Creativity, Culture & the City:
A question of interconnection

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Summary

Credit: Zollverein, Photo: RUHR.2010/Rupert Oberhäuser

There is a need to switch the question: Not what is the value of imagination creativity, culture, heritage, the arts or design for city development. Instead, what is the cost of not thinking of imagination, creativity, culture, design, art and heritage. Name a city that is globally important, but weak in these spheres.

All cities need to gain recognition and to get onto the global radar screen in order to increase their wealth creation prospects and to harness their potential. Creativity, the cultural distinctiveness of place, the arts and a vibrant creative economy are seen as resources and assets in this process.

'Creativity' whose essence is a multifaceted resourcefulness is a primary asset since human cleverness, desires, motivations and imagination are replacing location, natural resources and market access as key urban resources.

Creativity is legitimized within the arts and should spread to other spheres from encouraging social innovations or establishing more creative bureaucracies.

Most cities are in transition, especially those with an industrial past, and need to renew and revitalize their economic base in order to move up the value chain and to become more knowledge intensive places.

To keep and attract the increasingly mobile workforce the attractiveness and vibrancy of place and the opportunities it provides matters as never before. The atmosphere, look and feel of a place and

activities of the people who live there are its culture. The arts and cultural institutions contribute significantly to generating interest and vitality.

Too many cities are developed within a limited, hardware focused technically driven urban engineering paradigm as distinct from creative city making which combines hardware and software perspectives, which also focuses on the sensory and experiential and seeks to create the conditions for exchange, transaction and networking.

Retrofitting the conditions for conviviality and rediscovering the power of the public realm is increasingly important. Culturally literate good urban design helps this process.

City renewal at its core is a cultural project as it involves not only economic and physical transformation, but also a shift in mindset and perspective. To bring people with you cities need engage them in their renewal story. Cities on the move need a compelling story to drive motivation and commitment and the arts are good at helping provide these messages.

The best cultural policies combine a focus on enlightenment, empowerment, entertainment and creating economic impact.

Our view of cities is a mix of reality and truth, hype and perception usually filtered through media representations. The overall culture of a place and the arts help define and shape identity, perception and image within the city's own terms.

The creative economy sectors, music, the new media, design, performance and literary expression are an increasingly important sector within urban economies. A vast array of evidence documents this fact and their contribution to employment and income for urban economies. In addition they have softer indirect spin-offs for cities, such as encouraging tourism or their vitality or shaping identity.

Some qualities differentiate the creative industries from other fields because like the arts it often deals with the sensory realm and helps create experiences.

Behind music lies sound and vibration; behind the painting arts visualization; behind film moving images; and design is in essence a moulding, patterning and problem solving activity and the new media are largely focused on connections.

An underexplored insight is that these attributes have migrated into every sphere of life and every industry and service. This makes their combined impact as powerful as electricity. The current economy could not run without them and they have transformed the way individuals, the city, the economy and society operates. There are part of its DNA.

Using creativity, culture, the arts and creative industries in city development should not happen formulaically. It is more an art than a science, but strong principles can help cities on their way. These include going with the grain of local culture rather than against it, focusing on the distinctiveness of place and involving citizens in an act of co-creation in making and shaping their evolving city.

The logic of arts and culture can be diametrically opposed to economic rationalism and this can create many dilemmas. One role of creativity is to find bridges between their complex aims and goals.

Secondary cities need to work even harder on their cultural offer and major events and accolades such as the European City of Culture can be catalytic in increasing internal self-confidence and external resonance.

The best cities are ultimately experienced as living works of art.

Setting the scene

Covering a 25 year perspective this essay is based on a qualitative investigation on the developing relationship between the arts and broader culture of a city, creativity and city development. Commissioned by the European Centre for the Creative Economy (ECCE) and Forum Avignon it explores deeper connections, strategic dilemmas and the future potential. Its brief sweep through history and the trajectory of development seeks to anchor today's perspectives and insights within a longer term view. Whilst this essay highlights six cities – Lille, Liverpool, Bologna, Bilbao, Krakow and the Ruhr- it must be remembered that the creativity/culture nexus is a world-wide phenomenon with interesting and proliferating examples across the globe.
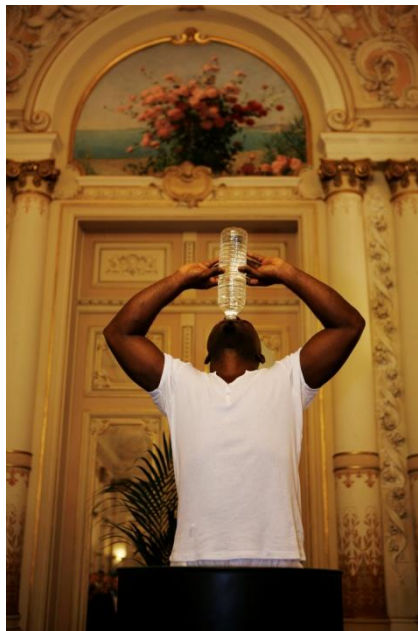
Credit: Forum d'Avignon

The central hypothesis is that widespread creativity, applying a cultural perspective to urban development as well as using art disciplines and their commercial manifestations drives deeper transformation in cities. These contribute not just to adding economic value and jobs, but more importantly, to the evolutionary process by which individuals, the city, society and the economic system grows as a whole. They are thus even more important than we have currently considered. The sector, therefore, may have as much impact as did the discovery of electricity which has transformed the way we live. The contention here is that their combined impact is immense, insufficiently understood and under acknowledged. Indeed they are like electricity or a nervous system. Our lives, our cities and their economies could not work without culture and creativity. These are constantly changing places and how we live in them.

This triad of words, 'culture', 'creativity' and 'the city' and the deeper concepts underlying them are now constantly used in unison. Seen together they exert a powerful force that is inextricably interwoven. They create an unfolding dynamic with far-reaching impacts on urban life, its wealth creation prospects, well-being, the overall vibrancy and vitality and of places and how they get onto the wider radar screen and resonate across the globe.

Cities compete with ever greater intensity in order to be the strategic places which have a direct effect and influence on world affairs or at least their nation economically, culturally and politically, where the defining agendas are created, facilitated and enacted. There are perhaps 25 global cities in this first rank of which six or so are of primary importance. Below that are perhaps 50 other cities in a second tier that have international recognition and as we cascade down the hierarchy and even greater number are searching to be on a bigger radar screen. The last two decades has seen them all recognize that broad based creativity, their distinctive culture and the arts within that as well as a strong creative industries sector are key competitive factors within city renewal and development. The attempt is to provide their city with an experientially rich sensory personality.

This essay has two sections. The first takes a step back and seeks to unscramble the nested complexity of the concepts 'creativity', 'culture', the arts' and the 'creative economy' very briefly. This is a necessary detour, otherwise the contentious and unresolved 25 year debate on the connections between the city, arts and culture and creativity will not be fully appreciated. Each concept is somewhat slippery and can avoid precise definition. Crucially their meanings have changed over time and continue to do so. Yet meanings from different eras stressing different priorities are used interchangeably with newer insights and interests. This adds to the confusion. It means people can often talk past each other. Yet interestingly this ambiguity and paradox can enrich discussion. Much of what follows is commonly known, but usually it is not viewed and considered together.

The second section summarizes lessons learnt and highlights the strategic dilemmas and conflicts that cities face in bringing culture and creativity together with economics and commerce in urban development.

Section One: Cities on the Move: The bigger context

Credit: Forum d'Avignon

Creativity as a resource

There is global recognition that 'creativity' whose essence is a multifaceted resourcefulness is a primary asset since human cleverness, desires, motivations and imagination are replacing location, natural resources and market access as urban resources. The creativity, skills and talents of those who live in and run cities will determine future success. Of course this has always been critical to cities' ability to survive and adapt. Creativity is both generic, a way of thinking and a mindset and is task oriented in relation to particular fields, such as inventing novel applications of sound technologies for safety in mining. Creativity requires certain qualities of mind, dispositions and attitudes, including curiosity, openness and a questioning attitude. It involves fluency and flexibility and the ability to draw on ideas from across disciplines and fields of inquiry, to think laterally and blend concepts from seemingly unrelated domains. It is based on divergent thinking, which opens out possibilities, reveals patterns and helps find solutions before prematurely closing in on a specific answer. This means that the organizational culture of a city needs to foster a culture of creativity which by being embedded helps a city to rethink itself when necessary and to adapt to changing circumstances.

Creativity is legitimized within the arts, in particular, as well as areas of scientific research. Therefore there is much to learn from these fields. The applications of creativity are very strong in arts related fields and their industrial and service driven manifestations from design to music or the new media. Yet the 'creative city' concept also has a broader scope.

Many cities call themselves 'the creative city', at my last count over 50. By this they usually mean that they have a strong arts sector and cultural institutions. They include Vancouver, Toronto, Auckland, Kanazawa, Manchester or Barcelona calling itself 'the capital of creativity', Bandung in Indonesia which is 'the emerging creative city' or Unesco's 'creative cities' network with places like Bologna, Montreal and Ghent and 26 others designated as creative for specific fields. The Ruhr region has its 'creative quarters initiative'. Liverpool has not use the brand, but for over 30 years has promoted itself as 'creative', whereas Krakow labels itself as 'cultural Krakow'. Lille has not used the concept. Importantly, Bilbao, by contrast, has addressed the issue differently. The city has been aware that it is innovative in that it has been bold in its urban renewal processes and that its economy has been entrepreneurial in taking on existing inventions and applied these in various areas of advanced manufacturing such as automotive components or wind turbine technology. It has been concerned, however, that it is not creative enough in that it has not invented new products, processes or services whose copyrights could accrue to the city. It therefore commissioned in 2009 from Comedia a generally applicable Creative City Index to measure its creative pulse.

The creativity agenda in fact has two trajectories. The first stemmed from the concern that the arts were under threat in the early 1980's. Related to this was the growing interest in the creative industry sectors from the new media to design and performance. Together they claimed that creativity lay at their heart and that they were central to how cities and regions could develop. Separately the knowledge economy agenda aligned with it.

Slowly and with gathering force from the 1960's onwards it became clear that Western societies were changing profoundly and becoming post-industrial based less on muscle power and more on brain power and its resulting knowledge. The raw materials of this new knowledge intensive system were increasingly information, knowledge and creativity. Knowledge here is both a product in itself and also a tool to enhance the value of other activities through the judgement and analysis by which it adds value to any idea, product or service. To have knowledge entails having a variety of subject and technical expertise and the intellectual capacity to problem-solve and discover opportunities. The latter is of course concerned with being creative. Knowledge is essentially human capital. It accentuates too the different types of skills and workers needed to run a society. In a more

knowledge intensive economy, the specialized labour force was initially seen as largely maths and computer literate and data savvy. Knowledge, crucially, can grow rather than deplete by being shared and applied. This shifts the economy from one of scarcity to potential abundance. The key point was the realization that a pre-condition for knowledge and ultimately the capacity to innovate was the ability to be imaginative and creative. This was the talent the new economy increasingly needed.

The urban creativity agenda is moving down the urban scale as every city needs skill, expertise and talent. It started two decades ago with the 25 largest global cities as recognition grew of the shift from nations as hubs of wealth creation to city regions. Now second and third level cities are equally focusing on the agenda. The main lesson is that creativity is an all pervasive attribute as important to urban development as IT connectivity. In order to move onto this new terrain we need shift the old intellectual architecture which has sedimented itself into our minds like a geological formation.

There is a crucial contrast in between the traditional 'urban engineering paradigm' to city development, which is largely hardware focused and which focuses more on the idea of the 'city as a collection of projects' to the notion of 'creative city making' which sees 'the city as the project' and which integrates hardware and software thinking and initiatives. The latter focuses on which physical conditions can foster and create relationships, networks and bonding between and within groups. It pays attention to how a place feels and its atmospherics. Equally it assesses how cities can develop stories for themselves that generate recognition, resonance and impact.

There is a proliferating global frenzy as places want to evolve as creative cities or simply to claim they are a 'creative city'. Some talk of a Creative City Movement. Everyone is responding to a world that has changed dramatically. It feels like a paradigm shift and whilst many things seem the same their underlying operating dynamics are different.

The Creative City notion seems like an answer to coping with this transition. It is like a rash and has spread everywhere. Often people want creativity to solve more problems than it can cope with. Importantly many problems or opportunities do not necessarily require creativity per se. The central issue is to have a mindset willing to reassess things openly and be creative when necessary.

The primary conclusions are that the creative capacity of a place is shaped by its history, its culture, its physical setting and its overall operating conditions. This determines its character and 'mindset'.

The resurgence of the city

The city has always been a centre of transactions, power and intellectual resources. Yet it is now hard to imagine that in the 1970's there was a fear that the city was in such a decline that it might not recover as their city centres hollowed out with businesses leaving and the flight to the suburbs. The result was urban wastelands as industry declined and began to move Eastwards. Remember New York barely avoided bankruptcy in 1975.

A significant phenomenon emerged in the transition to knowledge intensity from the early 1980's onwards. The city was 'rediscovered' and began again to exert a gravitational pull, because of its resources in learning, its capacity to help exchange and transactions, its cultural institutions and richer artistic life and vibrancy, its stock of buildings and infrastructure and its transport links. The city was seen as an accelerator of opportunity. The city is a dense communications system that is not easy to replicate in other settings. Once the urban focus re-emerged a vast urban regeneration process began with the tearing down of the past to make the city ready for professional services related industries, offices and residential developments that frequently pushed out older tenants as a result of the gentrification process. Often the results were negative.

Simultaneously an extensive retrofitting exercise began. World-wide several hundred old warehouses, breweries; train, bus or fire stations; cement, coal, textile, tobacco or steel factories; old markets or military barracks or older working class districts were transformed into culture or experience centres, incubators and company breeding grounds and as hubs for wider urban regeneration. The creative professionals, such as musicians, graphic designers, artists or actors in particular were drawn to these places. Their mere presence made them the vanguard of regeneration, a process that is well documented, but also led to gentrification and as costs spiralled often pushed them out later. It is strange that those same places that had had horrible working conditions began to be celebrated as places for the new and the hip. Why do these structures resonate? They exude memory and the patina of ages in an age where novelty erases memory increasingly and of course, physically their spaces are large and allow for flexibility and interesting structures.

They include most famously those in the Ruhr such as Zeche Zollverein in Essen or Duisburg Landschafts Park; the Tate North and waterfront development in Liverpool; the Roubaix Piscine or Tourcoing textile mills in Lille Metropole; the Sala Borsa in Bologna, the Alhondigabilbao in Bilbao; the revitalization of Kazimierz in Kracow and especially its Jewish Quarter. There are too the Distillery District in Toronto, the Cable Factory in Helsinki, Halles De Schaerbeek in Brussels, the Custard Factory in Birmingham, the refurbishment of old industrial buildings in Pyrmont Ultimo in Sydney, Metelkovo Ljubljana, the Truman Brewery area around Brick Lane in London and many, many more. The renewal of these large buildings often led to the wider regeneration of whole districts.

Another deep trend was the recognition that cities were the drivers of wealth creation, but what is the definition of any city? Is it the traditional boundary or a wider city-region? Most cities have a more narrowly defined historical identity and distinctiveness, yet their functional economic zone is wider, such as Liverpool and Merseyside or Bilbao and Biscay or Lille and its metropole. An important role for culture has been to help shape these often amorphous identities. The European Cultural Capital programme has played a key role in projecting their wider region as with Essen's reign to define is cultural capital 2010 as the Ruhr made up of 52 municipalities or Liverpool incorporating Merseyside in its programming. Often too when people refer to the city they simply mean the core and its immediately surrounding area forgetting that the city is also its suburbs, outlying areas, its industrial parks, which often equally need more life and renewal.

Moving culture centre-stage

Credit: Forum d'Avignon

Culture at its most abstract is how a society or place expresses importance and meaning. The residues of what collectively matters to a place and its people we call the culture of a place. It determines its character and personality. This depends on context from its topography to its personal histories. This is why mountain people usually differ from people growing up in a port city like Liverpool or those from an industrial city like Lille or Bilbao from a city based on learning like Krakow and Bologna. The one may be more inward looking and the other the reverse. Culture is not static, but transforms over time, although a past can give strength and anchorage. That past is both sedimented in the mind and the physical fabric of the city.

What is deemed important is inscribed and embedded in codes, rituals, attitudes and behaviours. It becomes the tradition or the heritage, such as the intellectual traditions of Krakow that some say can make it more conservative. By contrast the fierce competition between Liverpool and Everton football teams or Schalke and Dortmund in Ruhr stems from their culture of solidarity and also tribalism. What these cultural values are or could be are often challenged and need to be renegotiated. That process is in itself a creative one. We call the result 'the way of life' of a place. In essence it means everything we find there. It is broad as a definition, perhaps too broad for policy makers to get a handle on, because it can mean anything from the food people eat, the sports they love to the work and industries for which a city is known. Yet, of course, in the context where the virtual and real are increasingly blending what 'my place' is might not be what it used to be. Place is a moveable feast, we navigate many places simultaneously, we are 'here and there' at the same time as we use mobile devices to communicate 'out there' whilst at the same time we are anchored in the 'here and now'. Increasingly we can identify with many places and this reinforces our multiple

identities. Equally there are Bilbaoinos in Canada or Liverpudlians in New Zealand with strong loyalty to their place of origin. Stability, predictability and certainty are fluid.

With a world in flux 'my culture', that is who I am in all my rich mix, is a significant anchoring device. Going with the grain of a local urban culture as my city develops ironically and counter-intuitively helps the openness to change because it can provide a backbone and some confidence. By contrast not working with the culture or erasing it and its memory can create resistance to change. This is not a matter of nostalgia and reinventing the past, but fostering identity and working with it to move forward. This was an important insight the Ruhr area had in moving forward.

Urban reinvention is not only about physical change and creating new economic sectors, it is in essence a cultural project as you have to bring the population with you and engage them in your renewal story. This means operating at many levels simultaneously. It starts obviously with acknowledging the need for dramatic change and this is often painful. Then a vision needs to be in place that has enough compelling elements in it to drive forward momentum. For Krakow one strand was regaining a place on the European map; for the Ruhr a strand was turning the weakness of environmental degradation into prospects for new knowledge intensive industries; for Lille moving from the geographical periphery more to the centre. For all the former industrial cities there has been the educational problem. A culture of physical labour and very large companies is different from one that requires individual initiative and entrepreneurship. Creating these mental shifts in a city or region is complex.

Six cities, six stories
These transition processes cause dilemmas for each city and it demands a balancing act between old and the new. Some brief comments on those cities to whom we give special mention. All cities are proud, but some cities can be too proud, which can cause them to be inward looking defensive. Bilbao has had a century old battle to assert its identity vis-a-vis Spain and thus festivals like Aste Nagusia, 'the big week', have special significance. In this light the creation of the Gehry built Guggenheim Museum is extraordinary. Its creation involved much scepticism because in the city's economic crisis at that time there was investment in a cultural institution rather than traditional job creation and secondly because some said it was catapulted in from the outside. Yet it is one of the few initiatives of its kind that has worked and has changed the perception of the city highlighting its verve and style that was always there in a new light. The 'Bilbao effect' is difficult to replicate. Remember too that the museum was only one project of many and to identify one theme in Bilbao from which other cities can learn it is the quality of its physical regeneration from the arrival at the airport, to its metro stations to roads and overall place making. This renewal is now stretching out to Abandoibarra and Zorrozaurre. Bilbao encapsulated its approach by stating: 'You have a once in a lifetime opportunity to renew the civic infrastructure, at a minimum it should be international class and as a norm world class'. As a consequence many of world's architectural glitterati have built or are building in the city from Frank Gehry, Norman Foster, Santiago Calatrava and Zaha Hadid. Bilbao has come to see the creative industries as vital rather late and perhaps because it had some many other industrial strengths and also in response to Madrid's increasing dominance in this area as the city's talent as leaked outwards. Barcelona once Spain's hub for music and design has equally suffered from Madrid's rise.

Liverpool, another city of immense cultural richness and powerful architecture, known once as the 'second city of Empire' is equally very proud, which has been reinforced throughout its decline starting from the early 1960's onwards, since when its population nearly halved. In its search for a new role and purpose culture has been central within which the Beatles phenomenon was helpful just when the city was suffering most. Yet increasingly there is a sense that the Beatles are only one aspect of its armoury like its immense pride in football. The city's economic vigour has inevitably suffered causing untold challenges as the world turns Eastwards with its port facing Westwards,

which is a similar problem to Bilbao. Yet after many years as being seen as a 'problem city' Liverpool's fortunes are on the turn. Urban tourism is key and the main impact of European Cultural Capital status in 2008 was increased internal self-confidence, the changed perceptions of the city and its image crucially with national decision makers in Britain as well as potential visitors. This has shifted its prospects. It is Liverpool's cultural scene that is the attractor. This ranges from the historical architecture, where many of the superb old banking, insurance and civic buildings have been turned into entertainment palaces. It includes the city's museums, but also its nightlife. For good or bad Liverpool is the North West's weekend fun city. Recent physical transformation exemplified by Liverpool One shopping complex, the new hotels often housed within the old fabric or the new Liverpool Museum is reinforcing this momentum. It is back on the map for positive reasons. Yet amongst the array of creative cultural initiatives in the city it is perhaps its cultural community development within disadvantaged communities that deserves special mention. These are often unseen and less known, but crucial in terms of how the citizens of a city can feel more empowered and valued. Liverpool cannot reach its former strengths and the rise of Manchester nearby is also a factor, but without its cultural assets it would be far worse off. Clearly the city is attempting to diversify its economy towards the repertoire of bio-sciences, other knowledge intensive sectors and university learning with some success, but it is fighting an uphill battle.

Lille Metropole like many cities, which faced decline of their coal mining and textile industries from the 1960's onwards had to reinvent itself through services from the 1980s onwards. Lille is now a hub for French e-commerce and the logistics industry. It is France's fourth largest metropole, but has been seen as dowdy, dirty and somewhat dull. The most dramatic change for the city was the transformation of its centrality through the Channel Tunnel, Eurostar and Euralille in 1994. From being at the edge, way up North, it is a centre now between Paris, London and Brussels. This remains a strategic perspective for the city and may take a decade or two for the metropole to reach its potential as a location for higher value services rather than being merely seen as a well-connected logistical hub. This makes projects like the Centre of Excellence for E-Commerce and the Pôle Régional Numérique or Euratechnologies important. The latter located in the vast and impressive Le Blan-Lafont building some way off the centre of the city serves as a modern technologies hub for cutting edge activities. There is too the cluster of activities around the Tourcoing textile district including the Bernhard Tschumi designed Le Fresnoy, which is both a multi-media exhibition and events centre as well as an advanced cross-disciplinary school for sound, imagery and contemporary art. The same area houses a variety of incubators for new media technologies and the Pôle Images. The area has attracted the hugely successful Ankama company, based in an old mill. It has over 400 employees, many of whom are from Asia and North America, and which invented some of the most important massive multiplayer online role playing games such as Dofus or Wakfu as well as the Mukafukaz comic series.

In order to address the overall problem of entrepreneurship, a constant dilemma for former industrial cities, Créativallée, a public private partnership, was established in 2000 in order to 'transform Nord-Pas de Calais into a veritable land of creativity'. In addition Lille hosts one of the most important entrepreneur fairs the Salon Créer.

In spite of these initiatives for many Lille still remained trapped in its past image, even though at a simplistic level its rich historic core was there to be rediscovered. Therefore the same ambition that brought a Eurostar station and created Lille Metropole out of 87 communes including Roubaix and Tourcoing occurred by becoming European Cultural Capital in 2004. This acted as a catalyst to bring forces together and through an imaginative programme throughout the city-region it shifted perceptions, primarily internally so generating a new confidence as well as externally. Surprising initiatives like the Maison Folie in Moulins and Wazemmes or La Piscine in Roubaix, an unusual museum in a converted swimming pool, alerted a wider world to the city. Lille has been able to insert itself onto a map with impacts, for instance, on tourism. Clearly as with all industrial cities in transition problems remain in terms of education levels and individual aspiration yet at least Lille has

inserted itself into larger circuits. Importantly through the Lille 3000 project it has pledged to continue with a biennial celebration of cultural events. Its aim is to connect Lille to the world with a range of spin-offs beyond by focusing on a particular region or country from around the world delivering a year-long programme of events dedicated to that place. Lille reminds us of the value of the European City of Culture competition in that it creates focus, is a target for a vision, that it helps form strong partnership. Done well as in Lille it can lift a secondary city into a different position.

The Ruhr is an emblematic region and once the coal and steel centre of Europe. A vast area scarred by over a century of industrial exploitation the regeneration of the Ruhr and within it especially the Emscher Park area over 30 years has been a complex integrated environmental, economic, social and cultural project. Inevitably the residue of history remains in the physical fabric and the mindset of some. It is a very creative long term initiative even if some can find fault with the details. A series of stepping stones, pacing devices and staging posts framed the process to build momentum and celebrate interim achievements First, the IBA experiment within the Emscher area between 1990 and 2000, then the development of the Route of Industrial Culture, culminating with Essen's European City of Culture status in 2010 which it shared with the whole region. The pressure of target dates and deadlines have been useful to drive results. An overarching theme has been to give value to industrial culture. Industrial detritus became industrial monuments and carriers of culture thus avoiding erasing the peoples' memory. Industrial landmarks became sources of civic pride. Combined with this was the notion at times of using the area as an urban R&D zone and more recently establishing creative quarters across the region sometimes based on older industrial sites and at times on clusters as that for games in Muelheim.

There are a number of elements worth recalling, which form part of the overall impact and legacy. First, there was a boldness of vision to see the Emscher area and Ruhr in its totality within a long term 30 year perspective such as 'renaturing' the Emscher river. The idea of turning weakness into strength was a key concept by turning environmental degradation problems into an opportunity to explore new products. This did not happen on a blank sheet. The setting up of universities in the 1960's and the skills and expertise they generated provided a significant pre-condition for regional growth. Counter-intuitively stringent environmental standards drove economic development by forcing companies to come up with solutions.

Embedding an ethos of innovation from the technological to the social and to link environmental improvement to economic development and now with a focus on the creative industries has been important. Equally to take on board the broader notion of sustainability including the cultural was significant. An added element was to rethink the international building exhibition (IBA) idea to understand the power of symbols and their deft use such as in creating industrial monuments and finding new cultural uses for them such as with Zeche Zollverein or the Bochumer Jahrhunderthalle. This continues today with the recent opening of the Dortmunder-U. The unconventional coupling and unusual mixes, such as mixing the iconic and the everyday, or the idea of reframing the industrial sites as parks; or the combination of slag heaps and public art or coal mines turned into modern design centres jolts the imagination and surprises and are part of the Ruhr re-imagination package. The notion of using quality as a carrot and economic development driver when giving the IBA imprimatur only to the best examples was significant as was its 'incrementalism with perspective' approach. That ethos continues as does the operating philosophy to integrate all regeneration dimensions and to generate solutions that cut across existing boundaries in terms of disciplines, departments or sectors. Yet that challenge remains difficult still today as does the constant need to find mechanisms to bind the 52 towns and cities that make up Ruhr together into a common platform. The Cultural Capital achieved by making each place a capital for a week. The most emblematic instance of this bringing together was when in July 2010 sixty kilometres of motorway were shut for a day and where around 2million citizens of the Ruhr celebrated their unity as one.

Bologna is a different case as the city of the world's first university. It nicknames 'the learned one', 'the fat one', given its reputation for gastronomy and 'the red one', first referring to the colour of its roofs and then to its largely left of centre governments post World War II gives a sense of the place. Bologna has been a knowledge hub for centuries anchored in numerous research centres and with 87000 students comprising 25% of the population this shapes the city's personality. As one of the centres of the Third Italy it pre-figured many of the forms of network structures and flexible specialization in its advanced manufacturing sector, food industries, footwear, textiles and electronics that the rest of the world now seeks to imitate. Bologna is that sense is one of Europe's most creative places. The city has one of the lowest rates of unemployment and one of the highest per capita incomes in Europe. It has been renowned through time as one of Italy's more dynamic and well run places. There is the strong, well-documented, social economy and active citizen participation which help manage and deliver social, health and educational services.

Clearly a deeply cultural city it does not have 'the icon' a globally recognized object, although its 'Two Towers' are pretty spectacular. Instead perhaps the city is itself a living work of art. Bologna has traditionally been far more known for its business acumen and as a consequence it has had business rather than cultural tourists. In some sense it did not need to play 'the cultural card', since it already had a strong allure and vibrant cultural life partly reinforced by its student population as well as its renowned food culture that stemmed from its historic role of transforming agricultural goods and animal products. Its' cultural policy focus has traditionally been more focused on production rather than consumption through spectaculars and events. This has been an internal battle for a while. Its farsighted 'bottega di transizione' initiative developed in the early 1980's sought to develop old craft skills and to apply these to new contexts and needs and to merge them with new technologies. This programme gave prizes, grants and other support thus feeding niche advanced craft making and manufacturing. Its status as European City of Culture in 2000, however, played an important role in renewing and developing the cultural infrastructure and spaces such as the Sala Borsa or the Manifattura delle Arte district. In turn by raising profile culturally driven tourism has risen. It became in 2006 one of the first Unesco's 'creative cities' for culture. The recently elected council is in the process of agreeing a strategic plan with all major city stakeholders with the promise by the new mayor that culture will be at the centre of the vision for Bologna's future. This means the city can restart the work which had begun in the early '90s and which had led to Bologna European City of Culture 2000, and then was basically abandoned during the last decade. A central theme is to support creative enterprises. More recently these initiatives have been pulled together through 'Incredibol' (Industrie Creative Bologna), the creative innovation programme of the city, which launched in 2010. Incredibol is a public-private-third sector partnership committed to 'adopting' the best local creative enterprises by offering them premises, finance, advice, consultancy and work opportunities. Another project in planning is the creation of a regional agency to promote and sell the work of the region's artists. The agency could be called "Propheta in patria", based on a similar project from 1990. One lesson perhaps from Bologna is that when you are already relatively successful there is at times less drive to push your cultural profile so vigorously.

Krakow has always seen itself as the natural cultural capital of Poland and as one of its oldest cities it has experienced various highpoints including its Golden Age in the 15th and 16th centuries. This immense pride in its history, its ancient university, the Jagiellonian, and its associated intellectual life and its international outlook anchors the city's self-identity. As a result it has an extensive infrastructure of museums, cultural associations and festivals and is now a natural gathering place for discussing issues in culture, especially in the East. After the fall of communism the city immediately catapulted itself into European consciousness as one of the gems to be rediscovered It, for instance, set up the prestigious International Cultural Centre in 1990, whose aim has been to facilitate the intercourse between peoples of different cultures and whose main field has unsurprisingly been the cultural heritage of Central Europe. It was the first Eastern European city to

gain cultural recognition from the EU in 1992 when it started its special European Cultural Month linked to Madrid's candidacy. In preparation for that process an economic assessment of culture was made[1] the first in Eastern Europe. The next Eastern European city to do such an assessment was St. Petersburg in 2002. Subsequently Krakow became a European Cultural Capital in its own right in 2000. To some extent the city felt this acknowledged its 'rightful place' as a European cultural centre.

An important dimension of Krakow's culture is its Jewish heritage centred around Kazimierz and memorialized in the film Shindler's List. With Auschwitz nearby this has created global attention for the city. It also highlights one of Krakow's cultural themes to be a place of ideas exchange and cultural understanding. The first Jewish Festival started in 1991 in Kazimierz where the Jewish once lived. and culminates in a huge open air concert on Szeroka Street (Wide Street). Kazimierz, recently crumbling, itself is now becoming one the city's most creative, bohemian quarters.

There has often been a debate in the city about whether it tends towards cultural conservatism. One important legacy project from the year 2000 was the Krakow Festival Office, which still thrives today. The first goal of the original Festival Office was the organisation of prestigious events and it has taken this learning forward and is the only organization of its type in Poland. The office takes the conservatism issue head-on and tries break with the stereotype of 'conservative Krakow'. It promotes cultural events in a contemporary way through the extensive use of social media or interactive games. Indeed already in communist times, for instance, the cabaret Piwnica Pod Baranami was provocative and courageous and there are now new initiatives of this kind. Krakow print making culture was also historically very innovative and challenging and the International Print Triennial in the city keeps the tradition alive. In seeking to surprise Krakow has some unusual facilities such as the interestingly soulless Bunker of Arts or the Manggha Center of Japanese Art and Technology initially funded by the filmmaker Andrzej Wajda's Kyoto Prize money. A further significant development has been the creation of MOCAK, the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Krakow, which opened in 2011 and is Poland's first purpose-built modern art museum. It is symbolically located on the site of Oskar Schindler's former factory in Zablocie, a post-industrialist area of Krakow.

Nova Huta a new town built next to Krakow must be mentioned as part of Krakow's cultural landscape. The reasons for building such a vastly polluting industrial town, with the biggest steel, cement and tobacco factories in Poland from the 1950's onwards were mostly ideological and a kind of punishment for the cultural and intellectual Krakow. Coal had to be transported from Silesia and iron ore from the Soviet Union and the products were shipped to other parts of Poland since local demand was relatively small. This did not make economic sense. Of course, Krakow whose population has 25% of students was always at its core a potential knowledge city, which could build on its humanities and natural sciences. Unsurprisingly this is now a priority. For instance, the Jagiellonian Centre of Innovation set up in 2003 is both a technology transfer and innovation incubator centre supporting commercial research in fields like biotechnology, biophysics, physics and environmental protection.

Krakow's historic physical setting, its accessibility and walkability is key in understanding Krakow's cultural position. Centred around the Renaissance Grand Square (Rynek Glowny) the largest plaza of medieval Europe with the Sukiennice (the Cloth Hall) at its heart it is precisely the kind of environment urban designers are trying to retrofit. It makes being convivial and networking easy.

Krakow, as its leaders say is 'one of the most powerful brands in Poland' and it is culturally based. Krakow sees itself as part of a cultural club as some of its twinning arrangements show, such as, Florence, Cambridge/Mass, Edinburgh and St. Petersburg. A lesson from Krakow is that a strong

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[1] The study 'The economic impact of culture in Cracow' was undertaken by Charles Landry of Comedia

cultural foundation, combined university assets creates god conditions for a knowledge economy to emerge provided tradition does not pull back on creativity and innovation.

Navigating complexity

Generating cultural awareness and literacy and embedding this into sensitive and distinctive developments is we see a world-wide phenomenon. Most cities are struggling against the reverse threat of monocultural blandness as the homogenizing forces of globalism take hold. Thus we see an increasing attempt to create some new distinctiveness expressed most forcefully in the battle of physical icons as star architects roam the world to create the spectacular and to pump up desire. At the same new events, festivals or new activities are being developed

Taken together and assessing the forces of change some say we are living through a paradigm shift. Certainties evaporate, they melt away. Old ways of doing things are challenged. Periods of history involving mass transformation, like the Industrial Revolution or the internet driven revolution of the past fifty years, can produce confusion; a sense of liberation combined with a feeling of being swept along by events. Normally it takes a while for new ethical stances to take root or to establish a new and coherent world view. Today changes are happening so fast we feel we can never catch up with little time to absorb, understand and reflect then to act with some sense of clarity and judgement. This then becomes a cultural problem and it is a problem every city faces.

The best cultural policies combine a focus on enlightenment, empowerment, entertainment and creating economic impact.

The experience economy

Credit: Forum d'Avignon

We have talked so far about the broader culture of places, there are a series of more recent significant trends have made the significance of the creative sector in particular much clearer. The first is the rise of the sensory driven experiential economy, which initially became a new mantra of strategy and marketing. Later this coalesced with the increased significance given to design within technological innovation as well as the emerging potential of the new media and their immersive possibilities. Popularized initially by Gilmore and Pine's book *The Experience Economy* it describes the union of everyday consumption, the sensory and spectacle. Apple stands as the emblem for this development, where products create a compelling allure. This process is turning retailing, such as Apple Stores, into a part of the entertainment industry often blurring the boundaries between shopping, learning and the experience of culture. It involves creating settings where customers and visitors participate in all-embracing sensory events, whether for shopping, visiting a museum, going to a restaurant, conducting business to business activities or providing any personalized service from haircutting to arranging travel. In this process, for example, shops can develop museum like features and vice versa museums can become more like shops. Design, multimedia, theatrics and soundscapes increasingly move centre-stage. If you want to keep your customers' attention, it is said, you have to deliver a compelling experience. This trend has shaken the foundations of museums, libraries, science centres, shopping malls, cultural centres as well as virtually every aspect of the business world and the city itself.

With greater choices and higher expectations marketers are competing for customers' attention in order to break through the clutter and sensory overload to capture their focus. In this process cities themselves are becoming a bit like artistic installations with constantly changing events and often

vast, oversized advertising hoardings, which according to your view, are either scarring or making the urban landscape interesting. Every surface is a target for adverts. The exit gates of metro stations, the hand rails on escalators, the stairs leading up to them.

Grabbing attention is done by creating experiences that are so distinctive that they stand out in a crowded landscape. Organizations are creating their own "brandlands", think of Apple, which are destinations, both real and virtual, that deliver a memorable message by telling a compelling story that reflects magic, wonder and opportunity. Theme-park-style technology, special effects, and storytelling techniques are applied to physical projects like the Sephora and Niketown stores, the Lincoln library; a Volkswagen factory in Dresden, Germany; a cultural centre for the Sami people in Karasjok in Norway. Disney may have started this process through its Adventureland, Fantasyland, and Tomorrowland, but now organizations are working on corporate brandlands, cultural discoverylands, and learninglands wrapping everything up in a cohesive narrative, engaging visuals, and soaring musical scores. Think here especially of the activities of the Prada Foundation or the Punta della Dogana or Palazzo Grassi in Venice which houses the Pinault collection. The link with the arts is fore fronted with many companies from Intel to Audi, since it reads to the outside world as 'creativity', 'cutting edge' and 'innovative'.

Some, like the design company Ideo, are even toying with the idea of theming or rethinking hospitals, since we know you can build hospitals that makes people feel worse, thus equally they can be designed to help people feel better.

The 21st century will be a search for meaning, as many have noted. In a primordial sense meaning is transmitted through stories that tell us who we are and where we are going.

The power of arts

Credit: Forum d'Avignon

This thread of argument flows neatly into the arts. One crucial aspect of their power is their capacity to tell stories of 'me' or 'my city'. Stories are primordial, preceding logic and science. They are how we tell ourselves what happened, they are a means of organizing our experience in order to understand the world. They help us create ourselves and lie at the core of self-recognition. Deprive a person or a place of a story, a sense of lineage and trajectory and they remain unscripted. Driving motivation, will and forward momentum is a narrative of where we came from, where we are and where we can get to. It provides a fundamental structure to the experience of time.

It is worth exploring the arts in some detail because the difference in the imperatives and aims of city development, economic growth and the arts are starkly different. In reading through the strategic dilemmas of combing the agendas becomes apparent.

For many the essential core of culture is artistic creativity and the art forms like singing, acting, writing, dancing, performing music, sculpting, crafting, painting or designing. Whilst culture in the anthropological sense is wider these expressions of art are powerful.

The arts remind us well that humans are not computers and that there is more to understanding how the world works than a reductionist science that strives to develop algorithms and mathematical equations to account for everything. Crucially, however, the values and attributes that dominate and are responsible for much of the malaise of the modern world, narrow conceptions of efficiency and rationality, are almost *diametrically opposed* to the values promoted by artistic creativity. The former worldview is summed up by phrases such as goal, objective, focus, strategy, outcome, calculation, measurable, quantifiable, logical, solution, efficient, effective, economic sense, profitable, rational, linear. The contrast with the alternative worldview artistic creativity proffers increasingly gives the arts their power.

The creates the central dilemma in applying arts, culture and creativity to city development as potentially two values systems are clashing. The challenge is to find bridges between them.

The arts are potentially destabilizing since at its best artistic creativity involves a journey, which artists are impelled to undertake, not knowing where it will lead or if and how they will arrive; it involves truth-searching and embodies a quest for the profound and truth; it has no calculated purpose, it is not goal-oriented, nor measurable in easy ways, nor fully explicable rationally, its outcome can be mysterious; it has no quick or easy solutions; it denies instant gratification; it

accepts ambiguity, uncertainty and paradox; it recognizes that something beyond the rational exists; it proclaims often that humans have the right to pursue freedom and urges confidence in exercising that right; it inspires others to be brave and to risk failure; it champions originality and authenticity but opposes vanity; it accepts the potential for epiphany and exaltation and for having fun and delight; it generates openness to new ideas and new ways of doing; it lives in the "now" -- it takes place in the moment; it is transgressive and disruptive of the existing; it is often uncomfortable, even frightening. It is very different from the economically driven mind, which is threatens and challenges.

Yet the arts strong connection with creativity entices the world of economics as their talent can be a source of invention and applied innovation. Historically the link between artists pushing the boundaries and industrial innovation was strong. With the web, social media and cross-convergence in evidence this is becoming true again. Participating in the arts uses the imaginary realm and lateral thinking to a degree that other disciplines do not such as sports or most of science. Those are more rule bound and precise. The distinction between involvement in arts and writing a computer programme, engineering or sports is that the latter are ends in themselves, they usually do not change the way you perceive things; they tend to teach you something specific. The arts often focus on reflection and original thought and they pose challenges. If the goal of cities is to have self-motivated, creative places they need engaged individuals who think. Turning imagination into reality or something tangible is a creative act, so the arts more than most activities are concerned with creativity, invention and innovation. Reinventing a city or nursing it through transition is a creative act so an engagement with or through the arts helps.

Engagement with arts combines stretching oneself and focusing, feeling the senses, expressing emotion or helping to self-reflect. The result can be: to broaden horizons, to convey meaning, with immediacy and or depth, to communicate iconically so you grasp things in one without needing to understand step by step, to help nurture memory, to symbolise complex ideas and emotions, to see the previously unseen, to learn, to uplift, to encapsulate previously scattered thoughts, to anchor identity and to bond people to their community or by contrast to stun, to shock by depicting terrible images for social, moral, or thought-provoking reasons, to criticise or to create joy, to entertain, to be beautiful. The arts can even soothe the soul and promote popular morale. More broadly expression through the arts is a way of passing ideas and concepts on to later generations in a (somewhat) universal language. To have these effects the arts have to be communicated. For these reasons the arts and their institutions like museums or galleries are seen as lying at the core of culture.

Not all art for all of the time creates all these responses. The best art though works at a number of these levels simultaneously especially the making of art rather than just consuming. It triggers activity in the mind and agitates it. It is not a linear process, but as it happens associations and seemingly random intuitions and connections come forth. It is more unstructured, less step by step than scientific or technological procedure, it is freer flowing. It resonates at a deeper level.

Humans are largely driven by their sensory and emotional landscape in spite of centuries of developing scientific knowledge and logical, analytical, abstract and technical thought. The arts are not rational in a scientific sense, that does not mean they are irrational but rather a-rational. This is why all cultures develop the arts.

This highlights the role of the arts in tapping potential. The assumption is that everyone can in principle be more creative, involved, engaged, informed and that this is significant in creating citizenship . The out of the box, lateral thinking and use of imagination present in the arts is perhaps the most valuable thing the arts can offer other disciplines such as planning, engineering, social services or to the business community especially if allied to other emphases like a focus on local distinctiveness.

The arts help cities in a variety of ways. First with their aesthetic focus they draw attention to quality, and beauty. Second the arts challenge us to ask questions about ourselves as a place or city. Arts programmes can challenge decision makers by undertaking uncomfortable projects that force leaders to debate and take a stand. Arts projects can empower people who have previously not expressed their views, so artists working with communities can in effect help consult people. For example a community play devised with a local group can tell us much more than a typical political process. Finally arts projects can simply create enjoyment. So the arts can help create an open-minded culture that is more resilient and adaptable to the changes brought about by political ructions and globalisation. What other activity can better deal with dialogue between cultures, ethnic conflicts, allowing individuals to discover talents, to gain confidence, to become motivated, to change the mindset, to involve themselves in community.

The lesson learnt is that perhaps it is artistic thinking that is the strongest message from the arts. Planners, engineers, business people, social workers could all benefit from seeing their worlds through the eyes of artists.

All this has left out that the best of our past art ends up in museums and so the arts contribute to creating destinations, visitor attractions and help foster a city's image and identity.

The creative economy

Exploring the name

Let us start by being pedantic. What is in a name? The call the sectors music, media, performance, film, literature or design the creative economy. Whilst important these sectors cannot be deemed the totality of creativity in an economy. Other sectors that need scientific inventiveness are also creative and there are creative solutions to the broad realms of engineering or manufacturing processes or techniques. There is imagination applied to service industries that have nothing to do with the sectors defined as the creative economy. This can cause confusion and may in the long run be detrimental since outsiders to the field may not take them seriously.

The sector was not always given this name. Way back in the 1930's the original work by Theodor Adorno and especially Walter Benjamin ("The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" 1936). had partly seen 'the culture industry' as a kind of monster with largely negative connotations that reduced authenticity and through mass production of images was becoming a manipulative force. Once interest revived in the early 1970's the sector was given a positive twist to signal the role of the cultural industries in transmitting identity, the image of place and perceptions. Whilst aware of the large scale companies, such as those in Hollywood or the major music companies embodied, within the 1970's definition, however, was the notion that the sector can be problematic and provocative and many of the original proponents came from within the alternative media movement, which had been a strong oppositional force in the 1970's. When the British Labour government returned to power in 1997 its Department of Culture, Media and Sports renamed the cultural industries the creative industries, perhaps trying to avoid is political connotations, and set up a Creative Industries Task Force and an analysis and benchmarking system that has since become a reference and model. Other interesting terms have also been used, such as in Hans Magnus Enzensberger's book 'The consciousness Industry'. John Howkins proffers the term 'copyright industries' in his 2001 book 'The Creative Economy: how to make money from ideas'. Other options could be 'the imagination industries', 'the experiential industries' or even 'the sensory industries'.

This brief outline merely highlights the difficulties in describing these disparate and in some ways connected sectors in an economic sense. For instance, many parts of the sector have copyrights, that are tradable, yet if we include art projects many have no intention of having a marketable value. Of

course, some art works are involved in market processes like auctioneering. By considering these other definitions as well interesting dimensions and impacts of the sector are revealed.

The creative industries trajectory

The rise in importance of the creative industries emerged along a number of trajectories from the late 1960's onwards. These included: the restructuring of the global economy and the search for new growth sectors as production moved inexorably to the East forcing every city in the West to reassess its sources of wealth creation; the recognition that the entertainment industry was vastly significant well beyond Hollywood and growing; the increasing global importance of marketing and communication and the special role of these sectors from corporate video to graphic design; the understanding that the different sub-sectors were connected and cross fertilizing and so were larger than they first appeared. A pivotal moment, for instance, for Britain was when music industry exports overtook car exports 30 years ago. In relation to their own organizational mission Unesco and the Council of Europe were in the vanguard and undertook major research in the early 1970's in what they called the cultural industries. Their primary purposes were twofold, first to look at employment prospects within less developed regions, but especially to highlight the potential of a sector that embodied distinctiveness in an increasingly homogenizing world. Crucially they recognized that music, film, design, literature or performance embed and project the identity and image of places.

Separately, somewhat later from the early 1980's onwards, two worlds began to mesh that of arts and cultural policy and economic development. First, arts and cultural funding came under serious threat with the economic crisis of the 1980's and all cultural organizations had to find a further set of justifications for public funding. This was threefold. Internally organizations were being asked to increase their level of self-generated earned income. This involved both becoming more efficient and effective internally and thus a focus on their management and economic health became a priority. Second, the need to diversify funding including sponsorship rose dramatically. Initially the mutual benefit was based on providing new resources in exchange for enhancing the image of sponsors. Over time the dynamic of these relationships with non-cultural organizations changed. Some were based on unexpected consequences, such as the possibility of artistic organizations to provide services to the commercial sector like theatre groups running leadership or communications workshops. In addition the corporate social responsibility agenda meant that links were less based on patronage and more on exchange of services. Third, the public sector, whether state or city, increasingly began to develop what were in essence contract relationships in return for funding, such as providing outreach or educational services.

At the same time high unemployment levels meant that initially cities, and later governments like in Britain from 1997 onwards, saw the creative industries and even the subsidized arts areas as sources of employment. As larger industrial combines began to break down the need to develop start-up companies grew and the creative sectors were especially vibrant. This required a major rethink in terms of how economic development entities operated since their criteria historically had been based on assisting larger organizations rather than one to five people organizations. The alignment of interests between the cultural and economic worlds drove the interest in the creative economy in the public policy arena.

In essence cities as diverse as Liverpool, Bilbao, Barcelona, Manchester, Amsterdam or Birmingham struggling with industrial restructuring viewed developing the arts and creative industries as a possible answer to a mixed conundrum of problems, such as the need for new jobs, how to anchor identity in a changing world, how to foster social inclusion. Meanwhile more broadly within European cities similar developments began to take place although with a time lapse that has now been overcome. Indeed, the recognition of the importance of the sector came late to the European Union with the first comprehensive assessment of the sector in 2001 called 'Exploitation and Development of the Job Potential in the Cultural Sector in the Age of Digitalisation'. For reference

Liverpool undertook its first impact study 1987, the Nordrhein Westfalen government commissioned its first Kulturewirtschaftsbericht, encompassing also the Ruhr in 1992 from StadtArt and its partners, which it has followed up with updates; Krakow's smaller study was undertaken in 1992. Bilbao and the Biscay region only undertook its first assessment in 2008. An important landmark was the UNCTAD creative economy study of 2008 gave the sector global credibility.

Overriding everything with the rise of the new public management ethos was the need to provide evidence. This came in various forms. Justifications for culture, which essentially for public funders means investment in art forms and cultural institutions like museums or galleries, have varied over time and older arguments have merged with the new. To simplify, historically cultural expression was largely a reflection of religious belief and/or power or self-aggrandisement paid by rulers and the influential. Rapidly the justificatory trajectory for arts and cultural investment post World War Two shifted as state funding for the arts and cultural institutions became more formalized. First advocates argued for culture's wider civilizing role; then from the 1960's more strongly for its educational function and later its community development and social effect. Then as cultural budgets globally were under threat the economic argument was fore-fronted.

The notion of value was narrowed down and transformed into economic value with the rise of the 'economic turn'. Everything including the arts became instrumentalized. Funding increasingly was justified because of its economic impact. For many sceptics this was a form of economic entrapment through which it become less possible to discuss artistic or cultural content in its own terms. They felt there were too many compromises.

Since then several hundred studies of the economic importance or impact of the arts and culture have been undertaken across the world. There are specialist journals of cultural economics and global conferences on the theme practically every week. Over time the focus shifted. The first studies, in the early 1980's, highlighted the arts impact on life quality and their function as amenity. Increasingly then the role art as an industry was highlighted and the connection between culture and commerce were emphasized. Attempts were made to describe music, film or performance more in terms of their employment impact and their gross value added to the economy rather than in terms of their artistic content. The power of the argument was to link the combined sectors from music, to design to dance together, which showed that in many cities they represented between 5% and 10% of their local economies.

Later increasingly other arguments were brought into play such as the spin-offs from investment in arts, heritage and cultural institutions. These included their role in establishing identity and their ability to transmit values; their capacity to assist integration and to foster social inclusion; their help in building reputation and distinctiveness or in encouraging civic engagement; their contribution to adding value to property developments as well as in helping regenerate areas in transition and especially former industrial sites; their ability to increase the perceived quality of life; to foster communication within the city and between cities; their role in fostering innovation and creating the conditions for a creative milieu.

In sum, the art and cultural sectors are seen as an important economic factor in their own right, they contribute to tax revenues, they help increase property prices; they are a location factor, they help drive the experientially driven economy, they help add value to other economic sectors for instance through design input or ability to help communicate and sell other products and services and of course they create work, encourage SME development and tourism growth.

Behind the surface veneer

Normally discussions about the creative industries have focused on describing arts activities like singing or music making, performing or designing as the music, theatre or design industry. We know they are significant industries in their own right, such as music's role as an entertainment and

performance industry. We know too they add value to other sectors in an obvious communication and marketing sense through graphic design, creating adverts or corporate videos. We know they completely mediate our perception of the world   and thus how we experience it. In the long term advocacy process to establish their importance their direct and indirect effects have been calculated and their economic worth estimated. This is fine as far as it goes, but it is limiting.

Consider a though experiment. What lies behind what we call music, the visual arts, design or new media? At its core music is sound and vibration; the painting arts are about visualization; film about moving images; design is in essence a moulding, patterning and problem solving activity and the new media are largely focused on connections. Of course, each medium has its own history, styles and genres. Yet these core attributes are vital and an integral part of any activity, product or service. They enhance their value, usability, relevance and resonance.

Take almost at random a study on how Perth could be more creative, which investigated the mining sector or oil and gas industry. A closer examination showed how creative economy sectors are deeply involved. Think of sound and vibration which helps discover oil and gas in deeper sea beds where sound helps create seismic surveys and 3-D interpretations of underwater conditions. Think of visualization where data streams can be converted through the convergence between computers and graphics to images to help understand what is going on underground by creating virtual worlds so helping decisions on where to mine. Think of film, where in mining you can explore dangerous terrain. Consider the uses of virtual reality simulations to explain safety procedures.

Consider medicine and long distance diagnostics and treatment where telepresence is now possible. This essentially uses cutting edge creative industries related communications technologies, such as high speed data connections or videotelephony combined with robotics to allow for remote surgery where the patient can be kilometres away. The broad category of telemedicine or telenursing helps provide health care at a distance through hand-held mobile devices that allow healthcare professionals to view, discuss and assess patients as if they were in the same room. Equally ultrasound devices, using sound to see, can emit high frequency sound waves that help create images or reflect points of differing density so helping the identification of a disease at a distance. Discussions with Merseybio Incubator in Liverpool showed at least 20 applications of visualization, imaging or sound related applications from magnetic resonance imaging to virtual and augmented reality applications for, for instance, training or for understanding vast data sets.

Consider developments in e-commerce, where Lille is a leader with the presence of companies like Auchan. It also houses France's e-commerce centre of excellence. To make e-commerce function at its best means creating immersive, interactive experiences, which even allow for fitting on clothes virtually. Essentially buying then becomes a filmic experience that you the user control.

Consider logistics which is also a strength of Lille, where real time tracking requires visualization as does the monitoring of most production facilities where the film of the process determines the decisions you make.

These merging processes are all pervasive. Consider the sci-art movement, initially largely funded through a long term initiative of the Wellcome Foundation. It tapped into the understanding that the beginning of the 21st century has finally seen a rapprochement between the two great ways of exploration, discovery and knowing: art and science. The concept of the Sci-Art built on this and brought artists and scientists of all kinds together to work in a structured environment on projects of mutual discovery and ultimately benefit. From the beginning, the Sci-Art concept was based on the premise that the most fruitful developments in human thinking frequently take place at those points where different lines of creativity meet.

Over the years the Sci-Art competition brought together over 2000 artists and scientists working in partnership to combine their insights and ways of thinking to solve problems and come up with innovative ideas. Globally there are other initiatives such as ArtSci which was funded by The

Rockefeller Foundation. For instance, one of the winners was 'the grass project' where artists wanted to trap the chlorophyll to stop the grass becoming brown in the gallery. A collaboration with Britain's leading agricultural research institute followed, but the results were surprising. The chlorophyll problem was not solved, but the scientists had problems in interpreting vast data sets which the artists helped them visualize in new ways.

Seen in this light the activities of the creative economy are all pervasive. It then becomes the platform through which practically any form of innovation is generated and determines how the economy works.

A final point, for some this range of evidence about the importance of creativity, culture, the arts in city development is still not convincing. The arguments they say are too soft or vague, and that may at times be true, but not always. The tangible is easier to grasp than the intangible. Yet as Daniel Yankelovich the renowned American pollster noted: 'The first step is to measure whatever can be easily measured. This is okay as far as it goes. The second step is to disregard that which can't be measured or give it an arbitrary value. This is artificial and misleading. The third step is to presume what can't be measured isn't really important. This is blindness. The fourth step is to say that what can't be easily measured really doesn't exist. This is suicide!'

Section Two: Lessons learnt

The current financial crisis is putting pressure on all initiatives focusing on creative approaches to city development and the use culture in urban transformation. There is a paradox. Budgets are shrinking just at the time cities increasingly recognize the importance of creativity and the role the creative economy or the arts can play. There is a growing culture of caution and risk aversion.

Cities should look at the nexus of creativity, culture, arts and the creative economy as part of a wider 'creative ecology' which includes innovations in other fields such as the incentives and regulations regime or social innovation or other sectors not related to the creativity industries. To get full benefit of the potential new ways of communicating with citizens and audiences, especially on the part of the public interest sector, is crucial. This blends the use of new technology with core ideas such as co-creation or open innovation.

The best cultural policies combine a focus on enlightenment, which fosters insight, knowledge, education and reflection. Then empowerment, which concerns strengthening identity, focusing on social inclusion, finding ways to strengthen cohesion and joint working and visioning. Entertainment is important for its elements of playfulness, leisure, fun and recreation and relaxation. Finally a focus on economic impact highlights the need to work within economic imperatives such as job creation, capacity building and skills enhancement, helping start-ups and an entrepreneurial culture, which in turn can help issues like tourism or image improvement[2].

This agenda implies that cities cannot work within a silo mentality. It requires new ways of working that are strongly inter-disciplinary and cross-departmental, linking for instance, those concerned with culture, economic development and social welfare.

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[2] After Dorte Skot-Hansen (2005)

Primary global cities, such as London, Paris, New York or Tokyo and Beijing are magnetic. They are strategic places and hubs which have a direct effect and influence on world affairs economically, culturally and politically, where global agendas are created, facilitated and enacted. There are only very few of these cities and then a further 2o or so in the top league. They can operate strongly across the whole value chain from ideas generation, production, distribution and marketing.

Yet there are **significant roles that 2nd,3rd, 4th and 5th level cities can play** as advantage and disadvantage is constantly shifting. This provides opportunities for all the secondary cities discussed. Good 2nd cities are very strategic and confident that they can succeed, provided they overcome the more negative features of the 2nd city syndrome.

Difficulties will always remain for relatively smaller ambitious cities in moving up the value chain and in capturing centrality. Yet there are a vast number of niches that a city can become known for, such as with Milan's global position in design and fashion. For instance, Bilbao is a world model for urban regeneration and has become a must see destination or Lille has strong niches in e-commerce and logistics and the Ruhr's industrial culture route.

Now that gifted people increasingly choose the place first before the job within that place secondary cities can compete on a new terrain that of quality of life. Their relatively smaller size, the ease of transactions and exchange can counteract some of the disadvantages of lack of centrality.

Secondary cities benefit especially from special designations like the European City of Culture. It can be vital in changing self-confidence and the external perception of place.

There are a series of balancing acts and strategic dilemmas cities need to consider in using a cultural perspective in development. They include a focus on production, company formation and economic supports or consumption and spectacular events; emphasizing the heritage of the city or its innovations; highlighting arts forms or broader themes within which art forms fit; looking more at older media or the newer experimental forms; taking community development seriously or primary being concern with the prestige arts; focusing on the mainstream cultural scene or also the alternative, fringe and provocative; being aware of the interconnections between the physical hardware of the city and its software priorities which are the activities people undertake, how they interact and bond; balancing developments and programmes on the city centre or the suburbs and outlying areas; managing cultural activities in an art form department or linking cultural concerns to the remits of all departments.

All places are special in their own way and when they work well one can imagine them being able to create the ultimately mix, which is becoming:

- Place of distinctiveness and anchorage. Somewhere that feels like home, that generates a sense of the known and comforting. A place that celebrates where it comes from, but is confident in where it is going.

- Place of connection and reconnection. Somewhere that is locally bonded yet at ease with the global and that has seamless connectivity from the physical to the virtual.

- Place of possibility. Somewhere that is open minded and encourages curiosity and which provides choices and opportunities in differing phases of life.

- Place of learning: Somewhere with many possibilities to self-improve from the formal to the informal, a place where a discussion culture is vibrant and things are thought about afresh.

- Place of inspiration: Somewhere with a visionary feel, where aspiration and good intent is made visible in interesting ways and that therefore create a positive virtual spiral.

- Place of adding values and value simultaneously in its attempt in any major initiative it undertakes. Thus its economic drive is framed by an ethical value base.