, it portrays Istanbul as a global metropolis of more than 15 million inhabitants. On the other hand, the clichés of ‘Cool Istanbul’ are mainly focused on a single neighbourhood: Beyoğlu. This 9 km<sup>2</sup> hilly district located on the European shore and surrounded by the waters of the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn has constituted both a magnet for the creative sector and a showcase for Istanbul’s effervescence. Since the 1980’s Beyoğlu has undergone a massive transformation in its physical, social and economic structure.

## ***Beyoğlu’s golden past: myth and reality***

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century Beyoğlu is commonly remembered as a cosmopolitan, tolerant, and a cutting-edge neighbourhood. This nostalgic memory goes along with the idea that recent urban transformations have enabled a return to its past glory after half a century of degradation.

---

<sup>1</sup> This quote is taken from a report that presents several cases of artists that chose to come to Istanbul for a short or long term : <http://blogs.afp.com/cross-culture/?post/2012/07/20/La-bouillonante-Istanbul-attire-les-artistes>

Formerly referred to as Pera, a Greek word meaning 'across', it was opposite the centre of power of the Ottoman Empire, on the other side of the Golden Horn. Due to the presence of the port of Galata, many foreigners frequented or settled in the district: Venetian and Genoese traders as well as Greeks and Armenians.

Along the 19th century, Europeanisation of Beyoğlu went along with the development of trade, industrial revolution, and the growing influence of European nations in the Ottoman Empire. French, Italian and Greek schools and embassies settled there.

The Great Fire of 1870 accelerated this movement. After the destruction of traditional Ottoman wooden houses and the construction of European style multi-storey stone buildings, the reorganisation of the street grid was eased.

Thus in the early 20th century, Beyoğlu offered not only very modern urban services such as an underground train and an electric tram, but also a wide range of entertainment. From cabarets, cafés and passages, to cinemas and theatres. This lively and cosmopolitan atmosphere went along with a strong social contrast between port workers and rich merchants or diplomats.

Conversely, in the 1980's, this same district was mainly associated with crime, prostitution, destitution, rural migrants living in deprived housing left empty by Greek populations forced out of the country in 1955.

This description has found a common ground with the critic of the modern state, accused to have promoted a uniform national identity against Istanbul's cosmopolitan richness. Yet, until the late 1970's cultural activities were still very active: cinema production, concentrated in Yeşilçam Street, was at its highest peak. Publishing and visual arts were also very prolific in Beyoğlu.

Just like the destructions of the Great Fire of 1870 had accelerated urban transformation, the 1980 military coup appears as a turning point for Beyoğlu. Repression destroyed the creative sectors as the flames had destroyed wooden Ottoman houses. Literature, cinema, visual art, as long as they were prompt to carry subversive political messages were hampered. Many intellectuals, writers and cineastes had to leave the country. This was followed by waves of liberalisation both in cultural and urban policies. Private television companies developed, philanthropists took over the city's cultural policy and obtained tax cuts. As for urban

planning, the 'Beyoğlu project' launched in the beginning of the 1980's opened major road axes within the district while pedestrianising other areas for consumption activities, especially the famous Istiklal Street. Thus, the nostalgia of the golden past of Beyoğlu favoured policies that furthered its specialisation in cultural consumption.

***Beyond the revival discourse: What made Beyoğlu a creative district?***

Despite the restrictive policies that were put in place in the beginning of the 1980's, Beyoğlu kept its attractiveness. Although the centrality of the service sector moved north with the rise of a central business district in Levent, Beyoğlu was still accessible by all modes of transport and was in close proximity to the gravity centre of the tourism sector on the historic peninsula. Besides, many international institutions were maintained in Beyoğlu: consulates, foreign cultural centres, schools and research centres. The various types of heritage present in this district represented a potential of rehabilitation: stone buildings built in the 19th century, passages, but also industrial heritage. Finally, the atmosphere of tolerance is also a factor that enabled Beyoğlu to remain attractive for creative workers, in contrast to other districts where social control can be perceived as too intrusive.

The planning system in Beyoğlu involves various levels of governments: Apart from the municipality of Beyoğlu, the municipality of Greater Istanbul is in charge of the planning through the urban conservation area development plan. Additionally, some areas are controlled by the central government, along with real estate developers. Due to the complexity of the planning system and its limited implementation, powerful private actors took over the rehabilitation of some areas. Thus, the large industrial consortiums owned by major families (Koç, Eczacıbaşı, Sabancı) started to build a cultural showcase in Beyoğlu.

The establishment of cultural poles has occurred through a pragmatic approach and generated emulation within the cultural sector, which contributed to an organic development of cultural activities in the proximity of these cultural poles.

The Biennial launched in 1989 by the Eczacıbaşı family is the most emblematic example of this strategy. Since its creation, this event had been hosted in various buildings after negotiation with public authorities. Although the two first

editions were located in historical buildings such as Hagia Sophia, it later settled in industrial buildings and in public spaces. It was a way to experiment with a cultural function for these buildings and to open the opportunity to institutionalise it. This trial and error process enabled the creation of many cultural facilities. For example, Istanbul modern, which opened in 2004, was a 8,000 square metre dry cargo warehouse and was used for the Biennial in 2003. It is now a private museum of modern and contemporary art headed by the Eczacıbaşı family. Similarly, the Biennial of 2005 used a historical building in Istiklal street and a tobacco factory, which were rehabilitated by Garanti Bank and Osman Kavala, respectively, and turned into cultural centres: Salt Beyoğlu and Depo.

### **The southern part of Beyoğlu and its major cultural poles.**

Many other new cultural poles were settled in Beyoğlu, among which can be mentioned Arter (2009) and Pera museum (2000), both put in place by the Koç family. The first is a contemporary art centre located in Istiklal Street. The second was installed in a former 19th-century hotel and took its name from the old name of the neighbourhood, in a way to assert this revival of Beyoğlu's golden past. One of the latest of these poles is Salt Galata opened in 2011. This building of the former Ottoman bank was turned into a cultural complex: it comprises a museum, a library, temporary exhibition spaces and archives.

Following the establishment of these various cultural poles, organic development of creative activities took place. First, art galleries opened in the proximity of the cultural poles soon after their opening while rents were still low. They have been successively clustering in Galata, Tophane and Karaköy. Thus, Istanbul modern constituted a magnet for these galleries. As they settled in lower-class neighbourhoods, they were accused of contributing to the rise of prices and gentrification.



Figures 1 and 2. Depo cultural center during the Biennial in 2005 and then in 2011.

### **A creative district in transition**

Some worries have been expressed for the future of this district as a creative district. The same unplanned approach that enabled an organic development of creative activities is progressively detrimental as it promotes consumption- oriented and profitable urban renewal over maintaining a creative production system.

The example of Emek sineması has been emblematic of this trend. Despite civil society's years of mobilisation to claim for the heritage value of this historic cinema, its conservation was not deemed profitable enough by the real estate developer that bought the building.

Such programmes may entail the decline of Beyoğlu as a creative district. The development of cultural poles that started in the 1990's relied on the discourse of a golden past that had to be recovered after the degradation of the 20th century, discarding the fact that this cosmopolitan atmosphere was rooted in a long lasting social mix.

## References

- Ayatac, H., 2007. 'The international diffusion of planning ideas: The case of Istanbul, Turkey'. *Journal of Planning History*.
- Çelik, Z. 1993. *The remaking of Istanbul: portrait of an Ottoman city in the nineteenth century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Durmaz, B. Platt, S., Yigitcanlar, T., 2010, 'Creativity, culture tourism and place-making: Istanbul and London film industries', *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*.
- Seni N. (2010), 'Istanbul à l'heure des musées privés', *Méditerranée*.

# CREATIVE DISTRICTS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: MABONENG PRECINCT, INNER-CITY JOHANNESBURG

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

**CHRISTIAN M. ROGERSON** (SCHOOL OF TOURISM & HOSPITALITY, UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA)

**JONATHAN J. ROGERSON** (ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA)

Johannesburg is seeking to be recognised as Africa's 'world-class' city. One area of strategic significance within Johannesburg is the inner city, which historically developed as the commercial and retailing hub of the metropolitan area. Moreover, in proximate suburbs to the inner city there evolved important nodes of industrial and warehousing with entrepreneurs engaged in a range of light manufacturing operations that included clothing, printing and furniture. From the period of the late 1970s, however, Johannesburg's inner city had begun to experience a phase of economic decline with the decentralisation of offices, commercial and retail developments to newer suburban nodes in the northern parts of Greater Johannesburg. The economic weakening of the inner-city economic cluster was accelerated by an associated rise in levels of crime and violence. Areas such as Sandton, Rosebank and Fourways emerged as the new economic spaces of Johannesburg and attracted private sector investment away from the inner city. The surrounding industrial zones also experienced decline as many expanding enterprises sought out larger industrial space in peripheral areas and other factories experienced downturn and closure because of the impacts of international competition.

Since the 1980s the ailing inner city of Johannesburg has been the geographical focus of a wave of initiatives led by the City Council and aimed at physical and economic regeneration of its fabric. A range of initiatives have been mounted to assist the revival of the inner city as a commercial, industrial and recreational focus for the city. In addition, the promotion of the inner city as part of the tourism economy of Johannesburg has been attempted through the establishment of new cultural districts and heritage developments. At the core of all the Council initiatives has been the goal of attracting and sustaining the confidence of private sector investors to participate in the economic and physical regeneration of Johannesburg's inner city. One sector that has been targeted for bringing

new economic life into the inner city has been that of the creative industries. As part of strategic economic development planning for Johannesburg as a world class city in 2005 the Council identified a number of targeted sectors for support in order to assist job creation, investment attraction and poverty alleviation. Alongside new support programmes for business process outsourcing, call centres, ICT, freight and logistics, and sport, it was announced that the Economic Development Unit of Johannesburg would actively support the sector of creative industries. Since 2005 a number of policy initiatives have been launched to assist the expansion of creative industries in the city with most attention focussed on the film sector, the fashion industry, and arts and crafts. These initiatives around creative industries contributed to a limited degree to the goals of physical regeneration of parts of the inner city.



Figure 1. Maboneng on the Eastern Side of Johannesburg Central Business District. Photo: Arabella Rogerson.





Figure 2. Arts on Main, part of the Maboneng Precinct. Photo: Arabella Rogerson.

Arguably, the Maboneng Precinct represents the most dramatic manifestation of the role of creative industries in the economic and physical regeneration of inner-city Johannesburg (Plates 1 and 2). This area is situated on the eastern edge of the Johannesburg Central Business District and historically was occupied by light industries, mainly clothing and printing establishments, and warehousing. In parallel with other parts of the inner city the area experienced economic deterioration because of the exodus of surrounding commerce and offices and of factory closures. It was a part of the industrial rustbelt of Johannesburg and avoided by most city residents and private investors. In 2008, however, the derelict warehouses and industrial premises began to attract the attention of one private property developer, Jonathan Liebmann, whose subsequent initiatives have led to a process of gentrification centred around the making of a creative hub styled by the Sotho word Maboneng meaning 'Place of Light'.



Figure 3. New Retail space at Arts on Main. Photo: Arabella Rogerson.

Former construction offices and warehouses, dating back to the early 1900s, were refurbished by 2009 as Arts on Main, which began as an artists' refuge and gallery outlets. This development rapidly emerged as a complex of art studios, bookshops, boutiques, a restaurant called Canteen and a bustling Sunday market that injected new energy and vibrancy into a neglected part of the inner city. With the subsequent refurbishment of a second derelict neighbouring building, Main Street Life, new work and recreation spaces were made available to artists, filmmakers, fashion designers, actors, entrepreneurs and residents. The six-storey building, Main Street Life, consists of residential apartments, a boutique lifestyle hotel, several restaurants and the Bioscope, which is a trendy venue for indie movie goers. Completed in 2010 Main Street Life is considered one of the most progressive residential units in Johannesburg offering a range of accommodation, a rooftop bar, gardens and a boxing gym as well as ground floor retail that includes the cinema, a theatre, restaurants and exhibition spaces. The boutique hotel, 12 Decades, situated at the top of Main Street Life, offers twelve individual designer rooms each representing one of the twelve decades of Johannesburg history. Here guests are invited to an 'authentic' Johannesburg experience. The hotel offers an innovative artists exchange for national and international artists stopping over in Johannesburg, allowing creative individuals to stay at

12 Decades for a determined period in exchange for a piece of artwork that becomes part of the collection.

The broad vision at Maboneng was to craft a creative integrated lifestyle which was based on innovation, entrepreneurship and leadership. The consolidation of Maboneng as a new creative focus in inner-city Johannesburg was confirmed with the decision by the world renowned South African artist William Kentridge to move his studio into a large space shortly after the opening of Arts on Main. Other organisations that sought space in this development included the Goodman Gallery, the Goethe Institute, and local fashion design brands. Further renovation of abandoned buildings in the surrounding area have included new development of residential apartments and an urban museum space designed to showcase African cutting-edge design. The Museum of African Design is a multi-disciplinary exhibition, event and performance space with the central aim of advancing problem-solving ideas for Africa.

In terms of the global South Maboneng precinct represents an emerging African initiative to use creative industries as the catalyst for a physical and economic regeneration of declining urban space. In particular, at the regular Sunday market Maboneng becomes an oasis of life, energy and creativity as compared to other parts of Johannesburg's inner city. Overall, the precinct represents the crafting of well-designed and unique mixed use spaces that are a hub for encouraging entrepreneurship, culture, creative expression and design. The developments taking place in and around the precinct are becoming recognised as new recreation and tourism spaces in Johannesburg and 'consumed' by both local residents as well as a growing number of international tourists.

# THE SAADIYAT ISLAND CULTURAL DISTRICT IN ABU DHABI

ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

**HAMED AL HAMED**(PORTSMOUTH BUSINESS SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH, UK)

**SHABBAR JAFFRY** (PORTSMOUTH BUSINESS SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH, UK)

**ALEXANDROS APOSTOLAKIS** (PORTSMOUTH BUSINESS SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH, UK / TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CRETE, GREECE)

## Introduction

The concept of cultural quarters or districts is based on the seminal work by Jacobs (1970), Marshall (1920) and Schumpeter (1934). The concept, developed in the back of economic geography context (Monk and Monk 2007), has received considerable attention and has grown exponentially in terms of popularity. Essentially, cluster (or geographical district) formation and emergence can be attributed to the emphasis placed on the encouragement of industrial clusters in early 1950s as a response to declining post-industrialised economies and economically deprived locations (at either the local, regional or national level). Marshall himself considered the spatial concentration of factors of production as an essential step in the realisation of pecuniary, agglomeration and labour externalities. Porter (1990) then argued that ‘geographically localised’ or ‘clustered’ firms could potentially enhance economic growth.

In culture and tourism settings, the concept has proven to be considerably popular among researchers, practitioners and managers alike, despite its relative short association with either of the two sectors. Basically, the argument is that clustering of cultural tourism resources in close geographical vicinity is an important influential factor on urban development (Zheng 2011). According to Scott (2004, 2006) cultural quarters can be described as cultural production centres providing conducive cultural environment and scope for better economic achievement and entrepreneurship (Heur 2009). In particular, the emergence of cultural quarters as facilitators of local economic growth and development is based upon the

conceptualisation of cultural heritage as capital (Rizzo and Throsby 2006, Scott 1997). Thus, cultural heritage capital may be conceived as a resource with a high economic potential (Ashworth and Voogd 1986). The literature in the area has provided a rich account of case studies and relevant papers applying the concept of cultural quarter or district as a form of policy panacea to solve local economic development and other economic related objectives (Bassett et al. 2002).

### **Abu Dhabi Cultural Quarter**

Recently, the Abu Dhabi Administration has publicised its intentions to break away from the monoculture economy relying heavily on oil reserves, by taping more systematically on to the tourism industry, following the example of neighbouring Dubai. The intention in Abu Dhabi is to build on Dubai's successful practices without repeating the same mistakes (tourism on a mass scale, emergence of prostitution and gambling, exclusion of indigenous population from the property market) (Henderson 2006, Ponzini 2011). Abu Dhabi's objective as stated in the promotional literature is 'not to become a commoditised destination for mass tourism.' Reflecting on the intention of the Emirate to offer a unique tourist experience, Abu Dhabi tourism authorities have focused on the evolution of cultural and heritage tourism in the area.

In an effort to create a destination of international standing, and at the same time differentiate the nature of the economy, Abu Dhabi authorities have recently embarked on a very ambitious project. Their plan is to create a cultural district that would house and accommodate local as well as international cultural expressions. This project, called Saadiyat island cultural quarter, is expected to be completed in 2015 and is expected to lure tourists to the emirate and at the same time create jobs in the cultural sector for UAE citizens (*The Financial Times*, 24 January 2012). As part of this objective, Abu Dhabi is planning to create a 670-acre cultural district (the Cultural District of Saadiyat Island) with the purpose of creating a cultural oasis in the desert.

The Saadiyat island cultural quarter development has been put forward by the Abu Dhabi emirate in order to create a major cultural 'oasis' in the Middle East region (Department of Planning and Economy, 2009; Oxford Business Group, 2007)).

In this respect the 670 acres, Saadiyat island cultural quarter (SICQ) development aims to become a cultural centre that could accommodate culture and cultural resources from the whole region, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE) area (Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority, 2007a, b). As the second largest city of the UAE, Abu Dhabi hopes to lure more tourism through a massive project on Saadiyat Island located along the coast of the city. The district wants to draw 3 million tourists by the year 2015.



Figure 1: The Saadiyat Island Cultural Quarter. Source:  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saadiyat\\_Island\\_Model\\_Pict\\_1.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saadiyat_Island_Model_Pict_1.jpg)

According to the plans being unveiled by AD authorities, the SICQ development is going to include:

- The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (based on Frank Gehry's concept, this will be the largest Guggenheim museum in the world, with approximately 130,000 square feet of exhibition space);
- The Louvre Abu Dhabi (a classical museum);

- The Sheikh Zayed National Museum (a museum devoted to the history and traditions of Abu Dhabi and the legacy of the emirate's much admired late ruler His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan;
- A performing arts centre (a museum presenting the best that the UAE has to offer in terms of music, theatre and dance);
- A maritime museum (a museum reflecting the rich maritime history of the UAE and the Arabian Gulf).

In total, the SICQ will include 5 landmark museums, 29 hotels, around 8,000 residential properties, 3 harbours, 1 park, 1 golf course and 1 sailing club. Each one of the 5 museums (Louvre Abu Dhabi, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Zayed National Museum, a maritime museum, and a performing arts centre) has been designed by a world renowned architect. Ultimately, the objective would be to create a cultural landmark which every western tourist would have to visit.

It is envisaged that this would allow the Emirate to diversify its monoculture economic base and compete on equal grounds with other Middle Eastern destinations (Devlin and Page 1999, Garb 2004, Krens 2007). Emirate authorities have signed agreements with the Louvre and the Guggenheim museums for long term loans to be exhibited in the Abu Dhabi cultural district once this is completed.

### **Novelty in Operations**

Abu Dhabi's objectives behind the development of a cultural/creative quarter have been different from those of other destinations (Zheng 2011, Scott 2006). Sharpley (2003) as well as Al-Hamarneh and Steiner (2004) indicated long ago that one particular challenge faced by Abu Dhabi Emirate in its effort to develop a successful and sustainable tourism industry was its run down and dilapidated stock of resources. Sharpley (2003) and Hall (2000) have argued that focusing on culture and the provision of cultural tourism resources capable of luring local, regional as well as international tourists could provide a solution to this challenge. This assertion, relating to the provision of major developments and the financial support of mega- projects as pillars of tourism development in a destination has been greatly facilitated through the concept of cultural quarters, or cultural districts

throughout the world. In this respect, (actual or prospective) destinations such as Abu Dhabi envisage that the spatial agglomeration of cultural resources could generate a comparative advantage for the destination.

However, the process of generating a comparative advantage in cultural tourism in SICQ follows a slightly different pathway. Policy officials and planners in Abu Dhabi have recognised that utilising a local-global nexus to permeate their operations could offer them the chance to retain their comparative advantage in the long term. Hence, the concept of sustainable comparative advantage, as opposed to comparative advantage. In other words, policy makers have recognised that relying on mega structures and world renowned architects alone (both examples of push marketing strategies) is not enough anymore. These marketing strategies are geared towards the pushing power of world brands and names to attract visitors to the area. For that reason, the Abu Dhabi administration has put forward a cultural tourism strategy that would attract major brand names in the area, but also actively promoting local artists and indigenous cultural heritage at the same time.

The objective here is to obtain the maximum degree of visibility and exposure to a globalised market, and promote local culture at the same time. Although these practices have been adopted many times, this does not mean that they have always generated the same level of success. This is partly down to their 'passive' and 'low value' nature. Relying on mostly imported talent and resources would probably be adequate to attract an international audience in the region at the beginning, but would not manage to create a strong sense of local cultural entrepreneurship and revitalisation leading to urban regeneration. Focusing equally on attracting global (mostly imported) resources, as well as facilitating the production of local (native) cultural resources and output offers a novel way to urban regeneration through cultural quarter developments. Thus, adopting a local-global nexus as far as Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island cultural quarter is concerned could ensure long-term sustainability of comparative advantage.

Instead, pulling marketing strategies tend to focus more on the utilisation and exploitation of the comparative advantage generated through local differences and variations. These pulling marketing strategies entail retailers or policy makers identifying the features and attributes of the local or domestic supply that are mostly



appealing to customers and provide them – supply and demand in its purest form. This is the basis of a pull strategy. Create the demand, and the supply channels will almost look after themselves. Or in other words, a globalised strategy with a local twist.

## References

- Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA), (2007a January 31) *Abu Dhabi Commissions World's Top Architects for Museum and Performing Arts Centre Designs*. Abu Dhabi: ADTA.
- Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA), (2007b) Saadiyat Island Cultural District Exhibition. Abu Dhabi: Emirates Palace.
- Al Hamarneh, A. and Steiner, C. (2004), Islamic Tourism: Rethinking the Strategies of Tourism Development in Arab World after September 11, 2001, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24, pp. 18 – 27
- Ashworth, G. and Voogd, H. (1986) The Marketing of Urban Heritage as an Economic Resource. *Paper at the Conference on 'Planning without a Passport'*, Maastricht November 5 – 9, 1986
- Bassett, K. Griffiths, R. and Smith, I. (2002) Cultural Industries, Cultural Clusters and the City: The Example of Natural History Film Making in Bristol, *Geoforum*, 33, pp. 165 – 177
- Department of Planning and Economy, (2009), *"The Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030"*, The Government of Abu Dhabi: Abu Dhabi
- Devlin, J. & Page, J. (1999) Stepping stones: Arab integration, competitiveness and the Euro-Med Agreements, *ERF Workshop on the Dynamics of New Regionalism in MENA: Integration-Euro-Med Partnership Agreement and After*, Cairo, 6 – 7 February.
- Financial Times, The (2012) *Abu Dhabi Approves Spending Boost*. The Financial Times. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0.html>. Accessed 25 January 2012
- Hall, P. (2000) Creative Cities and Economic Development, *Urban Studies*, 37, pp. 639 – 649
- Henderson, J. (2006) Tourism in Dubai: Overcoming Barriers to Destination Development, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 8, pp. 87 – 99
- Garb H., (2004), "The Dubai Shopping Festival as a Catalyst for Tourist Development and Urban Transformation", *In: Long, P. and M. Robinson (Eds.), Festivals and Tourism: Marketing, Management and Evaluation*, Business Education Publishers: Sunderland
- Jacobs, J. (1970) *The Economy of Cities*. New York: Vintage Books

- Krens, T. (2007) *Cultural Endeavours*, The Report Abu Dhabi 2007, Oxford Business Group: Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority
- Marshal, A. (1920) *Principles of Economics* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.), London: MacMillan
- Monk, A. and Monk, C. (2007) Economic Geography: The Rising Star of the Social Sciences, *Oxonomics*, 2, pp. 16 – 20
- Oxford Business Group, (2007), “The Report; Abu Dhabi 2007”, Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority, Abu Dhabi
- Porter, M. (1990) *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*. New York: Free Press
- Ponzini, D. (2011) Large Scale Development Projects and Star Architecture in the Absence of Democratic Politics: The Case of Abu Dhabi, UAE, *Cities*, 28, p. 251 – 289
- Rizzo, I. and Throsby, D. (2006) *Cultural heritage: Economic Analysis and Public Policy*, In: Ginsburg, V. and Throsby, D. (Eds.), *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture*, Amsterdam: Elsevier
- Scott, A. (1997) The Cultural Economy of Cities, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 21 (2), pp. 323 – 339
- Scott, A. (2004) Cultural Products Industries and Urban Economic Development Prospects for Growth and Market Contestation in Global Context, *Urban Affairs Review*, 39, pp. 461 – 490
- Scott, A. (2006) Creative Cities: Conceptual Issues and Policy Questions, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 28, pp. 1 – 17
- Sharpley, R. (2003) The Challenges of Economic Diversification Through Tourism: The Case of Abu Dhabi, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4, pp. 221 – 235
- Schumpeter, J. (1934) *The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits Capital, Credit, Interest and the Business Cycle*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA
- van Heur, B. (2009) The Clustering of Creative Networks: Between Myth and Reality, *Urban Studies*, 46(8), pp. 1531 – 1552
- Zheng, J. (2011) ‘Creative Industry Clusters’ and the ‘Entrepreneurial City’ of Shanghai, *Urban Studies*, vol. 48(16), pp. 3561 – 3582

# CREATIVE HERITAGE: MELAKA AND ITS PAST

MELAKA, MALAYSIA

**CAN-SENG OOI** (COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL, CENTRE FOR LEISURE AND CULTURE SERVICES, DENMARK)

**SHEVREN LAI** (COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL, CENTRE FOR LEISURE AND CULTURE SERVICES, DENMARK)

Despite the celebration and promotion of the creative economy, there is still a “dark” side to creativity. Creativity entails experimentation, chaos and failures. A creative space blends the aesthetics with chaos, sleek design with experimentation, and economic development with failed ideas. This case looks at the ambiguous and ambivalent interfaces of history in the historical city of Melaka (also known as Malacca) in Malaysia.

History, by its definition, is a documentation of the past. Any historical documentation can be contested and revised. This case will not engage in the debate on revisionist history. Instead, it will show how history and heritage is negotiated and appropriated under present circumstances in the historic city of Melaka. The re-interpretation and revision of history is part of the everyday creative response to changing circumstances. Such contemporary responses to the past, however unclear and acrimonious, are the essence of a creative place.

## **A short history of Melaka**

Melaka was a maritime powerhouse and gave its name to the world’s busiest shipping lanes, the Straits of Malacca. It is also where the founding story of Malaysia unfolded. Malaysia is said to have started as the sultanate of Melaka in 1396 when Parameswara, a Sumatran Prince set foot on the small fishing village (Wee 2009; Worden 2003). Today, the state of Melaka is 1,664 km<sup>2</sup> in size, located 148 km from Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia.

Sitting on the maritime highway that connects Europe to Asia, Melaka has attracted merchants and traders over the centuries. It thus was and is a confluence of diverse cultures from the West and East. Because of its maritime importance, the city was sought after by

European powers. Melaka was colonised by three European powers, starting from 1511 to 1957. The first was by the Portuguese for 130 years, then the Dutch (154 years), followed by the British, who colonised the whole of Malaya for 162 years. Today, Melaka Historical City is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, designated so since July 2008.

### **Histories**

The rich past of the historical city is a resource for Melakans and their leaders to imagine and envisage the city. But since the country's independence in 1957, the national authorities have an ambivalent relationship to the country's colonial pasts. The colonial past is a reminder of the weaknesses of its earlier rulers but the colonialists, especially the British, have left behind useful legacies, such as English as a working language, a functional bureaucracy and a well-oiled legal system. Melaka is the seed of this colonial past, and thus embodies this ambivalence.

The Portuguese ruled Melaka for 130 years, and the remnants of the walls of St. Paul's Church are visible reminders of this past. Outside the ruins, a white marble statue of St. Francis Xavier, a Catholic priest who manned the church in 1545 until his death in 1553, stands tall (Wee 2009). Also, the remains of the front gate of the fortress 'Porta De Santiago', built in 1512 by General Alfonso d' Albuquerque to protect the Portuguese colony, has become a tourist icon for the city (see Williams 2010, Picture 1). Such heritage sites sit uncomfortably with the authorities because they are reminders of a colonial past and indicate a strong previous presence of Christianity in the now Muslim country. Regardless, such remnants are central in recognising Melaka as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Figure 1. Locals doing morning exercises in front of the fort and St. Paul's Church (on hill). Photo: Can-Seng Ooi.

A response to the highly visible Portuguese past is to assert the presence of other histories. The St. Paul's Hill Civic Area where the fort and church reside, and is part of the designated world heritage site has been transformed into an area with numerous museums. Colonial architectural buildings acquire new use and meanings. For instance, the Stadthuys building, the former Dutch town hall is now the Museum of History and Ethnography, which showcases the history of pre-Malay Sultanate of Melaka to the present; the emphasis, however, is on the injustice and cruelty of colonialism and the glory of a newly independent Malaysia. The building itself is reduced to a shell telling politically acceptable stories of the present.

There are about twenty other museums – e.g. Kite Museum, Melaka Stamp Museum, Malay and Islamic World Museum, Architecture Museum of Malaysia – in Melaka, all managed by the Melaka Museum Corporation, a statutory agency in the Melakan government. Most of these museums are housed in beautiful colonial buildings. Essentially, new social, cultural and historical contents are injected to these old spaces. The 'museum district' highlights Malaysia's



Figure 2. Inside a Chinese Peranakan restaurant, besides food being served, one can buy souvenirs. Photo: Can-Seng Ooi.

journey from feudal state into modern nation, and celebrates a Malay-Muslim oriented view of the world. Thus new stories and histories are creatively embedded into old physical heritage.

Such official views of the past draw responses from the local communities, too. In the current social engineering programme in Malaysia, the Malays are given more privileges and rights. Minority ethnic groups, including the Chinese and Indians, lament that they are treated as second-class citizens. In response to the state-supported museums, private individuals and firms are now creating their private museums to celebrate their own

non-Malay and Muslim-oriented heritage. For instance, the Baba-Nyonya Heritage Museum celebrates the *Peranakan* or

Straits Chinese culture. In a nutshell, *Peranakan* culture is a blend of Chinese and Malay culture. There is also the Indian-Malay *Peranakan* culture. Nearby, Singapore has celebrated *Peranakan* culture because it is considered an indigenous evolution of a local community (Ooi, 2010). But in Malaysia, the *Peranakans* are seen as a threat to the official view that the Malays are the true indigenous people.

Regardless, locals and local businesses soon discovered that the authorities may tolerate the accentuation of *Peranakan* culture, especially if it is presented in a non-political manner. In fact, the *Peranakan* community during the British colonial times was well educated, English speaking and largely pro-British. After more than half a century, the presented *Peranakan* heritage seems to be devoid of politics and has been reduced to social cultural interests, even

by non-state supported and private enterprises. There are at least two reasons for this. The first is that members of the community are subjected to the Malaysian social engineering programme, as they are educated to speak Malay and see their country through the struggle for independence led by the Malay community. Many younger Malaysians do not know of the *Peranakan's* political and historical contributions. The second reason is that private enterprises have experimented and now have learned not to arouse the ire of the authorities. So, a depoliticised *Peranakan* culture has been translated not only through the private museums but also restaurants, hotels and tourist souvenirs (Picture 2). *Peranakan* culture flourished under the tourism trade, as it has been translated into objects for tourist consumption. This fits nicely into the official “Malaysia – Truly Asia” destination brand of the country, which communicates that Malaysia is home to a blend of various Asian cultures.

Lessons have also been learned from best practices in the regeneration of urban areas and urban planning, and consequently the authorities encourage initiatives, and now enliven the city through the beautification process. One of the most prominent projects is the colourful murals along the river (Picture 3). People taking the river cruise will enjoy the walls of old buildings painted with tropical flowers, local foods and Malaysians in different ethnic costumes. This celebrates a non-politicalised and tolerant multi-culturalism.



Photo 3. Colourful wall murals along River Melaka. Photo: Can-Seng Ooi.



### **Conclusions: Creativity with Malaysian characteristics**

The picture we have presented tells about the politics behind a heritage city. History and heritage is political. Nonetheless, we want to highlight how history is not only politically contested, it has become an arena for creative responses to current social political reality.

St. Paul's Church and the fort are focal points for the local community, which the authorities cannot ignore. The response is to layer other stories and histories to show that Melaka is richer than its colonial past. These other stories and histories tend to tow the official Malay-Islam-oriented lines. As national policies explicitly discriminate other ethnic communities in Melaka (and Malaysia), locals have responded in different ways. Many non-Malay opposition politicians call for an overhaul of Malaysia's ethnicity-based politics, others in the ruling coalition merely want to draw concessions from the government. In the case of Melaka, local enterprises have found ways to celebrate and draw economic gains from local heritage. As in the case of the *Peranakan*, their rich past is gloriously presented, albeit devoid of political contents.

What this case shows is that creativity is as much about aesthetics, ideas and economic growth, as it is about dealing with local circumstances and political realities. With this in mind, Melaka has become a creative place at various levels. The residents and other stakeholders use the city's heritage in ways that do not threaten the current political reality, while pushing the limits; they have expanded their spaces for cultural expressions. Non-official histories authentic to Melaka have now emerged, serving social, cultural and economic needs. In turn, the authorities find new boundaries for their social engineering efforts; non-political but culturally-rich expressions do not seem to threaten the system but offer economic potentials, and an image of a tolerant society. Such expressions are thus largely accepted, if not encouraged.

## References

- Ooi, C.-S., (2010) Histories, tourism and museums: Re-making Singapore. In Hitchcock, M.; King, V.T. and Parnwell, M. (Eds.) *Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press. 83-102.
- Wee, B., (2009) *Malacca: A World Heritage Site, Historically Majestic*. Kuala Lumpur: Purple Production & PR Consultants (M) Sdn Bhd.
- Williams, T., (2010) Melaka and World Heritage Status. *Conservation and Management of Archeological Sites*, 12(3), 197-208.
- Worden, N., (2003) National Identity and Heritage Management in Melaka. *Indonesia and The Malay World*, 31 (89), 31-43.

# ANIMATION BREATHES LIFE INTO CHINESE CITIES

CHINA

VINCENZO DE MASI

YAN HAN

**Keywords:** Chinese animation, soft power, animation industry, creative economy, animation districts.

The animation industry today is considered one of the most interesting industries, both economically and culturally. From the creative point of view this sector is one of the most innovative because it can span different languages, taking inspiration from literature, film, TV, music, and other artistic features (Newman, 2012), and then merge them into a new artistic expression (Aldrich 2007, Bittanti 2008).

The Chinese government in line with the policy of soft power has recognised in the animation industry a strategic sector in the context of the creative industries; that's why since 2006 the Chinese central government has financed and supported this sector, urging local governments, regions, provinces and cities to finance and help through tax breaks, direct loans, interest subsidies, etc. (Keane 2007, Montgomery 2010).

In fact in the last few years China has become the first world producer of animated products with upwards of 220,000 minutes produced in 2011. To reach this goal, the Chinese central government has offered financial support with tax relief in order to help the birth of new industrial areas in China, changing and regenerating districts and areas of small and big cities.

Cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Tanjin have upgraded old quarters in order to establish an industrial design focused on animation, for example, in the Chinese capital new creative poles such as the district near the Beijing Cartoon Art Museum

were born with the help of the central government, an animation department was created at the Communication University of China (Figure 1) and Beijing film



Figure 1. Department of Animation at the Communication University of China, Beijing. Photo: Yan Han.

academy; an air industrial was revitalised with companies having as a principle the creativity and art such as the 798 Art Zone in Beijing. In fact, previously this industrial district was dedicated to the production of military technology. (Figures 2 and 3), and here there was the birth of some very famous design and production studios such as the Hutoon Studio (Figures 4 and 5) led by the animation director Pisan.

Since October 2006 China had already been able to generate new creative jobs with the birth of 5473 animation studios. There were 477 animation departments and 1,230 universities offering studies on animation (Xiang 2006). According to Zhao Shi, Deputy Director of the State Administration of Radio, Film and (SARFT) in the last few years there were about *“64,000 graduated students majoring in animation at university and more than 466,000 were studying in colleges.”*<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Xinhua News Agency, *Record 81,000 Minutes of Cartoons Produced in 2006*, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/news/194658.htm>, last visit 16 June 2013.

The goal of the government is to allow the creative people to work with a multitude of people who, through the products of animation, were able to create a virtuous new economy, giving importance especially to the creative features rather than the material ones.

Even though the animation industry is in its early stage of development, many steps have been made on this creative wave, for example, in the *Proceedings of 2007 Chinese City Planning*. It showed that there were four big-scale animation and comic industry cluster areas around mainland China by 2006. They are Beijing-centred Bohai Rim, Yangtze River Delta which centred in Shanghai, Hangzhou and Nanjing, Pearl River Delta centred in Guangzhou and Shenzhen, and middle part cluster region centred in Chengdu, Changsha and Wuhan. At the same time, the *2006 China Animation Yearbook* listed the mainly productive animation companies in mainland China by 2006, including CCTV China International Television Corporation, Shanghai Studio, Sanchen Cartoon Group, Wuxi Taihu Digital Animation Film Pioneer Park, Shenzhen Yijing National Animation and Comic Industrial Base, etc.



Figure 2. 798 Art Zone, in Chaoyang District of Beijing. Photo: Vincenzo De Masi.

However, as an advocate of creative industry and preferential policy, the places of animation emerged all over the country. According to the *2010 China Animation Yearbook*, there are four types of places under the title of 'National Animation and Comic Industrial Base'.



Figure 3. Another place of 798 Art Zone, in Chaoyang District of Beijing. Photo: Vincenzo De Masi.

They are National Animation Industrial/Educational Base belonging to SARFT, National Animation Video Game Industrial Revitalisation Base belonging to the Ministry of Culture, National Online Game and Ani-com Industrial Development Base belonging to GAPP, and National New Media/Software Technology Base belonging to MOST. From the list we can see that Hunan province, Liaoning province and Sichuan province all hold three types of bases following Shanghai and Beijing. Jiangsu province and Guangzhou province only have two. Zhejiang, Jilin, Fujian, Shanxi, Shanxi, Hubei, Hebei and Shandong are the emerging animation provinces. However, in the *2011 China Animation Yearbook*, it is stated that the Top 5 of animation production is Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Guangdong, Liaoning and Fujian, which does not have the most Animation Bases.

<b>Type</b>	<b>City &amp; Province</b>
Animation Industrial/ Educational	Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hunan, Guangdong, Hubei, Liaoning, Chongqing (Sichuan), Jilin, Fujian, Shanxi, Shanxi
Animation Video Game	Shanghai, Jiangsu, Hunan, Liaoning Sichuan
Online Game and Ani-com	Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Liaoning Sichuan, Hebei
New Media/ Software Technology	Beijing, Shanghai, Hunan, Sichuan, Shandong

Table 1. The most important Chinese cities and provinces and their major productive specialities.

By comparing the situation of Chinese animation in 2006 and 2010, one can see a significant development in the industry across the various provinces so that its magic has touched the production of animation which was not only booming in big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, but also in small cities. Take Xiamen as an example. Xiamen Software Park was set up in 2000 and now its third-phase project is under development. Its aim is to create headquarters dealing with software, Ani-com & games and circuits. At the same time, the regions that have advanced in politics, economy and culture are turning to expand the depth and breadth of Chinese Animation. On the one hand, developing new media technology and combining with traditional animation, and on the other hand, completing the animation industrial chain. For example, in 2009 the first Animation and Comic Museum opened in Xuzhou, province of Jiangsu<sup>2</sup>, then Shanghai Animation and Comic Museum opened in 2010 and in 2013 the National Animation and Comic Museum (中国动漫博物馆, *Zhōngguó Dònghuà Bówùguǎn*) that cost 1 billion RMB, scheduled to open in Hangzhou by the end of 2013.

The *China's Culture Industry Development Report (2012-2013)* points out that the development of China's cultural industry is entering into a substantial inflection point; the culture market will change from a shortage into overproduction.

<sup>2</sup> Xuzhou Animation Museum, <http://www.86wiki.com/view/3115941.htm>, last visit 12 June 2013.

In addition to the opening of Disneyland (Disney Resort), planned to open at the end of 2015 in Shanghai, the first in mainland China, another interesting project named the China Comic and Animation Museum (CCAM) will be opened and it will be realised by the Hangzhou Urban Planning Bureau (L'Espresso 2008). This work began in 2012 and is very interesting because it plays a part in upgrading into a developing part of the city through the introductions of cultural cornerstones becoming a focal point of the district. It is expected to be completed by 2013<sup>3</sup>. The museum is very special from an aesthetic point of view. In fact, it will have the form of eight balls which host the international museum of animation inside. The area of the museum is



Figure 4. Hutoon animation Studio at the 798 Art Zone, in Chaoyang District of Beijing. Photo: Vincenzo De Masi.

estimated to be some 30,000 square metres, a number of public plazas, an expo centre of about 13,000 square metres and a number of islands in the parks. The project is designed by the Belgian architecture studio MVRDV with a budget of some 92 million euros. The Chinese central government plays a fundamental role in the development of this sector – one that had little reason to shine on the world stage a few years ago.

---

<sup>3</sup> China Daily, *China Comic and Animation Museum design unveiled*, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/hangzhou/e/2011-05/04/content\\_12443622.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/hangzhou/e/2011-05/04/content_12443622.htm), last visit 27 June 2013.



Due to the new interest and involvement in animation productions, the appearance of many districts and provinces is slowly changing in China causing a significantly high social and economic knock-on effect which will be evident in the near future. Based on the fact that China is one of the eastern countries taking centre stage it is only right that design is now following suit. The creative industry of animation has had a dramatic impact in a few years' time and it has felt the need to create places that harboured this kind of creative industry. Besides the Chinese corporate interest, large American companies are planning to create new jobs in China finding it impossible to ignore the possibilities for growth. Disney and Dreamworks plan to enter this market and are already building theme parks and collaborating with the animation industry for the production of films and television series co-produced by the brand created in China. Japan is ahead of the rest already taking advantage of the ripe source, studios are already present in China, having sold the rights for the construction of a park and a museum dedicated to Japanese productions. In fact, the Hello Kitty theme park is expected to open in 2014 in China's Zhejiang province. Projects will surely be completed in the coming years and new ones will be born making China become an important player for the creative industry and its urban development.

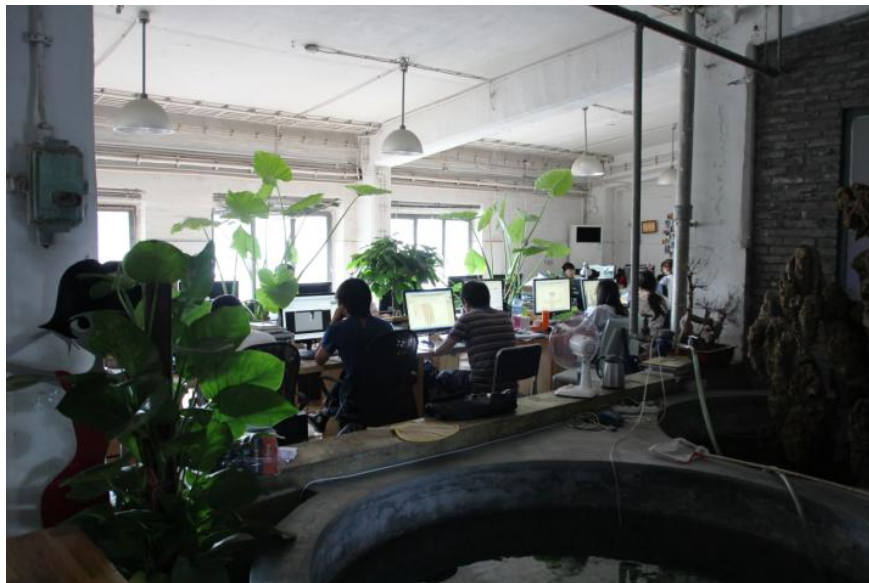


Figure 5. Inside Hutoon animation Studio at the 798 Art Zone, in Chaoyang District of Beijing. Photo: Vincenzo De Masi.

## References

- Aldrich C., Gibson D., Prensky M. (2007), *Games and Simulations in Online Learning: Research and Development Frameworks*, Idea Group Inc (IGI).
- Animation Bluebook (2012), *Chinese Animation Industry Development Report (2012)*, Social Sciences Academic Press (China).
- China Animation Yearbook 2006, China Radio and Television Press, 2007, 378-393
- China Animation Yearbook 2010, Anhui children press, 2011, 235-239+
- L'Espresso (2008), Volume 55, Edizioni 13-17, Editrice L'Espresso.
- Guthrie D. (2012), *China and Globalization: The Social, Economic and Political Transformation of Chinese Society*, Routledge.
- Jin D., Chee F. (2008), Age of New Media Empire: A Critical Interpretation of the Korean Online Game Industry, *Games and Culture, A Journal of Interactive Media*, 38-58.
- Keane M. (2007), *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward*, Routledge .
- Montgomery L. (2010), *China's Creative Industries: Copyright, Social Network Markets and the Business of Culture in a Digital Age*, Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Proceedings of 2007 Chinese City Planning, Heilongjiang Science and Technology Press 2007,1537-1540.
- The China's Culture Industry Development Report (2012-2013) points out that [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2013-03/25/c\\_124500718.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2013-03/25/c_124500718.htm), last visit 16 June 2013.
- Xiang Zhong 廖祥忠 主编(2006), *中国动画年鉴 (China Animation Yearbook)*, 中国广播电视出版社 (China Radio and Television Press), p.13.

# COMMUNALITY WITHOUT COLLECTIVITY

FOTAN, HONG KONG

DAISY TAM (HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY)

The Fotan industrial village is located in the North East part of Hong Kong; tucked away in the New Territories on the mainland<sup>1</sup>, it is, to many (even those who live in Hong Kong), a world away. Unlike Central, whose skyline is the face of the city, the humble industrial estate is not graced by the design of world famous architects. Like many other industrial areas, the unremarkable concrete buildings were originally built for light industries; but as the cost of real estate and labour reached for the sky, factories moved north of the border into mainland China. These industrial estates that stood for the past 50 years have witnessed Hong Kong's economic backbone shift from manufacturing to finance. The loading bays that have seen the heyday of this era mutely observed as the containers and traffic dwindled. Fotan, as with other industrial areas of Hong Kong, quietly became forgotten. Today, apart from a handful of printing business and food processing plants, the majority of the units have turned into offices and storage spaces.

Hong Kong prides itself as the financial centre of Asia, but what the celebrated skyline of bank towers also points to, is a lack of investment and support for the development of art and culture. Coupled with high property prices, artists have long been victims of the neo-liberal economy in the city also known to insiders as the "cultural-desert". In a capital driven society, industrial spaces from a bygone era became the only haven for displaced artists, which offered relatively large spaces at a low cost well-suited to the setting up of studios and workshops. Most of these studios are independent but they are united by the cheaper rent that the older

---

<sup>1</sup>The geographical territory of Hong Kong is composed of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories. Hong Kong island houses the Central Business District and is often regarded as the heart of Hong Kong. The Kowloon Peninsula and the North Eastern New Territories are located on the continent bordering with mainland China.

buildings offer. Local painters, sculptors, carpenters, designers slowly gathered and settled in the emptied units of the massive blocks of towers. As the trend gained momentum, a critical mass formed and Fotan became a hub for local artists.

These newcomers are not always welcome and are in fact often met with raised eyebrows from older tenants from the industrial era. The young, often hip and rather bohemian group of youngsters is perceived to be somewhat interrupting the normal running of business<sup>2</sup>. Artists and local entrepreneurs sit rather uncomfortably alongside each other, each keeping to their own territory. This is in turn juxtaposed with a precariousness from the government: from a legal perspective, industrial lease requires the units to be used for production or go down purposes. As many of these businesses and artists are not technically adhering to the lease, the common secret joins these occupants in an unspoken pact, each tacitly maintaining cover for the other.

For most of the year, Fotan operates to a normal business rhythm and the only sign of artists are the dispersed lights in various buildings that shine late into the night. All except for the weekends of one month in the year, when studios open its doors for *Fotanian* – a festival where artists invite the public to view their workshops and their work. During that time, a striking transformation takes place. Shutters are pulled up and doors are pulled back, letting music and light flood the dark and quiet corridors. The streets, deserted by the weekday workforce, are replaced by crisscrossing visitors armed with maps. The cargo lifts, usually smoothly operated by professional workmen, jolted in the hand of amateurs. The whole area transforms itself into a giant art safari, where not only galleries, but buildings and roads and local daipai dongs<sup>3</sup> also become part of the scene. Fotan, with its lack of attractions is not a usual destination, and for many, industrial spaces were as much of an exotic experience as the art.

---

<sup>2</sup>According to the Planning Department of Hong Kong Government, the majority of industrial floor space is used for warehouse/ storage purposes (55.9%), second and third largest uses are office (11.9%) and ancillary office (8.7%) (Industrial Report 2009) The majority of offices house trading companies which most deals with business in China.

<sup>3</sup>Local outdoor eateries – roast pigeons and chicken congee are Fotan's specialty.



Figure 1. Floor numbers. Photo: Stan Diers ([www.standiers.com](http://www.standiers.com))

*Fotanian*, as the first art festival of its kind in Hong Kong, has been growing steadily in the past ten years and 2013 was by and far the largest one ever to be held, with over 100 studios and 300 artists participating. With the increasing success

of the event, sponsors came in with money and publicity, talks were organized, apps were built and there was even a mobile exhibition truck cruising the streets of Hong Kong. The success of the festival indicates that while the presence of artists in the area are not fully supported by the law<sup>4</sup> they are, however, not completely clandestine either. The precarious presence of the live-in artists exists in between the legal/illegal boundary. But why are they tolerated and how does this community operate?

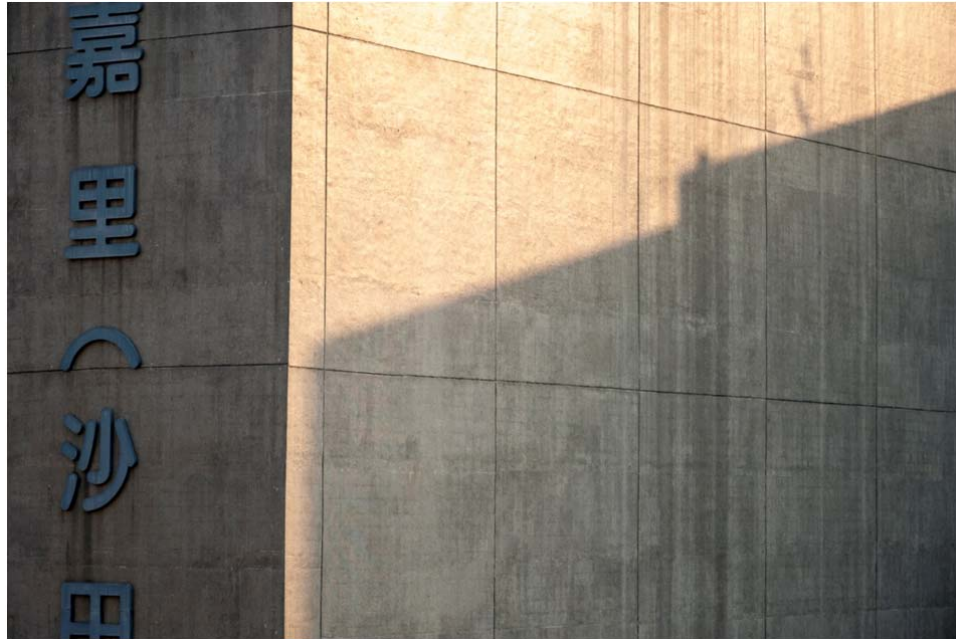


Figure 2. Industrial building. Photo: Stan Diers ([www.standiers.com](http://www.standiers.com))

The tacitly maintained boundaries between artists, entrepreneurs, visitors and to a certain extent, even the government, operate on a delicate balance which counts on each turning a blind eye. Within this environment, individuals employ their own tactics to find ways of slipping between the formal structures and rules. They recognize what they can get away with, they surf on the margins of what is permissible, teasing the boundaries of what is punishable. The rule that somehow operates beside the law carefully crafts out an environment where Fotan flourishes within the carefully maintained boundaries.

---

<sup>4</sup> Many artists also make their homes in these studios which is illegal according to Hong Kong Law; but they are not the first or the only ones, due to the unaffordability of the city's housing prices, many of the urban poor live in illegally subdivided bedsits in industrial units.

Rather than arguing for the need to legitimize through governmental intervention, it seems that the current paradoxical presence of all the parties involved is in itself the perfect balance. The government's strategy of revitalization often means redevelopment<sup>5</sup> with the goal of tearing down old depilated buildings to build new ones more in line with the modern façade of Hong Kong. Unfortunately, the mere mention of such intention in the 2009 policy address has already resulted in the doubling of prices over a period of 2 years causing many artists to strain under the increased rent. Already, developers and speculators are circling the units like vultures, buying them up with increasing speed. Like many new developments in Hong Kong, high prices of homogenous spaces after regeneration often become a sterile deathbed for creativity.

The re-appropriation of industrial spaces by artists as well as entrepreneurs are individuals' way of making-do<sup>6</sup> with the ever-expanding urban-regulatory environment. The multiple ways in which these spaces are creatively imagined introduce a plurality of goals and desires into the otherwise deserted buildings.

Behind the quiet façade these units pulse with a myriad of activities. There is in fact no need for governmental intervention; revitalization has already taken place – if revitalization means to re-enliven a space, to make it more active, vivacious, spirited and to give it more life. A creative space is not a space that can be fashioned through management. Regenerated areas of Hong Kong (and surely other parts of the world) have proved prone to gentrification. A creative space, or an vitalized space is a space that allows for life, by which I mean a space that enables individuals to create meanings through their practices, which are by nature, plural, multiple and multi-directional. It is what facilitates ideas and collaborations to be forged, festivals such as Fotanian to be generated.

---

<sup>5</sup>The Revitalizing Industrial Buildings Policy introduced in 2009-10 policy address is defined by the new measures to promote revitalization through “encouraging redevelopment and wholesale conversion” (Hong Kong Development Bureau 2010)

<sup>6</sup> Individuals' resourceful ways of appropriating in everyday life is of particular interest to cultural theorist Michel de Certeau, who regards these practices as a form of tactics, understood as power for the powerless; this is opposed to strategies which are institutional or structures of power (1988) *The Practice of Everyday Life* University of California Press.



Figure 3. Rooftops. Photo: Stan Diers ([www.standiers.com](http://www.standiers.com))

The brutalist buildings of the industrial era might not make it onto Hong Kong's postcards but within the concrete walls, displaced individuals find their footholds that enable each to pursue his/her own goals, creating a functioning system in Fotan where there is communality without collectivity. If revitalization could be understood from the perspective of enlivening a space, then the value of Fotan lies precisely as such.

***Visuals by:***

Stan Diers, Graphic Designer

[www.standiers.com](http://www.standiers.com)



# HIGH-END LUXURY RETAIL AND THE CITY: A TIMELINE OF BOND STREET, FIFTH AVENUE, OMOTESANDO-AOYAMA AS LUXURY CAPITALS OF THE WORLD

NEW YORK, USA / LONDON, UK / TOKYO, JAPAN

BHAKTI SHARMA (STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, BUFFALO)

*Bond Street in London, Fifth Avenue in New York City, and Omotesando-Aoyama in Japan are synonymous with luxury retail. Located in different parts of the world, luxury retail is not the only common thread between the three neighbourhoods. This paper examines the urban sprawl, the timeless collection of architecture, the cultural activity surrounding these centres, and the perpetual destruction, revival, and reconstruction that comes with the territory called retail. The social and the cultural impact of luxury retail on neighbouring areas are analysed through the comparative study of a timeline of these luxury districts.*

**Keywords:** Luxury retail, urban neighbourhood, socio-cultural impact

Luxury streets around the world can be interchanged to another geographical location and the unsuspecting eye may not spot the difference. But the similarity in appearance of flagship stores and brands is not the only reason that this swap may be possible. The user – a shopper, a tourist, or a native – of London's Bond Street might find a similar peace in New York's Fifth Avenue as s/he may in Tokyo's Omotesando-Aoyama. But as Magrou (2011) in his text about the Louis Vuitton store on Fifth Avenue points out, "individual buildings would seem pale-faced without the others that surround them". So, is it just the architecture that creates prominent themes in the retail districts or are creative districts identical around the world or there is there more to this theory? The study of two main ideas centred on common historical threads that transformed these districts into retail Meccas, and subsequent historic and retail development can help us answer this question. Luxury fashion districts are centred

around fashion – a field not only embellished by the creative field of profession, but one that is usually accompanied by masterpieces from avant-garde artists and creative expression of architects in the shape of buildings.

The Old and the New Bond Streets in London replaced an imposing palace and garden when its namesake founder Sir Thomas Bond purchased the property in 1688. Fifth Avenue in New York City became synonymous with luxury when rich socialites moved into the neighbourhood in the 1860s and the opening of the now Hotel Waldorf Astoria in 1893 further strengthened this position. The 1964 Olympics in Tokyo brought fashion houses to the Omotesando-Aoyama districts, originally planned for aristocratic residences. It is not by coincidence that the most expensive shopping streets in the world also have the most exclusive residential clientele. While in London and Tokyo, high-end retail spawned off around elite residential areas, the luxury status of Fifth Avenue was confirmed with the settlement of rich socialites in the area.

The sprawl of residential and retail settlements in these neighbourhoods prompted better connectivity to these areas. The Piccadilly underground station that opened in 1928 serving 50 million people and the now Omotesando station that opened in 1938 are evidence of the economic growth that resonated through all these three neighbourhoods in their early stages of development. The development of mass transit systems allowed for the growth of other recreational activities around these retail centres. The Kensington Gardens, Queen Mary Gardens, and the Buckingham Palace Gardens surrounding the Bond Street area meet their counterpart in Central Park, the culmination point of Fifth Avenue and the Meiji Shrine gardens in Omotesando-Aoyama. In addition, the side streets or the backstreets around these main streets filled with boutiques, bookstores, florists, barbers, galleries, second-hand shops, and antique shops grew as well.

These historic streets are home to extraordinary museums, businesses and stores, parks, luxury apartments, and historical landmarks that are reminiscent of its history and vision for the future. Shopping, art, and culture are close allies for the shopper who is looking for a connection with the surroundings at a cognitive, emotional and intuitive level – something to hold on to, to take back as a memory, some memory stronger than the item they have just

purchased. For centuries the intent has been to convert retail into experience fully integrated into other cultural activities such as theatre and art (Cairns, 2010). The Fine Arts Society that opened in 1876 and Sotheby's Auction House that opened in 1917 in Bond Street in London helped in the development of Bond Street as the centre for top-end art and antiques dealers. Omotesando-Aoyama in Tokyo can also boast of its rich past and present in high-end art.

The opening of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1874, the Solomon - Guggenheim Museum in 1939, and the Whitney Museum of Art in 1966 on Fifth Avenue also parallels the development of art and the avant-garde in the retail district. In Tokyo, after the 1964 Olympics, the fashion houses started developing flagship stores. On the same lines as Bond street and Fifth Avenue, the Watari Museum of Contemporary Art opened in 1990 in the Omotesando-Aoyama area.

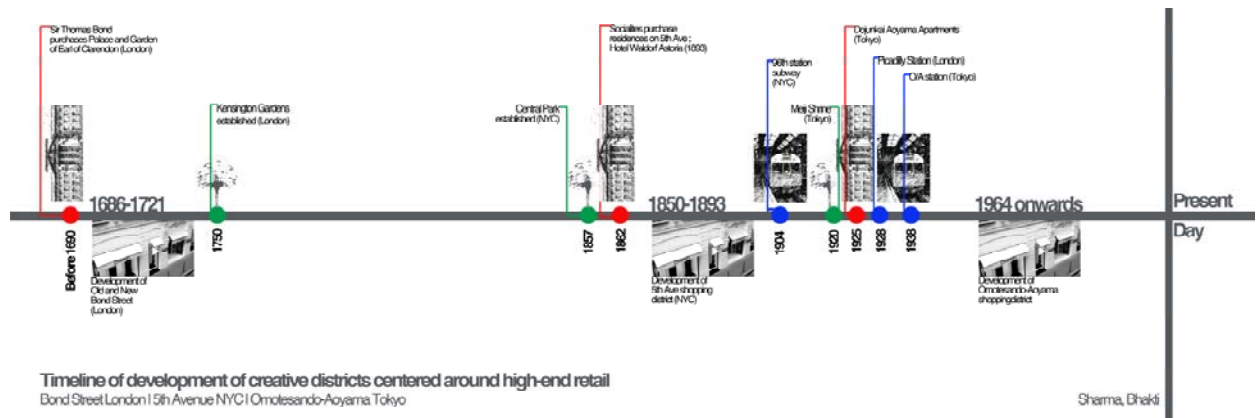


Figure 1. Timeline development of creative districts centred around high-end retail

But the development of these neighbourhoods was not all smooth sailing. While in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Bond street in London was catered to the male population that frequented the clubs and high-class brothels at night-time, during the American Civil War between 1861-1865 prices of the land in and around Fifth Avenue dropped tremendously forcing the owners to face losses. There are ups and downs in history but the three neighbourhoods have stood the test of time and continue to be the most expensive shopping streets in the world. So, is there a formula that can be used to develop a new all-inclusive high-end retail area that is a catalyst for creative growth in the areas surrounding it as discussed on the parameters above? This

retail area does not need to be another mall. It could be the same idea that Louis Vuitton used with Nagoya Sakae while entering the Japanese market. It could be an area where luxury brands open their flagship stores to revitalize a neighbourhood and the arts and theatre that these stores bring via their flagship stores can be used to promote cultural tourism? Throw in rich residential clients, a mass-transit system, a few artists and writers that treat the creative district in question as their muse, back alleys that both feed from and to the main streets, a troubled past, and statement architecture and you may have a chance. Or is the truth quite the contrary? Maybe all you need is one powerful brand. As Okinkwo (2007) states, "The answer is simple: luxury brands have the power of branding!"

Bring in Chanel and the rest will follow suit.

## References

Cairns, Graham. 2010. ...*Deciphering advertising, art and architecture*. London: Libri Publishing

Magrou, Rafael. 2011. London Bond Street. In *Louis Vuitton Architecture and Interiors.*, Eds.

Frederic Edelmann, Ian Luna, Rafael Magrou and Mohsen

Mostafavi, 142. Hong Kong: Rizzoli. Okinkwo, Uche. 2007. *Luxury Fashion Branding: Trends,*

*Tactics, Techniques*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

# REVITALIZING MICRONESIA'S CAPITAL CITY OF HAGÁTÑA: CREATING HISTORIC CORRIDORS

HAGÁTÑA, GUAM, USA

FRED R. SCHUMANN (SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, UNIVERSITY OF GUAM, USA)

*The city of Hagåtña has served as downtown, dating as far back as the sixteenth century before Spanish settlers arrived on Guam. The result of World War II, from the Japanese occupation of Guam to its recapture by the U.S. military, left many of Hagåtña's historical sites and the city itself damaged from repeated bombings. Although Hagåtña remains the seat of the island's government, there have been concerns over the capital's residential population decline. Efforts are underway to revitalize, preserve and protect the heritage and economic vitality of Guam's capital. Hagåtña holds memories of a resilient and vibrant history of Guam and the island's people.*

Guam, U.S.A. – The mid-Pacific city of Hagåtña has served as a central location for the Chamorros - the indigenous people of Guam - dating as far back as the sixteenth century before Spanish settlers arrived on Guam. As its capital, Hagåtña serves an important role as the center of government. In 1668, Padre San Vitores, a Spanish missionary, was instrumental in establishing the first Spanish (Catholic) church in Hagåtña, forcing most of the indigenous population of Guam to relocate to the city.

Hagåtña has been the capital of Guam since the Spanish-American War of 1898 when the United States seized control of Hagåtña from the Spanish. The result of World War II, from the Japanese occupation of Guam to its recapture by the U.S. military, left many of Hagåtña's historical sites and the city itself damaged. However, there are still a

number of historical monuments and remains that can be viewed, including sections of buildings left over from the time of Spanish rule, such as the Plaza de Espana near the cathedral of the Archdiocese of Agana, and Latte Park, where visitors can see pre-Spanish stone pillars referred to as Latte Stones. The devastation of the city, however, forced the once most populated village prior to World War II, to the least populated area that serves primarily as a center for government and business.

In the past decade, many loosely related efforts have been made towards the redevelopment of the once vibrant capital. A serious commitment towards the need to restore and redevelop Guam's capital was first written into Guam's public law, known as the Hagåtña Restoration and Redevelopment Act. The Act created an autonomous agency, the Hagåtña Restoration and Redevelopment Authority, to carry out the purposes of the legislation. Other government agencies have also addressed redevelopment efforts for Hagåtña. The Guam Economic Development Authority, charged with economic development initiatives for Guam, has directed redevelopment efforts toward Hagåtña. The Guam Visitors Bureau, responsible for developing Guam's visitor industry, has also addressed the development potential of downtown Hagåtña. Additionally, market forces evidenced through private organizations such as the Guam Chamber of Commerce, have made it a priority in recent years to redevelop the flailing downtown area.

A recent initiative to restore Downtown Hagåtña is to capitalize on its unique assortment of historical sites. In 2010 the Hagåtña Heritage Walking Trail, which comprises 17 historical sites, was launched. It was developed to transform what has been described as a "ghost town" to a livelier center. The 4-kilometer Hagåtña Heritage Walking Trail has been viewed as a way to provide economic stimulus through increased local government revenue by way of tourists who spend an extra half-day to experience the walk.

## **Revitalization Strategies**

After reviewing potential downtown revitalization strategies for Hagåtña, a professional team put together by the University of Guam's Pacific Center for Economic Initiatives (PCEI) determined an overall strategy for downtown Hagåtña in 2012. This strategy is based on three strategic initiatives: Celebrating the unique culture and history of Hagåtña through events; Educating people on the history of Hagåtña and the significance of the area; and Preserving Hagåtña's unique history and historical sites for future generations to come.

The team reviewed current research on consumer needs and demands, and also the needs of businesses in Hagåtña to determine what needs they have in order to maximize their revenue generating opportunities. It was determined that the businesses in Hagåtña need to build up a sense of community and cohesiveness to determine specific strategies and programs that can deliver more customers, clients and revenue. This was done with the partnering of businesses with agencies and academic institutions by using "economic gardening" approaches and initiatives. This was seen as an effective strategy for an island with a population of only 170,000, and where almost all companies meet the definition of "small business".

The University of Guam, the Pacific Center for Economic Initiatives and the Small Business Development Center have played key roles in developing programs that address the needs of the businesses. These include the development of business and entrepreneurial opportunities, providing training for business owners and staff, and assisting with technical and professional expertise at both the small business level and government policy level. The Guam Preservation Trust organization has also been an important partner and provides expertise to business owners on the history of Hagåtña.

One of the unique features of Hagåtña that has been lost in many similar villages on Guam is that of the family clans and relationships. Many of the same families that populated the capital of Hagåtña in the 1800's and 1900's still reside on Guam. Their memories and stories are a valuable asset as to setting the stage for modern Hagåtña,



as well as providing historical information and personal stories of the village and life in the village during the various periods.

Although the collection of Hagåtña historical sites represent a variety of periods, the predominant “theme” and period that appears to have lasted the longest and therefore has made the largest impact in terms of cultural remnants is that of the Spanish period. During this period, *barrios* were established, each with their own saints and character. A map from 1915 was used to identify the barrios and businesses that occupied the locations during the Spanish period. Because of the legacy of the Spanish, it was decided that this period best represents “historical” Hagåtña.

Based on determining the significance of the Spanish period, the approach for the action plan used was as follows:

- Identify the *barrios*
- Identify corridors within the *barrios* that surround the various historical attractions
- Meet with the businesses that are located on those corridors and begin developing a group associated with those historical attractions, based on their proximity.
- Bond the businesses with the historical attraction through a common theme.
- Honor the relationship between the historical attraction and the business by hosting a small gathering of the businesses and the key revitalization players and giving each business a plaque to display at their place of business. A variety of businesses exist in the barrios, ranging from cafes, restaurants, bakeries, taverns, cultural arts and crafts retailers, and event planners.

In December 2012, the first barrio, corridor and historical attraction were identified, as well as partnering six retail and service businesses with the “Old Spanish Bridge” historical attraction because of their location. Plaques were created and given

to the businesses during a brief public ceremony to demonstrate their commitment to efforts in the revitalization of Hagåtña.

A map was produced identifying the current businesses in Hagåtña and showing the Heritage Trail with each of the 17 historical sites indicated by a *latte* stone, a common cultural symbol in Micronesia. Using the map as a guide, a program of identifying and honoring businesses that are affiliated with the sites was developed along with an execution plan and schedule.

In late December 2012, the first Historic Hagåtña Corridor was unveiled, highlighting the unique history of downtown Hagåtña, beginning with the site of the San Antonio Bridge (*Tollai Acho*). Plans are underway to incorporate the next phases of the project to include monthly mobile bazaars in the barrio to feature products from Guam’s creative masters. While historic events and creative artists are already in place in various areas of Hagåtña, more events tying in to legends, superstitions, and folklore will be introduced around the corridors from this effort.

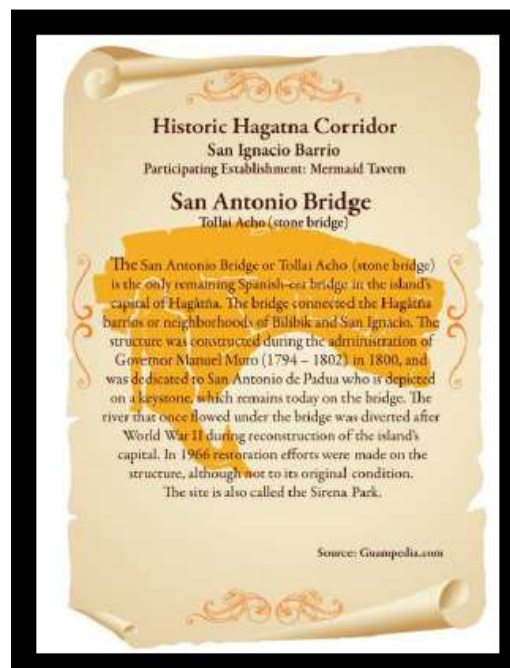


Figure 1. Plaque placed in San Ignacio Barrio, a part of Historic Hagåtña Corridor. Source: Fred R. Schumann .



Figures 2 and 3: University of Guam's Dr. Anita Enriquez (on the left) and project members at the unveiling of the first Historic Hagåtña Corridor (on the right). Source: Fred R. Schumann.

Plans are underway to develop four more Historic Hagåtña Corridors. These corridors will be aligned with the remaining barrios that comprise downtown Hagåtña. Not only will they provide residents and businesses an opportunity to participate in downtown revitalization efforts through the establishment of these creative districts, but they will also give residents, tourists, and artists a gathering place to interact and share ideas and products of creativity.

# MARVELLOUS MELBOURNE – MORE THAN A CITY

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

**SALLY WEBSTER** (CENTRE FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND WELLBEING, COLLEGE OF ARTS, VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA)

Melbourne, Australia's fastest growing city is a 'metropolis' that has a 'carnival atmosphere'. It has the 'enthusiasm of celebration' and 'a feeling of ambition' as the city offers events and cultural activities on a 'larger scale than any previously witnessed in Australia'. It sparkles with 'special illuminations on buildings', and 'necklaces of lights reflected in the [Yarra] river' with fairy lights that 'shine through the leaves and trees' in the ever elegant 'Paris-end' of Collins Street.

Walking around Melbourne, a visitor might marvel at this very cosmopolitan city and agree enthusiastically with these comments. Yet, these observations featured in newspaper articles across Australia described Melbourne's Centenary Celebrations close to 80 years ago. It would appear that not much has changed in Melbourne.

As in the 1900s, the Melbourne of now is acclaimed for its arts, its creativity, its cultural events, and its soul – pulsing with life as displayed through digital illuminations onto public buildings, fairy lights in the fashion precinct of Collins Street, music performed by buskers at special vantage points across the city, public festivals for every creative industry imaginable, street art celebrated in the labyrinth of laneways, and the city's endless pavement cafes offering culinary creations from what seems to be the most diverse range of international cuisine possible. It may be no surprise then that Melbourne has been named as the most liveable city in the world by the Economist Intelligence Unit not once but three times in 2011, 2012 and 2013, and been ranked in the top three since 2009.

The energy and appeal of Australia's second largest city is reminiscent of its early foundation years in the mid-1800s when the city experienced a boom due to its Gold Rush and at this time was the number one travel destination for the British. Within two decades of its founding in 1835, as it was the cultural, education and culinary capital of Australia, and as such was the unofficial capital of Australia until the modern capital Canberra was created in 1927. Due to the gold discovered in the nearby regional areas of Melbourne, the city quickly became the grand dame of Australia. This natural wealth paid and paved the way for major development and large scale, monumental civic buildings. It also funded the arts and cultural

attractions. The goal at the time was to herald the arrival of a new city in the British Empire. Hugh Stretton wrote in *Ideas for Australian Cities* in 1989, a publication acknowledged for its analysis and critique on the shaping of Australian cities, that through gold Melbourne capitalised on developing links with the city centre and the surrounding country areas and this in turn enabled the development of its own industrial and manufacturing base, further expanding the development and wealth in the city. The boom that Melbourne experienced enabled it to become a sophisticated city as was captured in the silent film *Marvellous Melbourne 1910 – Scenes of the City of Melbourne*.

Then the city lost its sparkle. As a result of the post-war depression in the late 1940s, the critical manufacturing industries of food processing, coach building, textiles and engineering – industries that had been pivotal to Melbourne’s prosperity – departed the city centre due to closures or in search of more economical rents on offer in the outer suburbs. Even the artists moved out for financial reasons and in search of life which was now considered devoid within the city. Melbourne was labelled ‘dull’ as Stretton confirms. It became known as the ‘9-5 city’, because the city was deserted once the office workers went home. It limped and stagnated in a neglectful state until the 1980s when both the Victorian State Government and the City of Melbourne, the city council, actively worked to return Melbourne to its glory days, and establish it as the dynamic city it has become.

In *Melbourne, Biography of a City* the conscious, strategic rejuvenation was illustrated as:

‘...the frantic development of the city in its earliest days has a reference to Melbourne’s recent years with its proliferation of high rise buildings, updating of important institutions such as the State Library and Museums, introduction of the City Square and the splendid Victorian Arts Centre and Concert Hall, the completion of the underground City (Rail) Loop, the refurbishing of the city’s railway stations, the landscaping of the Yarra River, the cleaning up of the attractive lakes in the Royal Botanic Gardens, the ‘recovery’ of Victoria’s first Government House and the development of Melbourne’s China Town – to name but a few.’

Melbourne was reborn celebrating its earlier grandeur while managing to bring to life areas of the city that had languished even during the boom times. Melbourne is designed around a grid and interlinking its main, wide streets with its criss-crossing trams there is an abundance of lanes and arcades. Not a handful, but a few hundred and nearly all previously

derelict, many once used as public urinals, garbage dumps, and as a result a magnet for vice and crime. With the support of the city council through changes to local by-law regulations in the late 1980s permitting retail and hospitality use of the lanes, these previous ugly areas now showcase all that is Melbourne – its art, fashion, music, food and culture. Whatever you may be looking for it will be found in one of Melbourne’s many lanes or arcades.

These once neglected and much avoided lanes are now among the stars of the city, many of which are designated public art spaces putting Melbourne on the international street art map. The charm and appeal of Melbourne’s laneways became a feature of the Tourism Victoria 2007 campaign: ‘It’s easy to lose yourself in Melbourne’ which according to Tourism Research Australia helped boost Melbourne’s international tourists to close to two million a year. The popularity and public interest in the lanes means any disruption to the street art makes leading news as when the artist Adrian Doyle converted a well-decorated lane back into a blank canvas for it to be quickly covered again with fresh street art.



Figure 1. Hosier Lane, Graffiti Street art.

The quirky uniqueness of Melbourne's lanes, their diversity in profiling art and Melbourne's ever dynamic culture from its migrant roots of Greek, Italian, Lebanese, Macedonian, Croatian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Korean, Ethiopian, Eritrean and beyond, capture what is the essence of Melbourne. It is as Sophie Cunningham, Melbourne icon and author, explains in her book *Melbourne*:

'Liveable cities don't happen by accident, and their vitality is the result of small things writ large.'



Figure 2. Melbourne Centre way Laneway, City of Melbourne

As it was almost a hundred years ago when as Hugh Stretton explained in *Ideas for Australian Cities* that there was much public interest in the shaping of Melbourne, there is again a renewed interest in how the city is presented and how it is to be shaped with forums hosted regularly seeking ideas on what is a liveable city and open discussion on how a creative city can be achieved through the arts. Melbourne has experienced its boom and its bust all of which has shaped the cultural heart of the city for today. It now flourishes with a creative energy that is so entrenched it seems this has always been this way. Sophie Cunningham best describes it in her book *Melbourne*.

'Melbourne is a city you get to know from the inside out...It's a city of inside places and conversation...of intimacy. It's a city that lives...you have to love it.'

**Hyperlinks** (in order as appear in text)

*Play Melbourne*. Visit Victoria, Tourism Victoria. 2011. <http://www.visitvictoria.com/play/>  
Retrieved 20 November 2013.

*Melbourne – Most liveable city in the world*. Invest Victoria, uploaded 1 August 2010.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UyIhn5dHMu> Retrieved 20 November 2013.

*Marvellous Melbourne 1910 – Scenes of the City of Melbourne*  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuVH8dgKymU> (producer unknown) retrieved  
20 November 2013.

*Lost in Melbourne laneways*. Tourism Australia. 2011.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SqipXnOzDE> Retrieved 20 November 2013.

*It's easy to lose yourself in Melbourne*. Tourism Victoria. 2006.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaZbnWpm5aU> Retrieved 20 November 2013.

*Graffiti uproar as Melbourne artist turns laneway blue*. The Age. Uploaded and retrieved  
26 August 2013. [http://media.theage.com.au/news/national-news/graffiti-uproar-as-  
melbourne-laneway-turns-blue-4692413.html](http://media.theage.com.au/news/national-news/graffiti-uproar-as-melbourne-laneway-turns-blue-4692413.html)

*Participate Melbourne – Achieving a creative city through the arts*. City of Melbourne.  
[http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/projects/arts-strategy?tool=news\\_feed](http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/projects/arts-strategy?tool=news_feed) retrieved  
28 November 2013.



## References

- Centenary Celebrations, *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW.), Tuesday 16 October 1934, p. 8.
- Cunningham, S. (2011). *Melbourne*. Sydney, NSW: New South (p. 275 and p. 7).
- Economist Intelligence Unit (2012). *The Global Liveability Report*. *The Economist*. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.eiu.com/site\\_info.asp?info\\_name=The\\_Global\\_Liveability\\_Report](http://www.eiu.com/site_info.asp?info_name=The_Global_Liveability_Report)  
30 September 2012
- Freeman K. and Pukk, U. (2013). *Laneways of Melbourne*. Melbourne: Melbourne Books.  
<http://www.portraitsofvictoria.com.au/ablanebk.html>
- Melbourne Celebrations, *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW.), Tuesday 26 June 1934, p. 8.
- Melbourne Centenary Celebrations, *Advertiser* (Hurstbridge, Vic.) Friday 3 November 1933, p.6.
- Museum of Victoria (2013) *Marvellous Melbourne*. Retrieved from:  
<http://museumvictoria.com.au/marvellous/postwar/index.asp> 11 February 2013.
- Newnham, W. H. *Melbourne, Biography of a City*. (revised ed 1985. from 1956) Melbourne, Victoria: Hill of Content Publishing, p. 36.
- Stretton, H. (1989). *Ideas for Australian Cities*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Sydney, NSW: Transit Australia Publishing.

# CREATIVE DISTRICTS: SURRY HILLS, SYDNEY

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

**SING D'ARCY** (INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMME, UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA)

**LISA ZAMBERLAN** (INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMME, UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA)

The history of Surry Hills in many ways mirrors the urban and cultural development of Sydney as a whole. Its transformation from agricultural land to urban district commenced in the early nineteenth century, propelled by the economic development of the colony and the lucrative profits of property speculation. Culminating in the 1890s, this boom brought with it a rapid increase in uncontrolled development and poorly-serviced infrastructure. Whilst this gave the area its distinct urban morphology of brick terrace houses, narrow streets and laneways it also contributed to its quick decline into what became known as 'The Slums of Surry Hills'. Despite the lack of planned development, the character of Surry Hills as a diverse, industrious community was forged during this time, marked by the presence of artisans, small shopkeepers and garment makers.

At the turn of the century the newly constructed Sydney rail lines allowed middle-class families to relocate to the utopia of the suburban lifestyle. This exodus left behind a Surry Hills with a reputation for disease, crime and other unsanitary practices of the inner city. This negative tag continued through the depression of the 1930s and into the post-war period, as the district was seen as a problem that needed to be solved. In line with Modernist thinking, numerous solutions were sought to the area's plight, ranging from the demolition of the old fabric and reconstruction as high-rise housing, through to its rezoning as an industrial site for the city. The legacy of intervention resulted in the current urban fabric and building type mix. As traditional Australian families abandoned urbanism for sub-urbanism, the inner city houses and jobs that they had left behind in Surry Hills were taken up by recent European immigrants, saving the district from complete decline.

A key distinction of Surry Hills is its urbanity – an uncommon trait in the antipodes where sub-urbanity is the paradigm. Whilst Australia is traditionally identified as land where distances between places and people can be expansive and isolated, Surry Hills condenses experience, inhabitation and networks in its closely-packed masonry assemblage.

## **A Creative District**

Currently, the range and diversity of creative practices in Surry Hills includes fashion, architecture and design, creative agencies, art galleries and artists' studios along with a variety of niche retail and hospitality services, both permanent and 'pop-up'. Mixed through this, the

continued high-density residential presence has meant that this district maintains a vibrancy, unlike many other areas of the city that empty out after dark. The revitalisation of Surry Hills emerged from its nature as a forgotten district, central in location but peripheral in consideration.

This curious heritage is what has encoded Surry Hills as the district for creative practices in Sydney. The confluence of a diversity of histories, spaces, cultures and communities allowed for a liberty of expression and experimentation that was not supported by the systems and attitudes of the suburban ideal. From the 1970s onwards 'alternatives' and 'creatives' colonised the derelict spaces taking advantage of the cheap rents, generously-scaled warehouse interiors and the proximity to the city, its universities and art schools. Taking refuge within the heart of the inner city, far from the disapproving eyes of the mainstream, an alternate and authentic sense of community grew.

The 1980s saw the consolidation of this presence with establishments such as the Brett Whitley Studio, Ray Hughes Gallery and Belvoir Street Theatre, that would become the cornerstone institutions of the district in later years. The occupation and transformation of these former spaces of industry and manufacture into ones which housed emerging creative fields instilled a new sense of value and worth where others had only seen deterioration and decay.

Vital to the creative code of the district is the coexistence of conception, production, sale and service. Entering any of the large industrial blocks it is common to find creative practices side-by-side with storehouses, sewing workshops or printing presses.

The undulating physical geography of Surry Hills determines the cultural and commercial landscape. Valleys define unique pockets within the district. Enclaves such as Lacey Street typify the way in which creative ventures engage with the heritage of setting and story. In a stronghold of the garment district Chalk Horse art gallery is located in the loading bay of a large brick warehouse. Its presence only marked by a white neon sign, superimposed on the original store signage. Opposite, Roller, a branding agency combines its day-time practice with pop-up events after hours activating the lane in a two-way dialogue with its neighbour. The public realm of the lane way is conceived as an extension of the work-and-play space of the studios whilst above strata of the day-to-day activities of the rag trade continue undeterred.

Geographic ridges connect the micro-districts, forming the high streets of the area, running like spines north to south. Streets such as Reservoir Street run perpendicular to these, part of nineteenth-century attempts to bring order to the chaos of development. Connecting the high ground of Taylors Square with Central Station below, this link exemplifies the diversity that defines the area. At the top a century-old water reservoir has been transformed into a new retail and hospitality hub. Tracking down the street is a mix of hot-desk creative offices, terrace homes both

grand and neglected, a Chinese noodle factory, bookshops, dance studios and the old Silknet House – an industrial icon from the beginning of the twentieth century. This building originally housed clothing production up until the 1980s, as these types of industries began to disappear from the city centre; the large interior spaces were divided up and rented out for music and art studios and the underground party scene. By the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Silknet House, like many of its type, was to succumb to the forces of gentrification in the last decade; transformed into high-end residential development.

## **2030**

Surry Hills is Sydney's confirmed creative epicentre, a fact that has not been lost on local government and property investors. The characteristics and traits that had long made the area undesirable have now become its drawcard. The district is under threat from an increasing commodification of its offerings, jeopardising the very essence that has made it unique. As with Silknet house and many other similar sites, the value of the land and lifestyle is causing a rapid redevelopment of extant spaces, transforming them into the exclusive domain of the wealthy. The City of Sydney has developed 'Sydney 2030', a strategic vision that nominates cultural and creative infrastructure as a key priority. The Council has identified Surry Hills as creative hub, with a new library complex as its centrepiece. The City acknowledges that a nuanced approach is necessary in order to sustain the integrity and vitality of the district in the face of ever-higher demand, rising costs and potentially competing interests. Some such initiatives include: a promotion and subsidy of creative work and living spaces; a public art programme; reinvigorating underutilised council spaces for the use of creative practices and start-ups; promoting fine-grain retail, residential and hospitality within the existing urban fabric.

Creative districts worldwide, irrespective of their heritage, require the liberty and democracy of access to spaces, networks and communities alternate to the mainstream. If historic creative districts such as Surry Hills fall victim to their own success, what environments will be left for future generations seeking to escape, immerse and create? Key to the success of the Council's strategic vision will be its ability to negotiate the accessibility and affordability within the area to allow its creative heritage to continue.



Figure 1. Chalk Horse Gallery, Lacey Street, Surry Hills.  
Photo: S. d'Arcy and L. Zamberlan.



Figure 2: Roller Studio, Lacey Street, Surry Hills. Photo: S.  
d'Arcy and L. Zamberlan.



Figure 3. Gnome of Gnome Espresso and Wine Bar, corner of Crown and Davies Streets, Surry Hills. Photo: S. d'Arcy and L. Zamberlan.

# THE OLD CHARM OF NEWTOWN: EXPLORING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SYDNEY'S NEWTOWN

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

SIOBHAN LYONS (MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY, AUSTRALIA)

## **The Allure of the Alternative: Newtown Today**

From December 2012 to December 2013, Newtown, the renowned cultural hub of Sydney's Inner West is celebrating its Sesquicentenary year. The suburb is home to some of Sydney's most illustrious street art, musical life and artistic talent, making it a culturally significant area as well as a historic district. As 2013 is a pivotal year for Newtown, the City of Sydney Archives has launched a new campaign called the *Newtown Project*, aimed at contextualising, educating and entertaining readers about the kaleidoscopic suburb.

Many have devoted much writing, music, and studies to the suburb, all aiming to articulate its cultural atmosphere. As Fasche writes, many acknowledge Newtown to be a 'vibrant, lively, unique and creative place, a melting pot where academics and the university crowd mingle with families and gays' (2006: 153). Admired for its attraction to the alternative, Newtown stands out as a more culturally and ethnically diverse precinct. Tim Freedman, lead singer of the Sydney-based band *The Whitlams*, a band whose music has been greatly inspired by the suburb of Newtown, describes it as 'essentially an artistic, broad-thinking community. Newtown would have to be one of the most ethnically, culturally, economically and sexually diverse suburbs in Sydney (cited in Tingwell, 1997: 38). Indeed, one need only walk up or down King Street, arguably Newtown's most famous site (see Figure 1), to appreciate the ways in which the suburb expresses its renowned diversity, through fashion, cuisine, art and music. Being a cultural hub is, therefore, directly linked to the creative industries that aim to nourish the various artists. On another site dedicated to Newtown's culture, the suburb is described as a colourful creative quarter:

‘Leisure management, creative industries and cultural tourism are sectors of exceptional growth in today’s economy. Newtown Precinct is well populated with cultural producers –event managers, photographers, film makers, actors, writers, animators, architects, artists, designers; and cultural consumers – those of us who buy their product—devouring films, plays, musical performance, and street life; attending galleries, festivals and exhibitions (Creative Quarters: 2013).’

This kind of artistic liberty—a key component to artistic and creative districts around the world—is exemplified in the famed ‘Martin Luther King’ graffiti mural (See Figure 2) on King Street. The Martin Luther King mural, painted by Andrew Aiken and Juilee Pryor, with Tony Spanos, boasts the famous phrase ‘*I have a dream*’, etched in gothic lettering, along with the Aboriginal flag and an image of King himself. The mural, which has been preserved since August 1991, is the longest standing mural in Newtown. Several articles express the avid devotion Newtown residents have for the mural, including ‘Councils brush up their views on preserving heritage-listed street art’ (McKenny, 2012); ‘Newtown’s iconic Martin Luther King mural razed by fire (Habib, 2011); and ‘What’s the story behind the Martin Luther King mural on King Street?’ (Earlwood: 2008).

Though the work was created illegally - an element that undoubtedly adds to its allure - it has developed heritage status. However, local councils are ambivalent in regard to its existence: ‘The growing profile of street art – much of it classified as graffiti and illegal – has left local government grappling with how to manage it’ (McKenny, 2012). Moreover, a documentary by Darrin Baker and Liz Paddison named “*I Have A Dream : The Making of A Mural*” (2012), is set to be widely released in 2013, which hopes to cement the mural’s place in Newtown’s history. As Marrickville council’s manager of culture and restoration, Josephine Barret states, the mural is ‘incredibly important in terms of telling one of the stories of Newtown’ (cited in McKenny, 2012). It is, therefore, just one of the many stories about the culturally significant Newtown.

While this mural is perhaps the most famous, it is by no means the only culturally significant site in Newtown. Part of Newtown’s vibrant culture is the element of rebellion. In a



2012 interview with Natalie Gould, now the owner of the famed *Gould's Book Arcade*, she states that part of the bookshop's *raison d'être* upon its establishment was that it was always opposed to censorship: 'this place was really established in terms of progressive ideas and opposition to censorship—state censorship—which I think is really important.' (Lyons, 2013). Newtown, therefore, has been founded on the progressive, the rebellious and ultimately, the unorthodox way and celebration of culture.

### **Newtown: A History**

Newtown has frequently undergone urban regeneration and development which has inevitably affected its place in history and the people involved. As Carroll and Connell write, 'During the 1990s Newtown experienced rapid gentrification, amidst much local concern at the 'loss of community' and the emergence of a 'dual city'" (2000: 145). But Newtown has experienced dramatic transformation prior to the 1990s. Although Newtown was initially established as a prosperous suburb (the name of which is anecdotally taken from a shop), during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the suburb, though already boasting a diverse culture, became synonymous with low-brow, 'blue-collar' culture, even being called a slum. As Spearritt writes, Newtown as well as other Inner West suburbs were 'thought of as slum municipalities' (2000: 163).

According to Pollen and Healy (1988), Newtown was originally a farming area. As the story goes, John and Eliza Webster opened a store between Australia and Eliza streets, naming it *New Town Store*. The earliest use of the name has been traced back to 1832. By 1838, as Pollen and Healy write, 'The area, always a mixed one, with working-class homes and large estates standing side by side, began to evolve as a busy workers' suburb, until, in 1923, it was described as a 'thickly populated suburb adjoining the city, with numerous works and factories, and a splendid tram service every two or three minutes down King Street' (1988: 186). Cashman and Meader also write of the suburb as becoming a distinctly 'mixed' one: 'In its early years Newtown was an elite suburb; Enmore Road and King Street south of Newtown Bridge were bordered by large estates and fashionable homes, but by the 1870s Newtown had

become a mixed suburb with a diverse population of the well-to-do and tradesmen' (Cashman and Meader, 1990: 52-53).

Moreover, Cashman and Meader argue that as Newtown progressed, it became 'justly famous' (53). The 'significance of King Street retail precinct and the importance of the Victorian retail premises which line a curving streetscape were recognised in the 1980s' (53). The suburb gradually and popularly became an ethnically diverse one, as the aforementioned theorists attest to. Greek, Lebanese, Spanish, Mandarin, Thai, and other cultures assimilated in Newtown, making it one of the more culturally fascinating areas of Sydney: 'In the immediate post-World War Two period, Greek-Australians continued settling in Marrickville, Enmore, Newtown and Redfern' (Turnbull & Valiotis, 2001: 8).



Figure 1. King Street/ Enmore Road intersection, Newtown. Photo: Siobhan Lyons.

The area has developed both notoriety and fame not simply around its cultural sites but also through its apparent associations: 'A character in Charles Dickens's famous novel *Great Expectations* is said to have been inspired by the fate of a Newtown resident, the daughter of

Judge Donnithorne, who was jilted on her wedding day, a few years after her father's death in 1852' (Pollen and Healy, 1988: 187). But Newtown is not without its controversy in regard to the dramatic urban renewal. As Kendig writes,

'Industrial expansion also intruded into the residential fabric of inner Sydney in the same period...The city council remained concerned at the pace of transfers from residential use and believed the Housing Commission programme of urban renewal was not providing new homes in the inner city to keep pace with these changes. From 1958 until mid-1963 the city council attacked the problem energetically, considering projects in Glebe, Paddington, Moore Park, Rosebery, Alexandria, Newtown and Darlington' (Kendig, 1979: 96).

Thus Newtown's history greatly informs its eclectic present. Today, Newtown exists as a culturally dynamic area in itself whose uniqueness is physically as well as culturally evident. In contrast to many other more commercial suburbs, it resists the kinds of changes that would undoubtedly impact on its intrigue. For example, where in other suburbs there exist the popular chains (Event Cinemas, Hoyts Cinemas, Dymocks Books and McDonalds), in contrast, Newtown has the indie Dendy Cinemas, a wide variety of second hand bookshops that are frequently listed as the best in Sydney (and moreover Australia), and due to changing demographics in Newtown in the 90s (Newtown Project, 2009), the McDonalds restaurant was closed in 1998. As a result Sydney is left with perhaps one of the few remaining iconic areas in which its history is as central to its cultural make-up as its present, creating a distinctly neo-bohemian vibe. As *Nova and The Experience* sing in their song 'Shooting Words', '*We could move to Newtown and find ourselves bohemian*'.



Figure 2. Famed 'Martin Luther King' Mural, King Street, Newtown. Photo: Siobhan Lyons.

## References

- Carrol, J. & Connell, J. (2000) 'You gotta love this city: The Whitlams and inner Sydney', *Australian Geographer*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 141-154
- Cashman, R. and Meader, C. (1990) *Marrickville: Rural outpost to inner city*, Australia: Hale & Iremonger Pty
- Earlwood, R. (2008) 'What's the story behind the Martin Luther King Mural on King Street?' *Timeout Sydney*, May 20, 2008, accessed February 17, 2013 at <http://www.au.timeout.com/sydney/the-bridge/features/1230/martin-luther-king-mural>
- Fasche, M. (2006) 'Creative People and the Gentrification: "Sowing the seeds of demise?" Evidence from Newtown, Sydney', in *Band 60*
- Habib, R. (2011) 'Newtown's iconic Martin Luther King Mural razed by fire', *Inner West Courier*, May 10, 2011, accessed February 17, 2013, at <http://inner-west-courier.whereilive.com.au/news/story/artists-restoring-burnt-mural/>
- Kendig, H. (1979) *New Life for Old Suburbs: post-war land use and housing in the Australian inner city*, Sydney: George Allen and Unwin
- Lyons, S. (2013) 'Digging through the Trash and Treasure: Gould's Book Arcade and the second-hand book culture', *Trash Culture Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 66-75
- McKenny, L. (2012) 'Councils brush up their views on preserving heritage-listed street art', *Sydney Morning Herald*, August 12, 2012, accessed February 17, 2013, at <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/councils-brush-up-their-views-on-preserving-heritagelisted-street-art-20120812-242ve.html>
- Pollen, F. and Healy, G. (1988) *The Book of Sydney Suburbs*, Australia: Angus and Robertson Publishers, 1988
- Spearritt, P. (2000) *Sydney's Century: A History*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press
- Tingwell, J. (1997) 'The world comes to Newtown: The Globe Venue', *Drum Media*, August 26
- Turnbull, C. & Valiotis, C. (2001) 'Beyond the Rolling Wave: A Thematic Study of Greek Settlement in New South Wales', *The Centre for Community History*, University of New South Wales, for the New South Wales Heritage Office, Professor Ian Tyrrell, 2001

## Films

- Baker, D., and Paddison, L. (2012) *I have a dream: The making of a mural*, 30 minutes, Marrickville Council

## Websites

Newtown Project: Newtown Council - 150 Years, accessed online, February 13, 2013, at

<http://www.sydneyarchives.info/>

Creative Quarters: Why does everyone love Newtown Precinct? Newtown Precinct Business Association,

Accessed February 12, 2013 at <http://www.newtownprecinct.com.au/experiencing/creative-quarters>

# DOWNTOWN NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS: A CASE OF CREATIVE PLACEMAKING IN THE UNITED STATES

MASSACHUSETTS, USA

LEILA VALOURA (BRIDGETHINK.ORG / BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE)

DON BURTON (BRIDGETHINK.ORG)

*“Yeah, you could take a walk with me, talk with me,  
as we take a tour of New B...  
Take a walk with me down 13 mile road,  
memories meant to hold in the city's cobblestones,  
Visitors from all over the world,  
to learn about  
Frederick Douglass, Herman Melville, Rotch Jones... Duff.”*

*"Walk with Me"*

*~ Lyrics by New Bedford teens in the Youth Ambassador Program,  
a collaboration between the National Park Service and 3rd Eye  
Youth Empowerment Inc.*

## **The Place, Its History and Social-Economy**

New Bedford, Massachusetts is the setting for the opening of Herman Melville's internationally acclaimed novel *Moby Dick*. Portraying the adventures and dangers for whalers in the 19th century, Melville highlighted the economic relevance that whaling and international trade had to New Bedford.

In a time with no electricity, New Bedford “lit the world” (New Bedford Whaling Historical Park 2013) through whale oil burned in lamps across the globe. Many of its whalers came from the Portuguese Islands of Madeira, the Azores, and at that time Cape Verde. New Bedford became the world's “richest city per capita” (City of New Bedford 2013) and, more importantly, conveyed cultures to and from countless foreign ports. Today, the sea still plays an essential role as New Bedford has become the nation's number one commercial fishing port in value of

landed catch (New Bedford Whaling Museum 2013).

No less important than the sea are the city's remarkable mills built in the late 19th century, when the textile industry grew, bringing another source of wealth to New Bedford. Once thriving, however, this city experienced economic decline during the Great Depression and the fading of its textile industry. Today, with a population of 95,183 (U.S. Census Bureau 2011) as many as 22.7% of its community lived below the poverty level in 2010 (SouthCoast Urban Indicators Project 2013) which only touches on the challenges facing New Bedford.

Despite adversity, though, an extraordinary resilience characterizes this community whose bold vision has created a vibrant renaissance in New Bedford's downtown district. As the lyrics of the song above suggest, this is a place where stories emanate from the cobblestoned streets.

### **Downtown New Bedford Today: A Vibrant Creative District**

Considered by Richard Florida the seventh most artistic city in the US for artists per capita (2011), this creative district rises up from its waterfront wharfs, spreading roughly across 38 blocks crowned with Greek Revival structures and captain's homes dating to its whaling days. Today, creators from printmakers to aerial dance artists occupy the city's historic spaces.

There's a pulse in this downtown. And as that pulse beats, café and pub owners have begun to locate in refurbished waterfront buildings. The New Bedford Art Museum curates world-class exhibitions in a 95-year-old converted bank, drawing visitors from Boston and Providence. Midsize and boutique galleries invigorate the district, bringing color and excitement like ArtWorks! recently “yarn bombed” water fountain or Gallery 65's exhibition which included vintage refrigerators converted into stylish couches. It is not unlikely to see the phrase, “I 'heart' NB” on skaters' T-shirts hanging out at any number of downtown eateries.

New Bedford as a ‘brand’ goes back decades when Elaine's Black Whale retail started printing the city's unofficial mascot, a whale of course, on various apparel. Today, love of place spawns urban art projects such as UGLYgallery's “#wheresthelove?” which brings murals to abandoned corners and begs viewers to look longer, harder at this city.



The National Trust for Historic Preservation even named the city one of the nation's "Dozen Distinctive Destinations" in 2011 for "dynamic downtowns, cultural diversity... historic preservation, sustainability and revitalization" (2011).

What draws people to this creative place? Perhaps it is the feeling of place itself. For, all the above efforts are grassroots and therefore, together they create a uniquely local personality. Within that local framework, longtime residents as well as new arrivals eagerly shape the identity of New Bedford by adding their voices to its evolving story.

### **The Groundwork for Placemaking**

New Bedford is a multilayered case where place is viewed as a whole, calling diverse members to inspire and form this community. "When you think about placemaking, it's really about people," says Lee Heald, Director of AHA!, the city's free monthly arts and culture night and collaborative organization interviewed on March 19, 2013. "It's everybody's stories and it's told from their point of view... it's powerfully local."

AHA! emerged from a Regional Community Congress in the 1990's, whose vision was to make New Bedford "an arts and culture hub" (AHA! Project 2013). Today, AHA! has 66 partners that include galleries, restaurants, shops, cultural organizations, museums, churches and universities who all agree to provide free themed programming once a month on AHA! Night.

"It's basically a community organizers model from the bottom up," says the Director of AHA!. "It's allowed small owner operated businesses and large organizations to come together and have equal footing."

According to Heald, approximately 3000 visitors descend on downtown on an average AHA! Night. They naturally stimulate the economy, both during AHA! and by returning to support local businesses.

According to a study from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth's Center for Policy Analysis (2009), in 2009 AHA! spent \$289,093 with an economic impact of \$734,719. That's a 2.5-dollar return on every dollar spent. Operating in part with \$35,000 in state grants, for every state dollar invested in the arts and culture in New Bedford, that dollar leveraged an

impact of \$21 dollars.

“There really is a success story built on collaboration,” says Heald. “A rising tide actually does float all boats.”

### **Preservation's Roll in this Renaissance**

One extraordinarily early effort providing the setting for today's renaissance is the non-profit WHALE, short for Waterfront Historic Area League. WHALE was formed in 1962 by a group of concerned citizens who acted to preserve the heavily blighted downtown when much of it faced brutal demolition.

WHALE purchased and restored 150-year-old threatened structures, even moving buildings when the highways came through. This tremendous community effort left New Bedford with a distinctly unique feel, “where the past speaks out clearly and movingly” (McCabe & Thomas 1995).

In 1996 WHALE joined other intrepid citizens and the Old Dartmouth Historical Society – New Bedford Whaling Museum to accomplish something visionary. Together they lobbied Congress to designate 13 downtown blocks as the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. According to Arthur Motta, Senior Director of Marketing and Communications for the museum, interviewed on April 1, 2013, the institution's 700,000 plus objects were crucial in this success as were WHALE's efforts in saving the buildings.

The 275,000 yearly visitors drawn to New Bedford because of the park spent \$12.8 million in 2010 alone and generated sales of \$17.6 million in the local region (Cook 2012: 9).

Another milestone in the district's renaissance was in 1998 when The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, in collaboration with State Senator Mark C. W. Montigny, took an unprecedented risk by renovating the historic center of downtown commerce, the dilapidated Star Store. When the district was still considered a ghost town after 5pm, the effort built critical mass by turning this 120,000 square foot 1898 building into a flagship arts campus for UMass Dartmouth's College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) and a downtown campus for Bristol Community College (BCC).

“When we brought the Star Store in, we had a core for young artists to rally around. And when young people walk out the front door, they want to go somewhere,” says Senator Montigny, interviewed on March 27, 2013, who acknowledges that \$40 to \$50 million public dollars were earmarked for the project. Included were funds for market rate housing in converted adjacent buildings so people could live in the district.

Opening in 2001, the Star Store became an “arts incubator that has anchored the creative economy,” says the CVPA’s Dean, Adrian Tió interviewed on March 21, 2013. “Students assigned studios in the Star Store live in the immediate area. In return, the downtown... has grown into a vibrant district of arts, culture, and entertainment,” highlights Tió.

Bristol Community College has also established two additional buildings as part of the project, contributing to the critical mass.

By 2009, more than \$80 million in private investment had come to the surrounding blocks, along with redevelopment of more than half a million square feet of commercial space – over a third of downtown's available commercial space (Lyons & Whelan 2009). From vintage shops to wine bars to the refurbished 1200-seat Zeiterion Theatre, doors were opening to welcome new crowds.

“All of a sudden,” says Montigny, “the downtown becomes a magnet of culture for the entire South Coast of Massachusetts.”

## **Conclusion**

At a 2010 Gateway Cities Roundtable, Lee Blake, President of the New Bedford Historical Society, encouraged listeners to “see who’s not at the table... whose story needs to be told, and help people tell their own story.”

That call-to-action is as important today as it was in previous decades as New Bedford addresses its challenges. But for sure, its collaborative players have shaped a sense of place in this downtown – a shining example of the creative economy at work.

And those newest members who weave the city's cultural fabric – the young rappers in the Whaling National Historical Park's Youth Ambassador Program – say it well:

*“Wow, I thought New Bedford was just nonsense who  
woul da known that it'd be filled with so much  
knowledge...*

*...I'm speaking it local you hearing my vocals...*

*So c'mon y'all come and take a walk with me...*

*...as we take a tour of New B.”*

Find out more about this renaissance at: [www.destinationnewbedford.org](http://www.destinationnewbedford.org)



Figure 1. "AHA! Night in New Bedford." Visitors gather for live music during AHA! Night at one of 66 partner venues. AHA! is a free arts & culture event which takes place on the second Thursday of every month in Downtown New Bedford. Photo courtesy of AHA! New Bedford.



Figures 2 and 3. (Above) “The New Bedford Whaling Museum and Working Waterfront.” The New Bedford Whaling Museum with today’s working waterfront behind it. (Below) “Mechanics Lane.” Mechanics Lane is one of New Bedford’s cobblestoned streets from its historical whaling era. Photos: Don Burton.

## References

- AHA! Project 2013, *Painting the Future: Arts and Culture in the City of New Bedford*. Available from: <http://www.ahnewbedford.org/acpc.html> [20 March 2013].
- City of New Bedford 2013, *History of New Bedford*. Available from: <http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/Tourism/OurHistory/Historyofnb.html> [5 March 2013].
- Cook, PS 2012, 'Impacts of Visitor Spending on the Local Economy: New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, 2010', University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83844-1139, p. 9.
- Florida, R 2011, *The Most Artistic Cities in America*. Available from: <http://www.theatlanticcities.com/arts-and-lifestyle/2011/11/most-artistic-cities-america/592/> [5 March 2013].
- Lyons, T & Whelan, W 2009, 'Danger to region if we lose Star Store, ATMC', *The Herald News* 17 June. Available from: [http://www.heraldnews.com/opinions/letters\\_to\\_the\\_editor/x737331991/GUEST-OPINION-Danger-to-region-if-we-lose-Star-Store-ATMC-06-18-09?zc\\_p=1](http://www.heraldnews.com/opinions/letters_to_the_editor/x737331991/GUEST-OPINION-Danger-to-region-if-we-lose-Star-Store-ATMC-06-18-09?zc_p=1). [29 March 2013].
- McCabe, M & Thomas, JD 1995, *Not Just Anywhere*, Spinner Pubns Inc, New Bedford, MA.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation 2011, *National Trust for Historic Preservation Selects New Bedford, Massachusetts, as one of America's Dozen Distinctive*. Available from: <http://www.preservationnation.org/who-we-are/press-center/press-releases/2011/new-bedford.html> [5 March 2013].
- New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park 2013, *Historical Information*. Available from: <http://www.nps.gov/nebe/index.htm> [5 March 2013].
- New Bedford Whaling Museum 2013, *New Bedford: The Commercial & Industrial Evolution of an American Port City*. Available from: <http://www.whalingmuseum.org/explore/exhibitions/upcoming/commerce-industry-evolution-american-port-city> [5 March 2013].
- Project for Public Spaces 2009, *What is Placemaking?* Available from: [http://www.pps.org/reference/what\\_is\\_placemaking/](http://www.pps.org/reference/what_is_placemaking/) [8 March 2013].

Umass Center for Policy Analysis 2009, *The Economic Impact of the Vibrant Marketplace in Downtown New Bedford: 4 Projects in the Culture Economy 2009*. Available from:  
[http://www.umassd.edu/media/umassdartmouth/seppce/centerforpolicyanalysis/aha\\_fy09.pdf](http://www.umassd.edu/media/umassdartmouth/seppce/centerforpolicyanalysis/aha_fy09.pdf)

[8 March 2013].

U.S. Census Bureau 2011, *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Incorporated Places: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2011*. Available from:  
<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2011/SUB-EST2011-3.html> [30 March 2013].

SouthCoast Urban Indicators Project, *Poverty – New Bedford*. Available from:  
<http://southcoastindicators.org/economy/poverty-new-bedford/#!prettyPhoto> [1 April 2013].

Youth Ambassador Program 2011, 'Walk with Me'(video file). Available from:  
<http://home.nps.gov/nebe/photosmultimedia/index.htm>. [8 March 2013].



# THESE BOOTS ARE NOT ONLY MADE FOR WALKING

NEW YORK, USA

JUAN ANTONIO SERRANO GARCÍA (SERRANO + BAQUERO)

PALOMA BAQUERO MASATS (SERRANO + BAQUERO)

*Transformation of the Meatpacking District through the type of footwear of the users who visit it*



Picture 1. (From left to right) Picture taken in the 1940s. Source: Anonymous photographer. Picture 2. Film frame of 'Cruising', directed by William Friedkin. Picture 3. George Seagal working on the sculpture *Parking Garage* in his atelier. Photo: Donald Lokuta. Picture 4. Set of the show *Gossip Girl* in the streets of the Meatpacking District. Photo: CV-DK. Picture 5. The High Line Park. Photo: Mat McDermott.

Shoes are not only made for walking, otherwise they would all be the same. It is possible to tell the story of a place by looking carefully at the shoes which people have used to walk through its streets.

In the neighbourhood commonly known as Meatpacking District<sup>1</sup> located in Manhattan, New York, many different types of shoes have been seen in a period of 150 years, which offer valuable information about its transformation over time.

What distinguishes this neighbourhood from other similar ones is that every time a new type of footwear appears in scene, which means that some changes are taking place, the pre-existing activities and ways of life are not completely erased but they somewhat coexist leading to new situations which enhance community living.

The first occupation of the Meatpacking District was accomplished in 1840, consisting of the construction of some row houses. It soon expanded developing into

---

<sup>1</sup> Officially known as Gansevoort Market, it runs from West 14th Street south to Gansevoort Street, and from the Hudson River to the east of Hudson Street.

tenement buildings, single-family homes and industry, unlike most other neighbourhoods at the time which were not mixed-use.

### **Butcher shoes**

In the 1870s, during the post-Civil War period, many people left this place looking for more desirable districts to live in. This fact, together with the Gasenvoort and West Washington markets beginning to work in the area, made this neighbourhood to become the most important meat and poultry industry in the world.

By 1900 it was home to about 250 slaughterhouses, from where meat was distributed to all the butcher's and restaurants in the City. They coexisted with other pre-existing industrial activities such as cotton printers, cigar making or auto repair shops and with a residential function to a lesser extent.

In the 1950s more efficient and cost-effective forms of distribution of meat were achieved, causing the industry of the area to decay, and leading to the abandonment of many of the slaughterhouses and infrastructures which had been built.

### **Leather boots**

Some entrepreneurs with few economic resources opened some nightclubs in the area in the 1980s. Prostitutes, transvestites and drag queens mixed late at night with rats of the size of rabbits. The activities which could not be carried out in other districts of the City found their place inside the empty slaughterhouses.

The Meatpacking District became then known because of drug dealing and prostitution, particularly involving transsexuals. Many underground sex clubs flourished in the area, most of them under the control of the Mafia as shown in the film *Cruising* starring Al Pacino, a thriller set in the sex clubs of the area.

### **Artists shoes**

The district, which had become very dangerous, was the centre of Mafia operations and the focus of the city's burgeoning BDSM (bondage, dominance, sadism and masochism) subculture. The fight against AIDS forced many nightclubs to close, leaving the industrial structures empty once again.

In 1985 Florent Morellet, an artist living in the area, opened a restaurant inside one of them and created an association called 'Save Gansevoort' together with Jo Hamilton in order to revitalise the neighbourhood preserving its scale and mood, as some important promoters were willing to invest and wait for a possible reassessment due to the strategic position of the area. This initiative was very successful, ushering in a gradual occupation of the reused buildings by chefs, artists, filmmakers and designers.

The industrial character of the Meatpacking district and the faint plants of the buildings soon attracted creative activities, becoming then art galleries, fashion restaurants, artist ateliers, architecture offices and recording studios.

Some of the most important contemporary art galleries of the moment are located here: Heller (420 West 14th St.), Ivy Brown (675 Hudson St.) or Bohemian Foundation (415 West 13th St.). The Whitney Museum of American Art will move to its new building in Gansevoort Street in 2015, consolidating the creative character of the area.

### **High-heeled shoes**

The opening of Jeffrey Shoes in 1999 marked the beginning of fashion retail in the Meatpacking district. At the beginning, only the designer ateliers were located here, but after the revitalisation of the area it became the perfect spot for fashion due to its bohemian atmosphere and its consideration as a cultural hub of New York City.

Diane von Furstenberg bought a big ex-industrial structure in 2004 to host her home and studio, and three years later her flagship store. Recently, Stella McCartney, Lucy Barnes and Alexander McQueen have opened big new stores in this place, too.

It has become the trendiest neighbourhood of New York City, being the background of many international TV series like *Sex in the City* or *Gossip Girl*. Michelle Dell, the Hogs & Heifers saloon owner, recalls: *'I'll never forget when the neighbourhood started to transition. You know, women rolling around in their Jimmy Choos and their Guccis, slipping and sliding in these streets which were covered in this thin film of meat sludge.'*

## Sneakers

The inhabitants of the district have always been very active and have continued the work of Florent and Hamilton, achieving the consideration of Gansevoort Market as a historical district and the consequent preservation of its heritage. In this way, the recent transformations of the area have been developed in a very sentient way, excluding some cases, just as it happened before, when the occupation by the different activities was spontaneous. Thanks to them and through a non-profit association called 'Friends of the High Line' an elevated railroad which runs along the lower west side of Manhattan, rebuilt in 1934 to carry meat, was preserved and reused as a public linear park in 2009 through a project of Diller Scofidio+Renfro architects. It is known as 'The High Line'.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Meatpacking district is the reusing of infrastructures so that they are able to preserve the echoes of past lives. It is one of the few places in the world where you can find a high couture store in the same space where there was a painter atelier, previously a sex club and formerly a slaughterhouse. Furthermore, all these transformations are visible as the structure has registered the previous activities and the passing of time.

The twisted iron bars, the big hooks and the wagon rails sparkle along with the stunning sculptures and the polished dance floors.

*Transformation of the Meatpacking district through the activities held on it at each time*



Picture 1. The Meatpacking district before the construction of the High Line. 1916. Photo: G.W. Bromley. Picture 2. Photo: Katsu Naito. Picture 3. The Florent. Photo: Miriam Meckel. Picture 4 and 5. The High Line Park. Photo: Tony Stewart.

At the moment 30 businesses related to meatpacking remain, processing half a million kilogrammes of meat every year and coexisting with sophisticated sculptures, luxury items and LED screens.

Every year new stores and restaurants arrive to the quarter as well as new galleries and ateliers. Besides, a very big project is expected for 2015: the opening of the new Whitney Museum of American Art, which moves from Madison Avenue to Gansevoort Street at the southern entrance of 'The High Line'.

### **Contact**

SERRANO + BAQUERO. Juan Antonio Serrano García and Paloma Baquero Masats

C/ Puentezuelas 22 Bis  
18002. Granada, España

[www.serranoybaquero.com](http://www.serranoybaquero.com)  
[estudio@serranoybaquero.com](mailto:estudio@serranoybaquero.com)

# A CARIBBEAN CREATIVE DISTRICT

WOODBROOK, THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

MARSHA PEARCE (UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)

Woodbrook is a historic creative district located in the west of Port of Spain, the capital city of the Caribbean twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Comprising 367 acres, the district was a sugar cane estate with a number of different proprietors. Among the owners were French Governor Phillipe Roume de St Laurent, Henry Murray, who was a Registrar of Slaves and the Scottish company W.F. Burnley of Glasgow. In 1899, the estate was purchased by the Siegert family, who are noted for their development of the Angostura aromatic bitters formula – a product used in beverage and food recipes around the globe. In 1911, the Siegerts sold the property to the Port of Spain Town Board – the precursor of the Port of Spain City Council – for 85,000 pounds. Port of Spain had become overcrowded. It was necessary to seek land to develop into a residential area and the state looked at Woodbrook. That development thrust would be interwoven with the establishment and rise of a number of creative spaces, practices and expressions. Over the years, since the early twentieth century, the tone of life in Woodbrook has and continues to be inflected by the arts.

The year 2011 marked 100 years of state-managed growth of the district. Today, connections to the past are evident with district street names such as Murray, as well as those such as Cornelio, Carlos, Alfredo, Luis, Alberto, Rosalino, Ana, Petra and Gallus, which are all names of members of the Siegert family. There is also a public park called Siegert Square. Yet, while the district's history lives in the present, Woodbrook has transformed, from a colonial site for the cultivation of sugar cane, into a dynamic residential and burgeoning commercial area and, notably, a hub for art and diverse forms of creativity.

The island of Trinidad was exposed to the art of motion pictures with the opening of its first cinema in Woodbrook: The London Electric Theatre, which was established in 1911. The cinema was later called Astor when it was sold in the 1930s. What was once a location for film screenings is now a church for ritual practices. Dance, music and dramatic stage performances would also find a home in

Woodbrook. Dancer, choreographer and Woodbrook native Beryl McBurnie founded the Little Carib Theatre in the district in 1948. McBurnie was an advocate of Caribbean folk dance. She was also a proponent of steelpan (or pan) music – a steelpan is a percussion instrument made from oil drums. It was invented in the twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Folk dance and steelpan music were stigmatised as art forms of society’s lower class. Yet, McBurnie believed that these were key arts in the development of Trinidad and Tobago’s cultural identity at a time when the islands sought to attain independence from Great Britain.<sup>1</sup> Beryl McBurnie was the first to put a steelpan band – the Invaders Steel Orchestra – on stage and she did so at the Little Carib Theatre. Today the venue remains an important one for the performing arts.



Figure 1. Street Art is a feature of the Woodbrook district. Source: © Anthony Moore.

In the same year that the Little Carib Theatre was launched, the Trinidad and Tobago Music Association inaugurated a festival in which both children and adults could compete in a showcasing of their musical prowess. One location for the music

---

<sup>1</sup> Trinidad and Tobago gained independence in 1962.

festival competitions was the Roxy Cinema, located in Woodbrook.<sup>2</sup> Although Woodbrook would no longer serve as a host for the music festival when a concert hall was later built in another area of the capital city, music remains a strong creative force in the district – particularly steelpan music.

Six pan yards are situated in Woodbrook. A pan yard is the practice area for pannists (steelpan musicians) and the home of a steelband. The district is the base for the Woodbrook Playboyz Steel Orchestra, Woodbrook Modernaires, the Invaders Steel Orchestra, Silver Stars Steel Orchestra, Phase II Pan Groove and Starlift Steel Orchestra. With these pan yards, Woodbrook is energised by the sound of steelpan music in the lead-up to the twin islands' annual carnival festival. The preliminary round of Panorama – the carnival season steelpan competition – is held at various pan yards around the islands. Adjudicators along with pan enthusiasts make their way to Woodbrook each year. For carnival 2014, Woodbrook's Phase II Pan Groove won their seventh National Steelband Panorama championship title.

The district is also a centre for the construction of carnival costumes. Numerous *mas camps* can be found. "Mas" is the shortened form of the word "masquerade." Mas camps are sites where costumes are fashioned and distributed. The building at the corner of Ariapita Avenue and French Street was the mas camp of renowned carnival artist and Emmy award-winning designer Peter Minshall, who designed the opening ceremony of three Olympic Games: the Barcelona Summer Olympics in 1992, the Atlanta Summer Olympics in 1996, and the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002. When Minshall moved his operations, the building would become the Mas Camp Pub in 1986. Today, it is called De Nu Pub. The Pub is noted for its sustained promotion of calypso, an African-influenced genre of music, which originated in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Despite the fact that what was once a mas camp is now a place with a different creative focus, the district is still known as a core for carnival costume production. Woodbrook has over forty mas camps including Tribe Carnival, Spice Carnival, Bliss Carnival, MacFarlane, Island People Mas, K2K Carnival Mas, Charm Carnival, D'Harvard Revellers, D'Midas

---

<sup>2</sup> Roxy Cinema is now a Pizza Hut fast food outlet.



Associates, Sobeit and Trini Revellers. A *Trinidad Guardian* newspaper article (2011) describes Woodbrook as the “capital for mas.”

Woodbrook also has the highest concentration of art exhibition spaces in Trinidad and Tobago. Six sites offer audiences the opportunity to engage in various forms of artistic expression, from paintings, drawings and photographs to sculpture and contemporary installations: Medulla Art Gallery, Y Art Gallery, On Location, Fine Art Gallery, Bohemia/The Night Gallery and Alice Yard. One art site, Alice Yard, which is literally a backyard space, offers artist residencies. Under the direction of architect Sean Leonard, visual artist and writer Christopher Cozier and writer and editor Nicholas Laughlin, Alice Yard has hosted a number of creative people from the Caribbean region, North America, Canada and Europe. Another site, Medulla Art Gallery, is the venue for the yearly New Media/experimental film and video screenings, which form part of the Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival.



Figure 2. Architectural designs marked by gable roofs, jalousie windows and fretwork details contribute to Woodbrook’s character. A drawing etched in the sidewalk (as seen in the image at left) exemplifies the district’s creative spirit. Source: © Anthony Moore.

Woodbrook continues to develop as a lively area for the arts with creative fuel even coming from a dimension of the district that involves the sex trade. Since the inception of Trinidad and Tobago’s annual Erotic Art week in 2009, Woodbrook has been the base for the event. The district is the place where visual artists, musicians,

poets and writers gather to share their imaginative perspectives and probe such issues as sensuality, sexual desire, arousal, power and taboos.

Clothing design also has a home in the district. The fashion house of Meiling Esau, one of the Caribbean's leading designers, is located at 6 Carlos Street, Woodbrook. The location is a collective or community of people working to execute their artistic visions. In 2012, Meiling – as she is known in the fashion industry – took inspiration from the Woodbrook address to launch the 6 Carlos Magazine, which aims to mirror the artistic community out of which the publication was born. Heather Jones, another principal Caribbean fashion designer, also operates from Woodbrook, with her business located in Luis Street.

The culinary arts are also a huge feature of Woodbrook. The district's popular Ariapita Avenue is characterised by several restaurants and roadside vendors. Along with eateries, the presence of bars and casinos make the avenue an axis on which Woodbrook's vibrant nightlife revolves. Poetry and jazz are also part of the nighttime offerings. The magnetism of Ariapita Avenue is perceived as being so strong that the location has been included in new tourism initiatives. In 2012, the government approved a multi-million dollar plan to shape the avenue into a tourist attraction.

Ariapita Avenue's status as a place of creative articulation was also reinforced when it served as the setting for local fashion designer and season nine Project Runway television show winner Anya Ayoung Chee's Spring/Summer 2013 collection. On January 31, 2013, Ariapita Avenue was transformed into a runway for Ayoung Chee's event entitled Fashion Rocks the Avenue – a fashion show with free admission for the public. Audiences crowded the avenue for an event which was Ayoung Chee's first Caribbean showing since winning the North American fashion design television competition in 2011.

The avenue is not the only node of interest. Woodbrook's built environment is also of significance. The district's suburban face reflects both old and new architecture. Woodbrook is known for its colonial-era gingerbread buildings, which are identified by wooden jalousie windows and ornate fretwork. These structures stand in sharp contrast to and are under the threat of being ousted by more recently erected high-rise properties of concrete, steel and glass. This tension of styles and

approaches to the designing of space in Woodbrook is one key source of continued conversations about the art of self-definition, identity and the trajectory options for growth and change in islands seeking to demonstrate their modernity and have a distinctive voice in the world. Woodbrook is a creative district in which the arts – from theatre to architecture – play a pivotal role in Caribbean processes of self-exploration and ‘becoming’.



Figure 3. Woodbrook’s built environment resonates with creative energy. Source: © Anthony Moore.

## References

- Blood, Peter Ray. "Mas Camp Turns 25." *Trinidad Guardian*. 2 June 2011. Web. 27 Mar. 2013. <<http://guardian.co.tt/lifestyle/2011/06/01/mas-camp-turns-25>>.
- Homer, Louis. "100 Years of Woodbrook." *Trinidad Express*. 11 Sept. 2011. Web. 7 Jan. 2013. <[http://www.trinidadexpress.com/news/100\\_years\\_of\\_woodbrook-129628453.html](http://www.trinidadexpress.com/news/100_years_of_woodbrook-129628453.html)>.
- MacLean Geoffrey and Vel Lewis. *The Built Heritage of Trinidad and Tobago*. Port of Spain: The National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago, 2012. Print.
- Ramdass, Anna. "Ariapita Avenue to be Tourist Resort." *Trinidad Express*. 10 May 2012. Web. 27 Mar. 2012. <[http://www.trinidadexpress.com/business/Ariapita\\_Avenue\\_to\\_be\\_\\_tourist\\_resort\\_-151059665.html](http://www.trinidadexpress.com/business/Ariapita_Avenue_to_be__tourist_resort_-151059665.html)>.
- Rampersad, Joan. "100th Anniversary Celebrations." *Newsday*. 5 Nov. 2011. Web. 7 Jan. 2013. <<http://www.newsday.co.tt/features/print,0,150115.html>>.
- Raymond, Judy. "Beryl McBurnie: The First Lady of Dance." *Caribbean Beat* 20 (1996): n. pag. Web. 7 Jan. 2013. <<http://caribbean-beat.com/issue-20/beryl-mcburnie-first-lady-dance>>.
- Woodbrook Celebrates 100 Years. *Trinidad Guardian*. 13 Aug. 2011. Web. 7 Jan. 2013. <<http://www.guardian.co.tt/entertainment/2011/08/13/woodbrook-celebrates-100-years>>.

# CREATIVE ARTISANS DISTRICTS IN THE PROVINCE OF LIMA

LIMA, PERU

**CHARLINE CAYEMAN** (MASTER'S STUDENT IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AT UNIVERSITY OF LUSÓFONA DE HUMANIDADES E TECNOLOGIAS, LISBON, PORTUGAL)

In the province's capital of Peru, Lima, there are two artisans districts. The district of Tawaq in Ate Vitarte and Ichimay Wari in Lurin. These two districts have the particularity of relaying Quinoa culture (place of origin of the artisans) through cultural events and artistic designs in their products. Since its arrival in the province of Lima, the districts have been created, improved and were able to start receiving tourists. The artisans use their creative art to give life to the district. The activities undertaken within the district revolve around "experiential tourism".

---

It was in a time of social and economic problems. In the 80s in Peru, Ayacucho (Peru's poor department) had started terrorism. It was a very violent time with a current extremist who murdered both civilians and military. It was in this difficult situation that provincials migrated to the capital, fleeing violence. They came in different circumstances and to different places in the province of Lima, for example, Ate Vitarte and Lurin. Municipalities of two small towns giving facilities to people living in poverty to buy their own land. People from Ayacucho were young and turned into families of artisans. They began to produce and sell their crafts in order to survive and build a future for themselves and their families.

At first, the sale conditions were difficult and the artisans were paid below the price of their products. In Lima discrimination and exploitation were predominant among employers. For this reason, the artisans took the initiative to form an association, which valued their jobs and could no longer be abused by employers.

Artisans from Quinoa district (department of Ayacucho) who arrived at Ate Vitarte founded an artisan association called Tawaq in Lima on 23 December 1985. At the beginning, the association had 6 members and now Tawaq has 31 partners. The translation of the Tawaq acronym means: "Wari Ayllu Associated Workshops of Quinoa". "Wari" is a reference to the

culture whose men were recognised for being great potters of the Pre Inca; "Ayllu" is a Quechua word meaning "family reunification", and "Quinua" as the name origin of artisans. Tawaq aims to develop the craft, preserve and defend the identity of its people and Andean culture. Its mission is to market its products through export and reception of experiential tourism that respects the principles of fair trade and seeking to improve the quality of life of its members. The workshops mainly engage people in the pottery of Quinua and retables, representative of handicraft products from Ayacucho.

Concerning the artisans who migrated to Lurin, they have also created an association in the artisan district, the association of Ichimay Wari. Since 1999, the association has had 19 families who produce ceramics, textiles and altarpieces. With the formation of their association, artisans have developed their communities and workshops with the help of



financing from NGOs and universities. Promoting their culture is an important mission for the artisans of Ichimay Wari. The name of the district association and Artisanal contains the Quechua word *Wari* referring to ancestral culture, and the word *Ichma* was used by a pre-Incan culture situated in the area of Lurín. The name contains two cultures and thus reflects adaptation to a new environment. The drawings present in their art represent the two ancient cultures. It is by their designs that the artisans transmit their history.

Figure 1. Artisan: Gedion Fernandez (member of the Tawaq association). Photo: Charline Cayeman.

When these two people's artisans arrived in the province of Lima, they arrived at a virgin land. Over the years, they have built their homes, their workshops and their districts. District development has been slow due to economic difficulties. But thanks to the creation of their association, they help each other to reproduce their former home of Ayacucho. And little by little, their creative art has settled in the district streets. Their creation has installed ceramic decoration in their district. For example, plates with decorations of Wari culture identify artisan workshops, sculptures and paintings in tissue to welcome the visitors. Artisans living in the two districts will be delighted to explain the meaning of each piece of their work that composes their workshop. Handicrafts, for example, drawings of landscapes of Ayacucho, convey scenes of cultural life that are usually associated with the seasons and



Figure 2. Learning one of the techniques with the artisan Juan Nolasco Chavez, member of the Association Ichimay Wari.

the rites tied with their beliefs. In the districts, they celebrate daily habits of their original people. It is through these associations, Tawaq and Ichimay Wari (acting as a community), that these districts have started to develop.

Given that the inhabitants are almost exclusively artisans in these two districts, cultural life in these districts focuses on crafts. The artisans transmit the artistic know-how from father to son. Cultural activities related to crafts are means of artistic expression and a way to preserve and protect the culture of Ayacucho. Artisans want to give more life to their district by making it attractive for tourist activities. But tourism is nevertheless not the dominant source of activities in districts. Tourism has some social impacts such as improving the quality of life and fulfillment, identity consolidation, participation in the cultural expansion. Tourism helps artisans develop their districts and informs visitors of the products they can create and

sell. It has happened that tourism helps to get customers from abroad. On the one hand, tourism is important to promote them but on the other hand, it is important to teach their skills and give information about their culture. Indeed, the activities are provided to visitors through the establishment of a participative tourism and experiential tourism. The idea is to offer visitors a learning experience on culture and handicraft techniques. It is an exchange of know-how and passion from artisans to visitors. But sometimes from visitors to artisans who develop their creativity among their experience. This type of approach can be related to the trend of creative tourism<sup>1</sup>. Artisans of Tawaq and Ichimay Wari wanted to use a different way from traditional tourism to create experiences that will benefit both tourists and the local community.

In terms of cultural activities, both districts organise meetings and community life events. Music, dance, gastronomy, sport and cultural activities are available in these two districts. In fact, they used to celebrate holidays such as Father's Day and more general activities all together around a banquet. The family has an important role in the functioning of cultural life of the districts. The Tawaq and Ichimay Wari districts maintain and preserve various cultural activities related to ancestral practices. The most important example is gastronomy. There is a Peru delicacy: the Pachamanca, a delicious and traditional Peruvian dish, based on baking, buried under the ground and cooked over hot stones for about 2 to 3 hours. It is a typical ancestral activity, and more than a method of cooking it is a celebration in and of itself, a source of fertility and life. Each region has a different version of the Pachamanca, but the principle remains the same. The preparation of the dish is accompanied by a true ancestral ritual in Peru related to Mother Earth (Pachamama). This dish is cooked in local districts and this one is sometimes shared with visitors. So, some cultural practices of the past are always present in inhabitants' customs and beliefs, which allow its preservation.

In conclusion, these two districts, Ate Vitarte and Ichimay Wari, have a rich culture from their place of origin and they have adapted to what they found in the province of Lima. This is conveyed by the handicraft through drawings found in their production. The two districts were created from nothing in the 1980s to become a cultural and attractive place to visit today. Artisans have been creative in establishing a tourism focused on participation and

---

<sup>1</sup> Creative tourism is defined by UNESCO as: "It is travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture."



learning their know-how or sometimes culinary experience. And cultural life is centred on sharing events between families in the community. The future of these two districts is rather promising as they have a good basis and good practices to continue to grow. It is important, however, that the artisans continue to help each other to take care of their creative districts and continue to move forward.



Figure 3. Photo: Charline Cayeman.