Keynote address: **'Cultural policy and Creativity in an Age of Scarcity'**

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Preamble: I wish to thank the conference organisers and partners of the CREart Network, and President Casaba, Mr Hunor, and the Harghita County authorities. Please *Note*: this paper is an extended version of the original address, whose order of topics has been slightly changed. The address was presented with many images, which cannot be reproduced here for reasons of copyright. Also, I do not litter the text with references; all reference are easily identified by author and are at the end.

In the UK between 1998-2006, (before the onset of the global recession), our city development and economic planning increasingly integrated a 'cultural' component as an essential ingredient. The New Labour Government (1997-2010) introduced many policy initiatives for cities, whereby culture was used within social and urban development contexts. Many of these initiatives have since been copied or adapted around the world, or have become routine policy options for city planners and governments. The terms 'culture' and 'creativity' became accepted legitimate public policy terms, sometimes indicating an increased quality of life, or new cultural facilities, or the involvement of artists and designers in public works. This short period has been celebrated as a cultural 'golden age'. It was also an era, as we know, of unprecedented prosperity, generated by unusual configurations of capital and the rise of finance, financial markets, and rapid trade through digital communications. The remarkable intensity of both culture and of capital during this time was not coincidental. Since the mid-1980s scholars have discussed the so-called 'culturalisation of the economy' and the 'economisation of culture' (Lash and Urry, 1993; Scott, 2000). These terms refer to the growing symbiotic relationship between culture and capital, facilitating a unique convergence of public and private goods, revenue sources and interests. Culture has become, among other things, a new series of marketing platforms, spaces of conspicuous luxury consumption, non-tangible capital distribution and added value to property, brand and service provision in the new symbolic landscape of the city.

My subject in this lecture is, of course, cultural policy. I will not be discussing actual cultural policies so much as the potential and potential issues for cultural policy discourse. Cultural policy is a discursive space many policy fields can converge upon, and interact within, and engage in multi-disciplinary research. Modern urbanization, as we know, came at the cost of our relation to nature or the natural world, and equally dissolved many forms of culture and custom, particularly cultural forms arising from a historic, religious or ancestral sense of 'place'. The fact that we require public policies for 'culture' tells us that culture without extensive social institutionalisation and legislation does not offer the level of empowerment we need. Culture seems to bring with it a certain promise of empowerment – that our propensity for imagination and invention wants more than just creative expression. It requires both the right and ability to shape our social reality.

There is something therefore both politically contrived (and in a sense artificial) about culture as defined by policy, yet at the same time socially necessary. The social necessity of culture is made emphatic in the context of the project of the European Union, where constructing bonds of value, cooperation and belonging, are essential to our survival. But the disciplines of industrial planning, civil engineering and construction, which built the modern city, do not themselves offer any solutions to the conundrum of culture in the city – there is no scientific logic that directs us to a clear, effective model of urban renewal, which itself develops our 'culture'. We need imagination in re-thinking the city as a space of culture.

The Creative City or the Creative Class?

A year ago I was engaged in research on the 'creative city' cultural policy phenomena, and in the course of research counted over 100 cities (also regions and even small countries) around the world with major urban cultural programs operating under the rubric of 'creative'. These included, for example, Creative Berlin, Creative Lebanon, along with many impressive East Asian city projects, in Seoul, Shanghai, and Singapore.

Despite the growing range of global creative city projects, there is a strong sense in which we are entering a 'post-creative city' era. This is, in part at least, generated by a pervasive use of the word 'crisis' and 'scarcity'. Scarcity is not just a matter of restricted resources: it is a policy psychology. It can motivate an 'unspoken' state of emergency, retrench existing power and interests, freeze priorities, and cripple attempts to take risks and innovate. The prospect of scarcity might logically imply a need for authoritative budgetary planning. But in this lecture I will point to the need to find ways of exploiting what we already possess -- locating concealed value, hidden potential, a capacity that we didn't know we have. To consider the obvious: thirty years ago, world-class centres of contemporary art, culture and innovation – I am thinking of Tate Modern in London and The Cable Factory in Helskini – were little more than derelict or unused buildings; the debris of a vanishing industrial landscape. We now find restored and renovated industrial complexes in almost every European city. They have become standard components of creative city strategy. Their history teaches us that it is often not new physical resources we need, but a re-thinking of current resources. We need a creative reinvention of the policy concept of 'resource', as we do 'the city' as cultural space.

One serious inhibitor of creative thinking in an era of scarcity are the city archetypes that are so embedded in the policy mindset. These archetypes are usually derived from the most industrialised, economically successful places: perhaps Marina Bay Sands in Singapore is one such archetype, or at least is indicative of what I am referring to. The urban planning imaginary of many city governments can so impulsively aspire to signature style, luxury architecture and the property-driven design of urban spaces. While accommodating themselves to local limitations, the aspirations of the creative city all too often move in the direction of the mixed economy of branded retail, temporary professional dwellings or hotels and new corporate office space. The aim is the 'millionaires paradise' of conspicuous and exponential wealth signified by the emphasis on leisure, a surfeit of luxury apartments and private, secure, spatial enclosures. We must ask ourselves – what lexicon of terms, what rhetoric, what policy language do we use to talk about creativity and culture in the city?

In the context of the theory of creativity – from recent and notable creativity theorists like Amabile, Bilton, Drazin and others – crisis and a scarcity of means can often provide significant conditions for creativity, at least, creative thinking. It is a truism to say that most European great art movements emerged out of poverty, difficult migrations and social instability. The crisis of sudden Europe-wide scarcity can present an urgent motive for thinking through conditions, preconditions, and the basic issues. Yet we need to be careful, for creativity is one of the great ideologies of our time. It promises much.

Last year I tracked an important conference hosted by the Brookings Institution, Washington DC. Called 'The Arts, New Growth Theory, and Economic Development', it featured experts on city

economics, (like Harvard University's Ed Glaeser, author of the well-known *Triumph of the City*). The conference presented a range of empirical data, and confirmed what many have been thinking: creative strategy within city development has produced amazing results – but has also created new limitations. I will extrapolate three points from Glaeser's fine presentation: (i) it is beyond doubt that creative culture in a city is symbiotic with enterprise and emerging industry. However, (ii) the large metropolis cities dominate this development. And (iii) culture and the arts are always a supplement to social stratification and social barriers within in any new configuration of the labour force.

The conference reiterated the accepted truths of New Growth Theory – that in advanced economies, economic growth stems less from the acquisition of additional capital and more from innovation and new ideas. We should supplement this observation with the research of UNCTAD and the OECD, where New Growth Theory's assumption that the 'growth' in question is categorically 'post-industrial', where countries who are not 'advanced' (the developing world) are also experiencing the power of 'creative industry'. For the bases of the new creative industries are not exclusively technological innovation and its concomitant forms of education. It is also culture, in its geo-social sense. But of course, the developing world is always at a profound disadvantage, as 'creativity' always seems to favour the great metropolis and the global city – London, Paris, Berlin. Creativity is networked and operated only in certain networks, which in turn provide access to certain markets. What about everyone else? What about the regions?

The dominant policy model of creative city development in Europe today would demand that a city effectively becomes an aspiring 'global city', or at least act like one. A city needs to build the following 'components', fitting them together, like a policy jigsaw: creative or innovation business clusters, key IP generating firms (like software, media or bioscience companies); cultural or 'creative quarter' in the city (particularly attractive to visitors), public spaces for frequent international festivities and new events, a strong education sector. A city requires cheap but architecturally attractive residential areas for young professionals, along with landmark buildings or monuments by a globally famous artist or architects. If a city has most of these, then it would probably qualify as a creative city. For cities facing severe limitations, one could join UNESCOs Creative Cities Network and 'specialize' in one of the recognised creative arts (accepting the equally severe potential of doing so).

In my research of creative city cultural policies, in almost every European city I have visited, the intellectual influence of Charles' Landry's *Creative City* and Richard Florida's *Creative Class* is apparent. It is apparent in both policy priorities as specific strategy objectives; and of course, it becomes a topic of discussion with the policy makers or politicians I meet. We are living with the legacy of Landry and Florida – which is problematic. To be sure, Landry and Florida have done a great deal to legitimize culture and creativity as a means of urban and economic planning. Furthermore, they implicitly challenged leading European sociologists like Manuel Castells or Ulrich Beck and the concepts of 'knowledge economy' and 'information society'. For one could convincingly argue that the very concept of a knowledge economy spawns a technocratic policy mindset inimical as much to the 'real' economy of manufacturing as it is to culture and the arts. In the world of Landry-Florida, however, we moved beyond the knowledge economy into the cultural or experience economy. The importance of place, location and physical urban environments has become critical; and creativity has a wider social basis, including more than the educated or those with strong 'connectivity'.

Yet, as I said, the dominance of Landry-Florida is problematic. Landry (who started as a junior European Union policy maker) does not have a static theory: his book is a 'toolkit for urban innovators'. A problem with Landry's Creative City is that the tools of his toolkit can be used without either the rationale or principle aim of the creative city idea. The rationale was that the growing emphasis on knowledge and technology in economic planning was serving to efface or even degrade essential sources and resources of value and productivity in a city. His principle aim was that the contemporary city utilizes all its human resources: it becomes a 'public city', a democratic city, where the social populace of a city is truly formed into a coherent 'public' and given a legitimate role in the formation

of their city. For Landry, it is the energy of deliberation and dialogue that becomes *problem-solving creativity*. Creativity is not centrally about art, but deliberation and *decision-making*. City officials, planners and urban policy makers, all re-configure their ways of governing the city. A city's agencies and organizations develop new creative organizational and experimental structures, finding new ways to engage with the city.

Landry's ideas preceded Florida by more than a decade, but Florida followed a wave of popular books in the US that were also read by European policy makers – books like Pine and Gilmour's *The Experience Economy* (1999), David Brooks' *Bobos in Paradise*, and Anderson and Ray's *The Cultural Creatives* (2000). They all cohered on an economic narrative on The 'post-industrial' (or post-Fordist) city economy of the 1970s-1990s, which can be summarised as follows: the city is facing a contraction of basic manufacturing capacity and labour; a new division of labour favouring services; an expansion of the corporate office complex and suburban employment centres; and the rise of a new 'middle class' of management as the dominant urban-regional social cohort. This new 'class' brings a rise in demand for education, cultural goods, facilities and prestige. 'Creative Class City' policies have invariably attempted to cultivate what Canadian scholar Thomas Hutton calls the 'New revival of the city centre', with 'mixed economy' of *production, consumption and spectacle* (Hutton, 2002).

It is not surprising to find that, like Florida, popular creative city strategies have attempted to capitalize on their perceived developments. And Florida's framework is motivated principally by an interest in new economic growth. His creative class theory presupposes that 'culture' only emerges through a vibrant economy, (which is global in scope). Such vibrant economies develop what he calls a 'cultural ecosystem', which in turn attracts and cultivates a creative class of professionals, who further generate and contribute to the vibrant economy. The key for Florida is *mobility* – young educated professionals travelling to the 'creative centres' where economic progress consequently evolves faster and faster.

Around Europe – we can witness a kind of synthesis of Landry and Florida: some of Landry's toolkit is used to construct Florida's cultural ecosystem in order to develop a vibrant economy. Ultimately, however, Florida's enterprise city is the opposite of Landry's democratic city – for it is a city for a young, university educated, mobile, professional class. It generates closed professional networks, high entry-barrier specialization, values technology over other forms of manufacturing, and it doesn't involve the whole city, but only segments – such as creative quarters or cultural sectors.

Of course – we cannot deny the achievement of the 'creative class city': My point here is that we need to recognize how the economic 'components' of the creative class city have become our *rhetoric* for defining creativity in the city – and thus the shape of a city's cultural policy and cultural strategy. But this rhetoric in the face of the age of scarcity can become redundant, as it is premised on a number of factors whose persistence is faltering: The current models of creative city development are predicated on four mechanisms: large-scale infrastructural development capacity; capital investment, FDI, beyond the usual EU structural funds; an active civic professional class, with surplus income they spend locally; and an accessible, pivotal, city location and identity. And further, it presupposes that creativity entails economic prosperity, where the category of 'economic' is sufficiently generic to allow us to evaluate the productivity of the city in both quantitative and qualitative terms. In the last 20 years our European cultural policies have been articulated in the rhetoric of democracy, multiculturalism and social egalitarianism, but our 'cultural strategies' have been orientated in the opposite direction – the aforementioned 'economization' culture.

We could cite examples with reference to our impressive museums of modern art (often converted industrial buildings) that have themselves become signifiers of urban development, exported around the world from their first appearance in New York, Berlin and London. East Asia is very fond of this model: my personal favourite is Shanghai's so called 'warehouse style art museum': Shanghart Taopu. While the larger examples are often well-funded through a complex of public and private finance and sponsorship, it has spawned a model of 'museum' that is now more accurately defined as 'cultural services centre'. Where these appear in the provinces, they often feature a lot of struggling, under-

paid junior curators, juggling a whirl of activities they are not really trained for: retail, to fund raising, to art education for children. Under public funding agreements many urban-based art galleries are under acute pressure to adopt a 'service industry' style of customer relations – but in so doing often falls into the same cycles of over-production and over-consumption that characterized the consumer economy. In the UK, curators and cultural managements protect the 'autonomy' of their contemporary art (the international contemporary art unpopular with the general public) by 'wrapping' it in a range of customer-focused activities and service, meeting the expectations of funders and city policy makers and even raising revenues.

The 'economization of culture' is not simply the instrumentalisation or commodification of culture: it is the re-scaling and shaping of the very concept, value and provision of public culture and its spaces, places and institutions. It has made an impact on the very role, ethos and management of museums, archives, galleries and open public space. Culture has been shaped into a series of professionalized corporate entities, each with their own professional protocols and objectives derived from models of corporate management. It has resulted in an organizational paradox within the cultural sector – how arts and cultural institutions exhibit or trade in the most radical and inventive art, yet operate with uncompromising corporate (often authoritarian) models of organization and management hierarchy. (It must also be said, like many corporations, they are also heavily reliant on cheap, even voluntary, mobile educated labour).

One thing is sure – and this can be said about the art world as much as the university sector, or even cities per se – recent developments have not created the conditions for increased cooperation and maximization of resources on a European level, and certainly not national cultural integration in a pan-European cultural sphere. It has created a set of competitive relations and dynamics, whose demands are cast as natural or inevitable. It now raises serious questions for us on the direction of our city cultural economies in an age of 'scarcity' where we can *not* presume the ever-increasing availability of tangible capital. Of course, we will always have resources – scarcity does not mean poverty necessarily, or 'doing art on the cheap'. It will mean a more rigorous, integrated approach to cultural strategy – which is not dominated by funding and capital allocations, but by creativity, ideas, leadership and intangible forms of capital.

In my research I have found that the creative class city rhetoric and its 'creative strategies' are everywhere – but *not in themselves creative*: they are usually copied or adapted from other successful models in larger cities. They are often the result of what scholar Andy Pratt calls 'Xerox policy making'. Everyone wants to copy the 'creative cluster' or the Arts Lab space, for example. What I have not found is *creative policy-making* – I find lots of strategies (funding, planning and management) for creative projects – but not spaces and places for creative policy research, debate, deliberation.

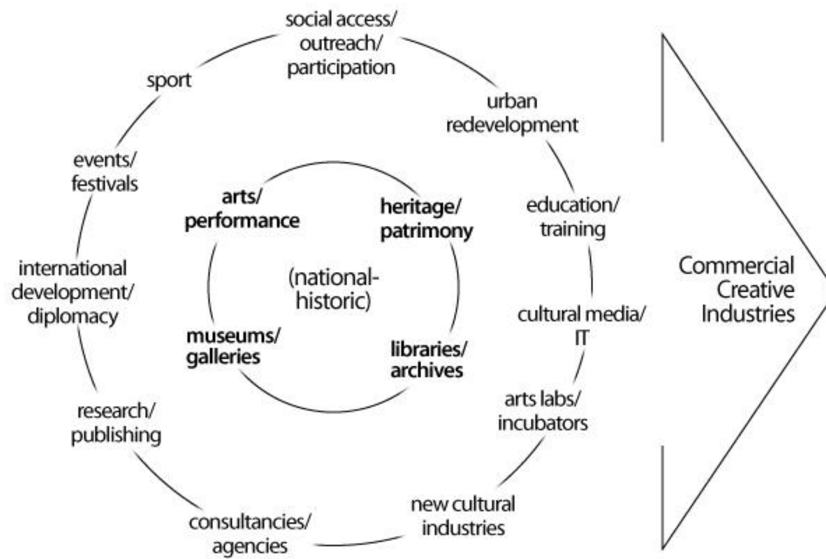
Cultural Policy or Cultural Strategy?

In this next section I want to underline the political ambiguity in the terms 'policy' and 'strategy', and how cities can generate many cultural strategies (concerning how to structure cultural funding, allocate resources, building capacity and capability, initiating events or new cultural agencies, and so on), yet can be bereft of cultural discourse, dialogue, deliberation and the very stuff of policy-making. The history of cultural policy in Europe is instructive in this regard.

In the aftermath of WWII, cultural policy in almost every European country had twin motives: to preserve the arts, as a region of humanity that aspires to higher realms of thought and wisdom; and to help create a sense of a good society, a society that cares about peace and prosperity. Cultural policy was a broad field of philosophical commitments, equally regarded as intrinsic to European history and heritage. In one sense these extend the two images of the city popular in early renaissance painting – the 'city as a work of art' (famously, Siena); along with the 'city of justice', as with the frescos by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Allegory of Good Government* (1338-40), which are in the Siena's *Palazzo Pubblico*. Cultural policy as a field of thought and endeavor preserved this twin vision – of a city as a

place of beauty and a place of justice. Historically, earlier in the Twentieth Century the political project of ‘public policy’ was an attempt to maintain a sense of social justice at the heart of rapid urbanization. Today, cultural policy is a unique field where creativity encompasses the social and the industrial.

Expanded Cultural Policy Arena



Political Function of Cultural Policy:
funding | legitimisation | governance | advocacy | advising/reporting | evaluation/assessment | gatekeeping | partnerships | international relations

DIAGRAM A: *Expanded Cultural Policy Arena*

At the centre of the diagram is the nexus of traditional nation state cultural policy objects every European city knows only too well. The expanded field has only emerged in the last 30 years, the right half of which is orientated to the creative industries (though not every country counts ‘sport’ as cultural). It is a matter of history the role that culture and cultural policy have played in the policy consciousness of the European Union. Despite being inserted into the Maastricht Treaty of 1992-3, then Treaty of Amsterdam (1997-9), the EU ‘principle of subsidiarity’ has affirmed that ‘culture’ continues to be a matter for nation states and their regions. However, something changed with the 2007 ‘European Agenda for culture’ (based on the Commission Communication on a ‘European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World’). It seems that for the first time, the EU had begun to politically assert the pan-European importance of culture, previously only articulated by the Council of Europe.

cultural policy discourse – historical periodization		
		main actors
40s – 50s	– National identity – national reconstruction – welfare. – historical patrimony and heritage. – Cultural protection, conservation, institution building. – access, public rights (supply side). – high arts (as against applied, and popular). – scholarship and cultural authority.	Nat.Stat. Gov'ts Councils, nat. museums nat. scholars
50s – 70s	– high art contested (pop art; mass culture). – authority and institutional monopolies opposed. – canons, hierarchies and genres questioned. – interconnections made between art, science, anthropology and psychology. – fiscal pressure on state instititions. – state remains cultural funder and 'owner'.	Nat.Stat. Gov'ts Councils UNESCO CoE
80s – 90s	– partnerships between institutions, organisations – influence of business and corporate management strategy and planning – cultural entrepreneurship and creative industries – sustainability, wellbeing and quality of life – international relations/development – multiculturalism and minority cultures – urban regeneration; art and architecture – core cities; city regions	Nat.Stat. Gov'ts Councils Local Gov't EU CoE UNESCO UNCTAD
2000s	– all of the above.... – rights, access, equality (ethnicity, gender, etc.) – civic life, public sphere, commons – the city – global cities – global civil society – Integrating creative and cultural sectors – 'New institutionalism' – new arts centres – networks; collaborations;	Nat.Stat. Gov'ts EU CoE UN – multiple OECD WIPO WB/IMF

DIAGRAM B: *Historical development of Cultural Policy*

The 1950s saw a consolidation of national patrimony, heritage and institutions; the 1970s saw a pervasive questioning of cultural authority, legitimacy and value – art canons and cultural institutions opened up, partly in response to new art movements and emerging popular culture; the 1980s saw the transformation of the management and production of culture under influence of global capital, corporations and business entrepreneurialism. From the 1990s to the present we have witnessed a certain integration of cultural production with, on the one hand, industrial production, and on the other, the global politics of rights and international political cooperation. All the major global actors are now concerned with culture's contribution to public and economic policy.

I take two points from this brief history: first, cultural policy is now more political (politicized) than ever before – it is part of a broader discourse on rights, liberties and social ethics. This makes it potentially more powerful: we need to assess whether cultural representation is finding ways to negotiate with, or interact with, executive realms of urban governance. And second, cultural policy is recognized by global actors, even the likes of the World Bank or IMF. While the left wing tendencies in cultural and urban research have derided the economization of culture – there is a sense in which this broad trend has contributed to cultural policy's (potentially) pivotal role in city governance. Potentially, cultural policy possess the multi-disciplinary capabilities for addressing the tense relationship between the economic, social and cultural in the coming decades of scarcity for multi-ethnic, hyper-mobile, politically unhappy Europe.

In many European countries (like the UK) cultural policy is largely (only) a funding regime, which has little policy-formation or knowledge capacity-building role within cities. The significance of the CREart Network project is that culture is here not just about artistic production and its funding. Creativity is not just a way of making art objects, performance or display. Culture is something central to the social and economic life of quality places. We know this, but in a new age of scarcity 'policy' for culture, policy's relation to strategy, need to be reconfigured. The old areas of 'cultural planning' and later 'urban cultural policy' achieved a lot: but they are no longer sufficient. This should be undertaken as part of our European collaboration. I suggest three preliminary issues for us to consider:

First, on policy resources: within Europe there is an enormous field of policy ideas, documents, strategic plans, and research. Yet, as academic researchers, even we struggle to find, collate and put them in a coherent order so as to develop our thinking. Cultural policy remains nation-state based, revolving around the arts and heritage, but at the same time often has multiple-influences (Australia has been a major influence for the UK, for example). In terms of our interests – 'cultural strategy-making' (particularly in the UK) – has become a series of separate fields, depending on context: and the most dynamic and developed context to emerge over the last twenty years has been urban planning and regeneration policy, not cultural policy itself. Looking back, the European Union's urban framework (the European Spatial Development Perspective or ESDP) with its many projects like INTERREG, etc. along with the EU's regional policy and structural funding (through the European Regional Development Fund: the ERDF) has had an enormous impact on the cultural sector and, in turn, strategy development. For the policy-making was conducted at the level of urban-economic planning, and hence the 'culture' component was relegated to the level of the strategic response to particular problems or situations. As a further consequence, in many European cities cultural policy remains detached from the broader discourses and available knowledge on urbanism, design and architecture and the political discourse of city governance itself.

Second: cultural policy is not subject to the same level of experimentation, research and development, as other areas of urban and economic policy. Every year I visit the European Capital of Culture. Every year I wonder why this extraordinary event is not utilized more by researchers as a resource, perhaps as a kind of 'Living Lab' – a cultural Living Lab. There are hundreds of science research-based Living Labs around Europe, serving to further our understanding of the relation between theory and practice in the physical, natural and environmental science. Where are the spaces where experimental cultural policy can be tested and tried, particularly in the area of networks and inter-cultural collaborations? Where is the equivalent of 'R&D' in cultural strategy for cities? The recent ECoC Guimaraes2012 in Portugal was full of ideas and strategies on how to engage with social communities, build networks, develop cultural literacy in children, and all with modest funding. This accumulated knowledge and experience can dissolve as the great event moves onwards.

The UK's new City of Culture, Derry LondonDerry (Northern Ireland) decided to make its cultural policy framework itself a creative project. On the one end, it constructed a network of young people and professionals, many of whom had left for the bigger cities in England or the USA. This diasporic network was reconnected with the city via many forms of communication and input, involving artists and school children, informing city policy makers of the 'city life' they do not experience. Each citizen was explicitly requested to conduct research – producing material evidence and perceptions on their life, their hopes and visions for the city. Their excellent strategy document must be read for the detail – their achievement was that they constructed a civic project that inspired collective conviction, that engaged with a global market place without converting the city into a platform for global capital. The social life of the city was deepened through institutionalized discourse – not institutions, but projects that continued way beyond the year-long event.

In other words, Derry returned to the social 'sources' of city life, the street level lives of communities and people, and found an energy for invention – and also, a global network of constituents. In one sense we could say that a truly creative policy for cities will find ways of tap into regions of life

resistant to policy – the everyday anarchy of the social and the ways in which the social grows, dies, struggles and evolves.

This leads to my third point, the so-called 'Autonomous Culture Zones'. In the past, small segments of the city of Amsterdam, Berlin, Ljubljana, famously became 'taken over' by cultural producers, squatters and alternative communities. They were secretly envied by cultural policy makers, who could never seem to harness this creative energy, or make art and social life come together in quite this urgent, compelling way. Here in the UK city of Bristol, Stoke's Croft emerged as a resistance by young residents to the kinds of gentrification taking place under the weight of creative city policies. The residents (and a lot of others) decided to construct their own organized cultural enterprises: they now have a small museum, shops, design and craft making facilities, and call themselves The People's Republic of Stoke's Croft.

One of the new research interests of my own Centre for Cultural Policy is cultural 'self-management' and 'implicit cultural policy' (where organized creative production generates collective ideas, values, and patterns of behaviour that resonate with the objects of mainstream cultural policy). Reiterating my central proposal in this lecture: where we are facing an age of relative scarcity, we need to find ways of reconnecting with the energy of everyday social life, and develop models of cultural strategy out of creative production itself. It is to this end I suggest we consider what I will call 'urban entrepreneurialism' as a framework for re-thinking cultural policy in the city.

Urban Enterprise or Urban Entrepreneurialism?

The dominant models of creative city development we have, as I have indicated, favour advanced urbanization under the impact of global capital. Development is bought at the cost of acute social restrictions and trading the public goods or space of the city to be used as a platform for foreign direct investment. 'Scarcity' obviously demands a more rigorous approach to strategies of distribution: 'who gets what'. The 'who gets what' question is at the heart of Public Policy in most countries. I think it is the wrong question – it is predicated on receiving tangible assets or fixed capital resources becomes the basis (practically, but also conceptually) of culture and cultural action of any kind.

Of course, we all need money and resources. But, as a logical, political, institutional, and cultural assumption, to say that a creative city can only be constructed upon a foundation of major capital investment, falls into the scenario we mooted earlier – only the great metropolis centres will succeed. Rather, we need a foundational role for the intangible capital of ideas, freedoms, dialogue and public leadership (of *applied creative behaviours*). The intellectual energy and vitality of a place will be more profitable than expensive new art museums. Our concept of creativity should be re-oriented to the entrepreneurial urban, expressed primarily in forms of social or public communication, organization, the policy process and the ways in which we implement policy.

I will discuss this idea with reference to a few examples. These are not 'models' of *urban entrepreneurialism*, but they indicate what I previously referred to as developing a cultural policy from cultural production – or developing our concept of culture from the shape and exemplars of artistic projects or products. The term 'the urban entrepreneur' was briefly mooted by Harvard Business School's Michael Porter in the mid-1990s: the term for him signified a business enterprise that exploited the unique economic and social resources of the inner city. It was specifically an application of commercial enterprise methods as a (neoliberal) antidote to American cities perceived to be beset by social problems and surviving only on welfare and charity. The 'urban' signified only unique conditions of competitive advantage. The objective was profit, and growth (i.e. the business would exceed the 'mere' local and become an international export). Using the term was a brave move on the part of Porter perhaps, as it had a previous life as a euphemism for 'street dealers' (drug enterprises, pimping, and so on).

The concept 'urban entrepreneur' however spawned a broader conception of multicultural, small business professionals and creative start-ups in specific (usually disadvantaged) urban locations.

However, I propose a counter-concept, where the emphasis is on the 'urban' not the 'entrepreneur', and where the urban is not simply a platform for wealth-creation, but the socio-material conditions of individual actions for change. Urban enterprise emerges from a specific social environment (and can make a tangible impact on that environment). The artists and projects I will cite do not think of themselves in this way: I am, of course, articulating their activity as a critique of the dominant model of creative class industry.

The first is called 'Sow and Grow', which is an art project variants of which could be found in various cities around the world. My version here is Glasgow, organized by the public arts organization NVA (from 2010). It set up a local self-production micro-agricultural economy on the disused land of the city, where without cash or monetary exchange, residents grow and distribute their own vegetables. The project does not feature art objects, but could be defined as a kind of social sculpture, in Joseph Beuys' terminology. It gathers an active community, with regular meetings, both planning and trading. It addresses local disempowerment, local carbon production, and the state of health in the city. It features re-claimed parts of the city – unused land. For each piece of land, representations and negotiations are made to the city authorities, with plans and schedules. It forms an alternative market, a cash-less alternative to the global food chain.

My second example is the project FLASH@Hebburn, in the town of Hebburn (2001-8). This was originally commissioned as a public art work, but the cultural administration of the project broke down, and the artist himself took responsibility for management. It lasted in total 7 years. It did not begin with an art work, or a site for the work, but both were constructed in relation to each other as the project developed. The place of Hebburn is effectively a dead industrial community, once quite famous, now with little left in the way of industrial infrastructure. The concept of the work was developed as a process of uncovering the traces and residue of urban and community memory, and reconstructing the social identity of the community through a vision for the future. The theme is thus 'future' oriented – a way of constructing a future out of a past that has largely dissolved.

The artist began the creative process by wandering around the area of the town – mapping the land, collating historical documentation, interviewing people, and creating a living archive of information on the place of Hebburn. The town was a place whose identity was constructed by an historical industrial community, now largely gone. The 7 year project was part of the region's regeneration strategy, but devised an alterative model of public art: the artist called it 'infrastructures'. We build infrastructures of meaning that articulate the material conditions of collective identity. On that basis a community can began to image, in a pragmatic way, a social future for itself. The 'art object' that emerged was a series of bespoke lighting mechanisms, each of which signified certain community activities, preprogrammed by the community themselves. The lighting mechanisms were developed as part of a R&D collaboration with a regional light technology company.

My third example is Eastside Projects: this is an 'art space', but not a regular art gallery, situated in the industrial district of Birmingham. The space itself is a 'project': it is not simply concerned with exhibiting art, but using art as a medium of dialogue about the relation between art and urban space. The space is used as event space, public communications and publications, research and seminars. It connected the local with the global – local audiences for global art. The building is a reconstructed cabinet factory, being constantly reconfigured as part of an ongoing investigation into the impact of urban regeneration strategy on social and urban spaces. To this end, the project is in consistent dialogue with policy makers on the function of the space and development of its urban context. It has generated a unique model of art space as a cultural-aesthetic inquiry into the changing geo-politics of urban economy.

My cursory explanation of these examples of urban entrepreneurialism I hope indicates something of the creative intelligence emerging from creative practitioners working in urban space. By implication, each of these examples facilitate an active and critical relationship between art, the social everyday, the city and its urban space, policy and the strategic intervention of culture in a social environment,

and of course the act of enterprise (the creative project). I believe they each contain the germ of a new approach to creative city cultural strategy.

Conclusion: farewell to the golden era

During this 'golden era' my University city, the City of Coventry, implemented many inventive strategies aiming to increase the cultural dimension of the city, and make the centre of the city a 'creative' place. The millennium year 2000, as you might all remember, was preceded in many countries by infrastructural investment and cultural commissions. In the UK, a Millennium Commission was established as early as 1993, and by its close in 2006 had disbursed over £2 billion for new buildings, environmental projects, celebrations and community schemes. Coventry city centre was one such millennium project, and formed the most extensive regeneration since the city's near obliteration by bombing from 1942-4.

For the year 2000 they commissioned seven artists to partner with architects and civil engineers. The project's aim was to articulate a segment of a city with seven distinctive works of public art, the fulcrum of which was a new European-style plaza in the Centre of the city. The project was led by a master-planner architect of international standing, a design team, and an external art consultancy in support. The segment of the city was given a theme – 'the journey' – from past to future, animated by a pedestrian route from the old cathedral bombed in World War II, to a new garden 'of international friendship'. As an urban project in the 'regeneration' of a segment of the city centre, it was professionally managed and the result is visually impressive. And yet, I end with this illustration today for a critical reason: for me, it illustrates two basic and chronic problems regarding the implementation of creativity by city government urban development initiatives. These problems are not merely practical, but theoretical: the question 'how do we make a city creative', is fraught with theoretical problems concerning how the 'city', 'creativity' and the relation between them is defined.

First, the 'city' is usually not the subject of an extensive design thinking process. The investment of design thinking usually concerns only segments of the city. The rest of the city is, of course, then subject to an assessment within broader economic planning frameworks (how the design of this segment will coherent and work in favour with the plan for the rest of the city). Design thinking, however, is 'contained' within a segment of a city. The city itself is rarely the subject of a theoretical inquiry as to the cultural landscape of its urban expanse facilitates 'creativity'. A project involving just part of the city is unfortunately not often used as a powerful device or policy platform for re-thinking the space of the city.

Second, and following from this, 'creativity' is so often invested almost wholly and exclusively in the development-stage of the design. It is not therefore understood in terms of the dynamic social relations that could emerge between the urban space and its users. It is conceived in terms of a certain configuration of urban form, and even if the composition of that urban form always presupposes some manner of visual-symbolic communication, creativity is usually invested in the physical, not social, infrastructure.

I use Coventry as an example, as the city is a paradox. Professionally I defend Coventry against its detractors, for it is a culturally fascinating place. Since World War II the city has maintained a pioneering approach to design and cultural strategy, and contains many innovations in planning and architecture, along with some important archaeological remains. And yet, few people in the UK would think of Coventry as a creative place, and certainly not a 'creative city'. The city has something of a poor 'image', and successive city brand and destination marketing schemes have petered out in an embarrassing silence. Where 'culture' appears in the city, it is usually under the designation of heritage, or contained in a segment of the city, like the Millennium project. So often, good quality architecture and art schemes become spatially trapped in an enclosed 'culture zone' that is so framed by heritage that inhabitants of the city assume the space is for visitors only. Coventry's inhabitants largely avoid its

most culturally interesting spaces. And rather than walk into the plaza, and use it, they walk around it. The plaza is almost always empty.

Yet here we find a distinction central to our subject of creative strategy in cities. This is a distinction between the perception of, experience of and engagement with, the space of the city (by both inhabitants and visitors), and the 'components' of the city, furnished by strategic design and planning. One might observe that the people of Coventry have not developed the cultural behaviours that would compel them to use this 'European-style' plaza; the plaza and segment have not become part of the life of the city. On the other hand, the plaza and the segment were never an integral part of a strategic re-think of the city itself -- what the city could be for its inhabitants – the rationale for their 'use' was never made manifest in the life of the city.

Such a 're-think' (of sorts) took place, quite unexpectedly, five years later. One the cusp of the global recession, the City Council bravely announced a billion-dollar urban design project, where the entire city would be subject to radical changes. An architectural agency was commissioned to provide a series of images that revealed the 'future' city. Whether the Council were aware of it or not, the concept behind the commission had an origin in an earlier national planning statement – the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) policy document *Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards a Better Practice* (1998). Among its various recommendations, this statement suggested that each city in the UK construct a 'vision' (a visualization) of their city 'in 25 years time'. This was not a 'plan' as such, requiring detailed drawings or data. It was to be an act of imagination. By implication, it placed 'imagination' at the centre of the urban planning of the city, and in so doing proffered a very different conception of planning: rather than developing a city incrementally, according to particular social or economic demands, the city would be defined as a creative act, *in toto*. It would be a space of meaning and visual experience, through which particular social or economic demands would be interpreted as they emerged over time. This process of 'interpretation' here, we might say, could be configured in various creative, democratic, ways. For as this particular situation illustrated, the presentation of a city's future through visualization provoked a greater reaction, response and engagement (from artists to citizen associations) than, arguably, current formats of urban development plans (blank documents; superimposed lines on simplified cartographic plans, and so on). Images of the city have a way generating provocation; for, like art, they demand interpretation, of the kind that always raises questions of identity and individuality. *Whose city is this? Whose ideas or plans? A city for whom?*

One last remark about my closing illustration of Coventry: something that caught my attention in the images of this new vision of the city was the way vegetation, increased greenery, made the image of the city ambiguous – more like a large town, covered in trees. Vegetation has a way of disordering our sense of 'metropolis', or expectation that a city must be dominated by a certain configuration of imposing buildings and roads. As the research of Iain Borden or Malcolm Miles show us, 'the city' is not a fixed term. Cities do not find an identity as cities primarily through the density of building but through the way power and knowledge determine the use of space. Being here, in the rural district of Miercurea Ciuc, Harghita County, as part of a cities network, is thought-provoking in this regard. For if a city does not need a certain kind of physical density or critical mass of major building types, then a more dispersed and heterogeneous configurations of place and space can develop 'city-like' capability, where the power of city life is manifest without the social and human cost exacted by the modern metropolis.

The significance of the CreArt project is that 'the European city' (a diffuse concept) needs to be defined, for by 'European' we must surely refer to the city as a political project (articulating a vision for Europe) as much as a cultural place (of values, communication, creativity) and urban place (social habitation, economy and productivity). The city is the agent of the most crucial articulations of human development, innovation, fashion and style, communication and culture. As an object of research, the city evokes the most pressing questions facing human identity, power and value. It is through the

framework of the city that we can articulate, with a specificity and particular application, chronic issues pertaining to identity, participation, equality and social development. These issues form part of the spectrum of problems that face European integration. What's clear from Europe today, is that the fraught relationship between nation states and the Union is not a particularly effective framework for pursuing questions of identity, participation, equality and social development. Perhaps, as Eric Corijn asserts, we need to extend the 'city-regions' emphasis of European development, capture the global economic significance of the contemporary city as a form of political capital, and asserts the relative independence of the city against national governments. We need strong 'city republics', for the sake of local democracy, culture and socio-economic development.

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