

# Culture, creativity and spatial planning<sup>1</sup>

In the past, culture has been a widely neglected subject in spatial planning. In a period of globalisation and increasing urban competition, however, the cultural dimension of urban and regional development has earned more attention from academics and planning professionals in cities and regions. This article presents the various dimensions of culture in spatial planning and city building processes in Europe, its role for urban imaging and marketing, for local economic development and job creation, and for sustaining identity and quality of life for citizens in the twenty-first century.

## A virus called creativity

When looking through previous Abercrombie lectures, I realised that this is the first lecture to be given on culture and planning. So far the themes have been, among others, local economic development (Tietz, 1987), sustainable development (Newby, 1990; Owens, 1997), planning for Europe (Davies, 1993), architecture, civic design and planning (Stephenson, 1985), planning history (Hall, 1995), regional planning (Simmons, 1999) and ethics (Upton, 2002). Does the choice of themes suggest that culture has not been a concern of planning and planners since this series of lectures was started? I am afraid it does, and I wonder why? For various reasons, it seems, the cultural dimensions of spatial planning have not been considered in planning theory, planning practice or planning education. Why is that the case? I assume it has much to do with a certain scepticism towards conservative cultural geography and the painful divorce from architects in planning schools. I could elaborate on this and also link my observation to the hesitancy of young people to become planners these days. However, I will not bore you with such an analysis. I will instead look into the relationship of cultures and the city, and city planning. I will also explore where spatial planners could promote the cultural dimension of urban and regional development across Europe.

There is a friendly virus, in the beginning of the twenty-first century. This friendly virus has affected the community of planners and could help us to survive as a creative profession. The virus is called creativity, sometimes creative milieu and creative industries, or even creative city (Landry, 2000) or creative class (Florida, 2002). Originally the term was pioneered and introduced by Ake Andersson, the Swedish regional scientist (Andersson, 1985). Not surprisingly, creativity comes into spatial planning

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with culture as a backpack, a rediscovery of the controversial debate about the future of the European city (Rietdorf, 2001; Kunzmann, 2002). In the beginning of the twenty-first century, culture and creativity have become key concepts on the agenda of city managers, development agents and planners, who are desperately searching for new foundations in city development with dwindling city budgets. Liverpool is spearheading this movement in Britain, or at least promoting it.

It seems the old paradigms of social and sustainable development are about to lose some of their former appeal. Is it a certain postmodern *Zeitgeist*, which supported the rediscovery of a dimension that did not play any major role in spatial planning during the last quarter of last century, in Germany, Britain, or the USA, though, by tradition, had a greater role in France and Italy?

In the style of American optimism I will argue in this paper first, that the cultural dimension of spatial development is a key to urban and regional development in 'Old' Europe, and second, that more imaginative spatial planning and creative governance are required to enhance the cultural dimension in order to maintain the European spirit of cities and regions across the continent. I will give some reasons as to why culture and creativity have gained so much attention, and, being a planner who does not have a background in cultural studies, I will develop some thoughts on how planners should cope with this new interest in the long neglected aspect of culture in planning, while hoping not to fall too much into the *Zeitgeist* trap. Before doing so I will explore the relationship of culture, city and planning in seven fields:

- Culture and image – culture sharpens the images of a city (and vice versa);
- Culture and identity – culture strengthens the identity of a city (and vice versa);
- Culture and space – culture enhances the value of locations (and vice versa);
- Culture and entertainment – culture entertains (and vice versa);
- Culture and education – culture educates (and vice versa);
- Culture and creativity – culture boosts creativity (and vice versa);
- Culture and economy – culture contributes to local economic development and creates jobs (and vice versa).

Culture, creativity and spatial planning, the terms used in this paper, require a brief definition:

First, there is culture. According to the dictionary which I consulted in preparing this paper, culture could have a narrow and a broad meaning. The most popular meaning of culture is that of a 'particular system of art, thought, and customs of a society', or 'the arts, customs, beliefs, and all other products of human thought made by a people at a particular time'. In all cultural environments in Europe one can find popular textbooks giving 1,000 and more definitions of culture for speakers who have to prepare speeches for birthday celebrations, ceremonial openings or funerals. I will not give you a sophisticated extra definition of culture. My understanding of culture

is centred around the arts, film and music, architecture and design – a culture which is rooted in and shaped by the history and identity of places. Liverpool is a cultural place, just as is Florence, Portmeirion, New York, Beijing, Poundbury (whether one likes it or not) and Las Vegas. I have one observation I would like to share with you at this point. More than once, when I was talking about culture, the city and cultural institutions in my home region, I was kindly reminded to spell out my particular definition of culture, before going any further. In contrast, never when talking about cultural institutions in conferences for members of a chamber of commerce or an economic development board was I requested to define economy first, before discussing economic development issues. When watching the promotional videos of Liverpool's application for European Capital of Culture 2008, I learnt that sport (and probably hooligans, too) is an element of the culture of the city.

Second, we have creativity. The *Oxford Dictionary* says creativity is 'the ability to produce new and original ideas and things'. This sounds reasonable. However, it does not really help a planner who is struggling in his or her day-to-day work with legal regulations, financial rules as well as with political and community sensitivities and considerations. Whenever he or she creates new plans or develops approaches to solve certain problems he or she is soon reminded not to forget about the feasibility of the original idea. Csikszentmihalyi's (1996, 28) definition of creativity is very useful – 'Creativity is any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one'. And his definition of a creative person is 'someone whose thoughts or actions change a domain, or establish a domain' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, 28). I would add that being creative for a planner means in addition that he or she occasionally has to be an urban or regional guerrilla to undermine established bureaucratic and political agendas.

Third, there is spatial planning. I have learnt that planning in Britain has become spatial planning. At least in this respect, by using the Euro term 'spatial planning' (originally translated from German into Euro-English) Britain thinks European. The RTPI offers two definitions. One is 'Spatial planning is critical thinking about space and place as the basis for action and intervention' (RTPI, 2001, 1). The second is better, a simpler definition which defines spatial planning as 'Making of place and mediating of space' (RTPI, 2001, 1). This second definition of spatial planning is simple and wonderful, at least for insiders. High school students, however, would still need a less sophisticated definition. Presumably, for them the traditional term town and country planning is self-explanatory.

## **Culture promotes images**

For reasons emphasised in city marketing literature, the image of cities has become extremely important to attract investors, professional people and media attention.

And we are all aware that culture (in the form of urban history, architecture, cultural facilities and events) is the main ingredient of city promotion campaigns.

Last year, after a fierce competition among eight British contenders, Liverpool was elected European Capital of Culture for the year 2008. Being the European Capital of Culture is a label no city in Europe would refuse. Getting the accolade means an enhanced image, with more financial support for cultural activities. More tourists are also likely to come, bolstering the local economy, at least for a limited time period. What is crucial, and those involved in such bids know this perfectly, is that a date and an event can lead to decisions which without the event would never have been taken. It can speed up political decision making processes tremendously and give an added emphasis to 'culture' if it is as broadly conceived as here in Liverpool. Bidding for the title and the event requires money, time and effort, which in the end, even if not successful, is always a good investment in the future of a city. That is why Newcastle, which came second to Liverpool in the cultural race, has not shelved the idea. On the contrary, the city has renamed its scheme and intends to proceed as planned with a new marketing approach to catch the momentum.

In Germany at present 17 cities are preparing their bids to be European Cultural Capital 2010. In most cities some sort of opposition exists, stemming from the local cultural community. In one of the cities, Liverpool's twin city Cologne, the opposition seems to be particularly strong. Recently, a popular German writer Guenther Wallraff, together with other artists, has criticised the city for participating in the competition and for spending taxpayers' money on the bid and a few 'fancy' projects linked to it. He suggested they should leave the race and give the money to local artists instead. I am afraid, though there is some rationale in his argument, that he totally underrated the awareness raising and marketing effects of such efforts on non-art related milieux. Some 15 per cent of the visitors to the extremely successful MOMA exhibition in Berlin, for example, had never been to a modern art museum before.

When comparing the British and the German application approaches to this bidding competition it is interesting to note that German cities seem to suppress the underlying economic rationale. German cultural managers do not dare to combine openly cultural and economic action fields. Culture is a 'sacred cow', which should not be sacrificed to consumption and entertainment. By tradition, it is a policy field where one does not really talk about money. Money has to be made available, and the more the better, and preferably from the public sector (which spends between 1 and 5 per cent of the local budget on cultural facilities and events in Germany). Of course one should be suspicious if cultural activities in a city are used extensively as a marketing tool to sell the city to consumers, tourists and potential investors, or as a means of promoting urban regeneration and local economic development. This could very easily result in their losing their original educational and enlightening character.

There is one aspect which cities have to take into account when sharpening the

cultural profile internationally. The promotion of cultural flagships should not be done at the expense of the broader local cultural environment. The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, for example, a well-publicised global success story, has little to do with the arts of the Basque country and almost nothing to do with the local arts community. And it is only the exceptional architectural character of the international exhibition hall which resulted in the great and the good of the world including the city in their itineraries to and from Santiago de Campostella. However, the cultural flagship has brought back hope to the Bilbao city region which was suffering, as many other former industrial city regions in Europe, from the impacts of industrial decline. The image and identity that the museum has created internationally and locally has helped the city considerably to revitalise the local economy. I assume, and I know it from my knowledge of the Ruhr in Germany, that many regional development managers would love to have such a symbol in their region, though I am convinced that any simple replicas would not serve the purpose. One Gehry Guggenheim Museum should be enough. Should any smaller cities in Europe feel a desire to copy the Bilbao success story, but with less courage, less money and a less brilliant design, they may fail and lose, and damage their endogenous cultural environment (Hoffmann, 1999).

### **Culture strengthens identity**

We all know that in times of globalisation local identity has become a key concern, and the arts are, apart from landscape features, the only local asset to display such difference. Since the Bauhaus movement started in the 1930s, architecture has lost its endogenous character, although Frederick II in Prussia had already asked his architects to borrow images from all over Europe, including Britain. Modern urban development projects and inner-city shopping malls are becoming more and more similar. While the physical structures of a city, together with consumer products, food and large cultural events, converge more and more in style, the cultural content remains the last bastion of local identity. At present, architects and city builders in Munich are fighting a civil war for or against the right to build high-rise buildings in the city. So far local government has successfully turned down any such applications. There is concern that Munich's identity will be sacrificed at the altar of the booming real estate market. And, being an affluent city with a strong cultural tradition, it can afford to resist the temptations of the property market.

There is a plethora of scientific literature about identity. Sharon Zukin's 'landscapes of power' are a brilliant early example (Zukin, 1991). The identity of cities and regions is a concern of many who reflect the spatial consequences of globalisation, global values, global mobility and global consumption patterns. The whole debate about regionalism in Europe is a debate about regional identity. Similarly, the discourse about the European city as well is a reaction to the eroding cultural tradition of the

European city. The debate about the paradigm of the multi-ethnic cosmopolitan city and spatial cultural identity is just starting. Are the thriving Chinatowns in Liverpool or Paris a threat or do they rather enrich the local identity? Is the urban conservation of the historical heritage in European towns a purely European value which is of little relevance to the Bangladeshi community in Bradford or the Turkish community in Berlin? Are cultural objectives and social concerns exclusive? Is Liverpool's slogan for the cultural year 2008 'The world in one city' the end of local identity, or just a copy of the fancy real estate project 'The World' in Dubai, where numerous artificial islands in the gulf are modelled after a world map with 27 or so different local identities, ranging from Italy to Thailand? For tourists from the USA, Japan or China, Europe has already become a kind of theme park. There are still many aspects which need to be discussed in order to find appropriate answers. To maintain the balance between local identity and international profiling requires considerable creativity and local political self-consciousness. It is clearly a difficult balancing act which requires courage and leadership.

## Culture and space

All over Europe, property developers have realised and rediscovered that culture enhances the value of locations. This identification of culture as an asset to city development, however, is not new. In 1986, Merseyside County Council produced a comprehensive directory 'Arts on Merseyside', and in 1988 a promotional study was published in Britain by Franco Bianchini and others entitled *City Centres, City Cultures* exploring the role of the arts in the revitalisation of towns and cities (Bianchini et al., 1988). They made a strong plea for incorporating the arts in local development as an appropriate means of organising the regeneration of run-down city centres. Though their visions may have been a little too idealistic and optimistic for profit seeking developers, they clearly drew the attention of policy makers and local economic planners to culture as a neglected dimension of urban renewal. Now, the fact that a Centre for Local Economic Strategies in Manchester had commissioned the study illustrates who had triggered the new interest in the arts in England – not the cultural associations, not the socially minded architect planners, the environment-minded geographer planners, or the RTPI-recognised professional planners. In Britain, at least, it was the local economic planners who saw the potential of the arts for local economic development. (This was not the case in Germany.) When Michael Parkinson together with Franco Bianchini published *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration* in 1993, culture had already become a commonly accepted theme in urban regeneration. Glasgow has always been at the forefront since it successfully qualified as the first British Cultural City of Europe in 1990, and subsequently became City of Architecture. All over the world, in cities such as Baltimore, Sheffield, Pittsburgh and

Berlin, cultural quarters have been promoted to end inner-city erosion. However, few cities are really successful models for the use of the arts in urban regeneration and local economic development beyond gentrification (Smith, 1996; Nyström, 2000).

## Culture and entertainment

Culture entertains, no doubt. While culture educates, of course, it entertains as well, though there are many cultural militants who draw a strict line between culture and entertainment (Hennings and Müller, 1998). Entertainment is clearly not limited to casinos, gambling and fun shopping in Las Vegas. Apart from a few journalists who have to write a review, or fellow producers who for benchmarking reasons sit in the audience, visitors who come to the Opera House to see Mozart's *Magic Flute* want to be entertained, enjoy the music and the singers, dress up fancily and have a nice evening out with friends. Their entertainment, by the way, is subsidised by the public sector in Germany – usually the local government – by around €150 per ticket. And, it should be emphasised, Berlin has three such opera houses. I do not mind this level of expenditure. From a global or European rationale this is acceptable. Roads, waterways, football and rugby stadiums, and military equipment are subsidised as well.

It is an interesting fact that planners do little for the city as an entertainment space, unless they have to zone land for an entertainment park, protect open space for sports facilities, control a red light district together with the police, or provide spaces for tourist facilities. Citizens in a city have to sleep, work, commute and go to school. Only during weekends, it seems, are citizens allowed to be entertained. One could and must suspect that planners do not like to enjoy life or to be entertained, or to be seen to like to be entertained, even occasionally. Most planners, being Calvinist-minded missionaries for social justice and equity or militant warriors for sustainable development, have deleted entertainment from their proactive agendas. Denying the entertainment dimension of culture in spatial development is hypocritical. As we learn perfectly well from the carnival in Rio de Janeiro, entertainment and poverty are not mutually exclusive. Fighting against social deprivation is no reason to exclude promoting entertainment in the city from the planning agenda.

The tourist city, as embodied in Susan Fainstein's vision of the future of the European city, is a city of entertainment with cultural facilities, a plethora of cultural events and public spaces in a culturally mature environment (Judd and Fainstein, 1999). Public spaces in cities are urban entertainment spaces in the wider sense and that is what tourists and local residents alike appreciate and what the new urban class of knowledge workers and e-workers value. However, we should not forget that entertainment is not limited to the age group of 17 to 34, though the entertainment consumption patterns of the 60 to 70 year-old citizens logically differ, as do those of immigrants from other cultural environments.

Most urban or spatial development strategies and concepts say little about entertainment, or hide the theme behind the tourist glaze. In Patrick Abercrombie's Plan for London (Abercrombie, 1945) I could not find any notion of entertainment, nor in the new Spatial Plan for Wales (Welsh Assembly, 2003). In a new study for Berlin – which in fact is the entertainment capital of Germany – this policy area is not mentioned, and in Britain the much acclaimed European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) does not either. Obviously, planning is still focused on its long-standing social agenda which, of course, as a key concern of planning should not be questioned.

## Culture and education

Culture educates. In an environment like this, I certainly do not need to stress the role of culture in education. Since the Greeks and Romans we are well aware that cultures educate, and education produces culturally minded citizens. The European project of enlightenment is a cultural project. However, there is one other facet I want to stress. In recent years the geographers and urban economists have been telling us that, after the sustainable city, the 'learning city' has to be seen as our urban development paradigm of the future. It is, indeed, a convincing paradigm. No local politician or local media correspondent would dare to be against any form of learning in the city. With traditional industries having left or ended their time as local or regional job machines, and banks and e-businesses moving their services and back offices to India or South Africa, the knowledge industries have taken over the key role as engines of local job creation. As learning is a lifelong process, the need for learning products and services is never exhausted.

Obviously, knowledge and culture are highly interrelated – it is a kind of yin and yang relationship, full of interdependencies. As a rule knowledge cities are cities of culture; and cultural cities are centres of knowledge. Knowledge industries flourish in an environment with cultural traditions and opportunities to participate in cultural events. A city which neglects the cultural environment of the local knowledge industries will soon experience a declining interest in the local knowledge institutions and clusters.

Knowledge institutions in England, favoured by the fact that the world wants to learn the global language in the country where the original language is spoken at its best, are drawing considerable economic benefits from the English language. I have no figures for the economic impact of the language and knowledge industries in England, or the number of foreign students and researchers in the country, though I assume this segment of the economy is showing the highest increase of any economic segment in Britain. Many university departments between Edinburgh and Cardiff would face difficulties in recruiting sufficient students without the growing number of foreign, particularly Chinese, students coming here for their education. The fame of



solid British higher education is unbroken. No wonder knowledge industries are the hope for European cities and regions to survive in a competitive world. Many other European countries have started to replace their higher-education working language with English in an attempt to gain a small share of the global knowledge market.

## Culture promotes creativity

In recent years literature about creativity has received considerable attention (de Bono, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). The challenges of new technologies in the globalised world require a growing number of creative knowledge workers. Consequently, investigations into the foundations, mechanisms and techniques of creativity are being made in order to promote creative thinking, writing and action. A growing number of guru-like consultants are offering courses on how to develop personal creativity and how to become more creative. Creativity training has become a multi-million dollar business in the USA and beyond.

In the field of planning, too, creativity has become a topical theme, though still only with a very small audience. Ake Andersson in Sweden has been one of the first planners to explore creativity of and in cities (Andersson, 1985). In his book *Kreativitet* he develops a scenario for the future of Stockholm based on a small set of rules on how to promote creativity and creative action for future-oriented urban economic development. And Peter Hall again, in his wonderful book *Cities in Civilisation*, traced the origins of urban creativity to be a melange of cultural foundations, cosmopolitan milieux and anti-bourgeois movements (Hall, 1998). A study I did together with colleagues and Charles Landry back in 1995 explored creative action in British and German cities (Landry et al., 1996). Based on the debates we had at that time Charles Landry wrote and published his inspiring and influential book on the *Creative City* (Landry, 2000). In this excellent book, full of insight and advice, he extensively describes the key role of culture as a platform for creative action in city development. In Germany, explorations into the role of creativity in urban transformation (*Städtische Kreativität*) are the underlying theme of a recently published compendium of creative experience in mainly east German cities after re-unification (Liebmann and Robischon, 2003), where traditional planning approaches did not apply for solving the problems of urban decline and decay. *Creative Europe* is the title of an excellent book presenting and analysing 13 case studies of creative approaches to urban cultural development in Europe (Cliche et al., 2002).

Not long ago, another approach to creative urban development attracted considerable media interest. In the typical American MBA approach to providing simple answers to complex questions Richard Florida convincingly explained the success of regions by the rise of the creative class and how it is transforming work, leisure and everyday life (Florida, 2002). His ambition clearly was to find new strategies for

the promotion of innovative regional development, knowing that copying the Silicon Valley success story does not make sense any more. To support his arguments he developed a geography of creativity and ranked cities accordingly. His indicators were immigrant population, a gay index measuring the number of gays, and an index, which he called the 'Bohemian index', measuring the number of writers, designers, musicians and so forth – the cultural actors rather than the cultural facilities. No doubt the number of creative workers is rising in post-industrial times. Consequently they are more and more a factor to reckon with when considering urban economic development. This segment of the local economy is still underrated by many local economic development agencies, which prefer to focus on the more well known IT or bio-med experiences from American city development.

Creative cities need creative governments if they wish to explore new ground for the future of the city. In times of public sector deregulation and dwindling local budgets it is highly debatable whether affluent or poor local governments are the more creative. In reality there is creativity at both ends of this spectrum. Hence creative leadership is the key to combat bureaucracy, lack of ideas and apathy.

## **Culture and economy**

A final though key point for our efforts to reintroduce culture as an essential element in city development policies is that culture supports the economy and creates jobs.

Culture has always been an important segment of both local and regional economies. Since the Middle Ages European cities such as Antwerp, Liege, Cremona, Venice and Florence have been the home of highly specialised cultural industries. They exported their products such as paintings, musical instruments, curtains, porcelain and silverware all over Europe. During times of large-scale industrial development and mass production these industries, and with them their locations, lost their relative importance. Other industries such as steel production, locomotives, chemical industries and, since the beginning of the twentieth century, automotive production, took over. New cities and regions became the centres of industrial production. Cultural industries lost their importance. Nevertheless a few cities and regions in Europe maintained their highly sophisticated artisan skills over centuries, and in times of heavy deindustrialisation they are coming back to prominence. When it became obvious that traditional service industries (banks, insurance companies, etc.) could not compensate for the losses of jobs in the industrial sector, cultural industries were discovered as a promising, future-oriented field of local and economic development.

The successful Liverpool bid for the European Capital of Culture 2008 promises to attract 11.1 million visitors to the city by 2008, 3 million up on the 2003 figure. The expectation is that these visitors will generate £547 million in 2008, and it is

anticipated that there will be a legacy effect of an extra 720,000 visitors per year by 2012, spending £53 million. Such figures are without doubt impressive. The bid promised to create 13,200 direct jobs in the cultural industries by 2012 due to growth trends, new developments and the Capital of Culture effect. One call for caution should be made at this point. If all the forecasts about cultural jobs in European cities actually materialise we will have more cultural producers than consumers in the year 2050 unless we succeed in exporting European cultural products to Asia and the Middle East in exchange for automobiles and industrial equipment.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the first studies to assess the economic impacts or importance of the arts, now being carried out by economists. They were commissioned to prove and demonstrate that the arts were not solely dependent on public sector finance or philanthropic sponsors. Such ‘bookkeeping’ studies were done in the USA, for Baltimore in 1977, Minneapolis/St Paul and Salt Lake City in 1981, New York in 1983 (Port Authority, 1983), and for Amsterdam. In the UK such studies were made by Myerscough (1988), for Liverpool, Glasgow and other cities, and a countrywide study was undertaken in 1999. You can find small studies in other countries – in Austria (Salzburg and Vienna), Germany (Bremen and Berlin) and France (for a detailed account see Behr et al., 1990). A different approach has been made by Allen Scott, a global trendsetter in economic analysis. Not long ago he published his Los Angeles and Paris inspired book, *The Economy of Culture* (Scott, 2000), in which he describes the importance of culture for local economies. At least in Germany such studies did not have much impact on policy making and they disappeared from the agenda of local government and the shopping list of economic consultants almost as soon as they emerged. Although all these bookkeeping calculations showed that each penny invested in the arts pays off economically and in terms of jobs, local government organisations and councils did not really trust the figures or feel encouraged to alter their local economic priorities.

Another point worth mentioning is the growing importance of ‘content’ industries, – firms developing, producing or marketing new material for the new high-tech tools (games, clips or e-learning etc.). Institutions of higher education such as academies of fine or performing arts, schools of fashion and design, and film academies are emerging as new local catalysts and lifestyle innovators. They have become the breeding ground for new entrepreneurs in the new economy and they are as important as all the bio-tech or IT technology parks around the traditional, natural- and computer-science institutions.

In recent times cultural industries – called ‘creative industries’ in Britain – have become a pet initiative of local development agencies in Britain, Finland or Austria. One should be careful because the concept of cultural industries is a difficult terrain. First, the word ‘culture’ means different things to different people and different disciplines. For some the concept of ‘culture’ is rather narrow, covering the arts in five fields – fine and applied arts; performing arts; film, photo and video; architecture and

design; and literature. Others have a much broader view of what culture means. Consequently, they add to the above all forms of entertainment, leisure and sport. Some extend the concept to agriculture and gastronomy. Others would even include religious and spiritual action. Hence any debate about the right definition of cultural industries does not make much sense, particularly when it comes to policy making. For the purposes of policy making, and this is the focus of this paper, it depends very much on local perceptions and traditions as well as local conditions and potential. The perception of cultural industries differs between Germany and France, as it does from Taiwan to Japan. Even within a country it could differ from region to region and from city to city. As a rule, there is a hard and indisputable core of cultural industries based on a wide variety of local industries and services which can be addressed by local or regional cultural industries policies.

What certainly differs is the absorptive capacity of the respective markets, and of the regional society consuming cultural products and services. A marginalised population with low educational background will neither have the means nor the desire to consume more than basic goods and services, while an affluent highly educated society will require a wide range of diverse and highly sophisticated cultural products and services.

The state of North Rhine Westphalia in Germany, a densely populated, highly urbanised state with a population of 18 million and a strong, diversified industrial base, was among the first to explore this field systematically. In the early 1990s the state's Ministry of Economy in Düsseldorf commissioned the first cultural industries report in order to learn more about the relevance and importance of cultural industries. The surprising result of this report was that cultural industries employing about 5 per cent of the labour force were growing faster than other industries. The findings very much surprised the political arena. However, given the economic power of other traditional segments of the economy with a similar share in employment figures (construction, chemical industry, steel production, coal mining etc.) and the attraction of modern IT-related industries, the newly identified sector did not immediately change promotional industrial policies. Over time, however, the segment gained more and more respect. By now, the cultural industries report has become a triennial tradition. The first policy programmes to support new enterprises in the sector were initiated and implemented in this state.

Another state initiative, the renowned International Building Exhibition – Emscherpark, which is primarily a comprehensive 10-year experimental initiative to change the structure and the dull image of the industrial heartland of North Rhine Westphalia, has supported such efforts by revitalising derelict industrial buildings and brownfield sites in the Ruhr. They offer superb opportunities for cultural industries, preferring to use buildings for their economic and cultural activities which are different from the traditional developer built structures of modern cities. Many

industrial sites in the region have been revitalised in recent years. The 'Zeche Zollverein' is the flagship of this new spirit in what was once one of Europe's mightiest industrial regions. The biggest coal mine in Europe, where 15,000 miners used to work, was closed in 1990. After a long political struggle the demolition of the site has been stopped, and in 2003 the site was listed as a UNESCO monument. Since its designation as a location for design and dance activities, the incremental revitalisation of this enormous site with an impressive collection of fine industrial buildings is now well under way. Gradually new activities and users conquer the terrain. The present masterplan for the area aims at changing the former pit into a European centre of design, with a mix of workshops and offices, educational training facilities, exhibition space and museums. A state development corporation is responsible for managing the project and receives considerable support from the European Commission's structural fund.

In the UK cultural industries, here termed 'creative industries', have recently entered the scene as the new hope for the country's declining industrial regions. In 1997 a special interdepartmental task force under the leadership of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in London was established to study the importance of creative industries for the UK economy. This task force defined creative industries as

those industries that have their origin in individual skills and talent and which have a potential for ... creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property ... 'Creative industries', the task force states, have the extraordinary ability to reverse economic decline, create social cohesion and give new meaning to work.

In 2001 creative industries in the UK accounted for 8.2 per cent of Gross Value Added (GVA). They grew by an average of 8 per cent per annum between 1997 and 2001, compared with an average of 2.6 per cent for the economy as a whole over this period. Exports by creative industries contributed £11.4 billion to the balance of trade of the UK in 2001. This equated to around 4.2 per cent of all goods and services exported. In June 2002, creative employment in the UK totalled 1.9 million jobs in more than 122,000 companies. Over the years (1997–2002) employment in the creative industries grew at a rate of 3 per cent per annum compared with 1 per cent for the overall economy. Quantitative figures for most other European countries are supposedly quite similar.

Many parts of the UK have gone on to support creative industries in their region or city. The North West (Liverpool and Manchester) has done it as well as the North East (Newcastle upon Tyne). The East Midlands, Brighton and Cornwall have commissioned regional research on cultural industries to establish a sound information base for proactive development policies. In 1999 Scotland commissioned a study on the evolution of cultural and creative industries in the region. In 2000, a Creative Industries Development Agency (CIDA) was established in Huddersfield to provide

infrastructure support for the development of the creative sector in Yorkshire and the Humber region. CIDA ‘... supports regional firms and freelance practitioners through activities, including placements, workshops, mentoring, business advice, counselling and regional conferences’.

The Nordic countries, particularly affected by the concentration forces of a globalised economy, are presently exploring the potential of creative industries using their world renowned tradition in design (glass, furniture or home textiles). Innovative projects have been developed in Helsinki and Malmö. Arabiaranta in Helsinki is a complex urban technology park centred around an arts university. A similar venture took off in Malmö, a medium-sized industrial town in southern Sweden, benefiting from the new bridge over the Öresund to Copenhagen – another design hub in northern Europe. It is redeveloping its obsolete port area around a university focusing on creativity. Other countries, regions and cities in Europe have similarly focused attention on cultural industries – the government of Catalunya (Barcelona, Spain) produced a White Paper on Cultural Industries in 2002; in 2003, Austria published a comprehensive report to identify and promote cultural industries (Cliche et al., 2002).

## Promoting the cultural dimension in spatial planning

Let me now weave together the different threads of my explorations into the various dimensions of culture. What should planners know? What should they learn from all the successes and disappointments of planning action in the past? What should they do to promote the cultural dimension at the six different tiers of planning and decision making in Europe? How can they incorporate and enhance the cultural dimension in spatial planning?

We have learnt that culture is essential for promoting the image and conserving the identity of the European city, for urban regeneration, for local economic development and for creative governance. What can we as planners do to contribute to such challenges at all tiers of planning and decision making? Of course, we could and should support the promotion of culture – we could contribute time and, if available, our own money (from family wealth, speculation or gambling) to culture. We should not leave this work solely to elitist cultural lobby groups around the globe. Within our day-to-day life we could contribute our cultural knowledge when ‘making the place and mediating space’ (RTPI, 2001, 1). Culture (including entertainment) should have our support.

Around two decades ago the renaissance of culture in urban development had started with a new perspective. In 1979 Harvey Perloff, eminent professor and dean of the School of Planning at the University of California in Los Angeles, published an excellent study entitled *The Arts in the Economic Life of the City* (Perloff, 1979), where, based on a survey of the role of the arts in the city of Los Angeles, he and his team

made four suggestions for ‘establishing a cultural element in the general plan for the city, county and region’ and for enhancing the role of the arts in city development. The study suggested that there was a need to:

- provide basic information about arts activities and about people involved in them;
- make plans for broader and more flexible use of public (and, to some extent, private facilities for arts activities, experimental arts groups and arts education efforts;
- probe for ways in which the arts might be tied into the various public services in order to enlarge the scope of the arts employment and income; and
- make plans for the fuller use of the arts in urban development and redevelopment.

I do not know whether the study had any major impact on urban development in the city. I assume it has been well received and subsequently shelved, as often happens with innovative studies in our field. Even the large community of planning theorists did not take notice of the arts dimension when exploring all their theories for and of planning.

A rich source of knowledge for our work is Graeme Evans’s excellent compendium *Cultural Planning*, which gives a deep insight into the relationship between national arts policy, the cultural economy and city planning (Evans, 2001). It is a landmark book that planners should have on their bookshelf, as it combines theoretical insight with pragmatic policy suggestions. He calls for a cultural approach to urban planning and more balanced policies to overcome the growing disparities between globally consumed elements of culture and more localised community culture in city development. How could this be done? The different spatial levels of planning and decision making are considered below and in Table 1.

- *Europe* I would suggest that the next ESDP, provided there is one, should include an explicit cultural dimension. Elsewhere I have suggested that subsequent ESDPs should have a thematic focus. Culture would be a good choice for such an attempt (Kunzmann, 2004). With the support of the Mediterranean planners this should be easy. Also, INTERREG programmes and networks could be exploited much better for culture-related programmes. Finally, ESPON could expand its information and database to include more culture-related information. Though Europe has become an economic entity, it is the cultural dimension of the EU in a global context which has to be reinforced.
- *National* The same is true for the national level. National spatial objectives must have a strong cultural dimension. National governments have to promote their national cultural assets in European objectives and programmes. National planning legislation has to be reviewed to ensure that cultural and multi-cultural dimensions are taken into account. It has to be made clear that culture is not just a

**Table 1 Promoting the cultural dimension of spatial planning**

Spatial level of planning and decision making	Means of promoting the cultural dimension of spatial planning
Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add a strong cultural dimension to the next ESDP</li> <li>• Introduce cultural subjects into INTERREG programmes</li> <li>• Improve the cultural database of ESPON</li> </ul>
Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen culture-related policies in national spatial plans</li> <li>• Insert culture-related goals in national planning legislation and regulation</li> <li>• Improve the cultural industries database</li> <li>• Review cultural impacts of national financial regulation</li> </ul>
Region/Land/City region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortify the cultural dimension in regional planning</li> <li>• Invite culture-related institutions to participate in regional governance</li> <li>• Include culture and entertainment in future regional concept development</li> </ul>
City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop holistic urban policies linking culture to land use and local economic development, including entertainment and leisure</li> <li>• Promote public–private partnerships in cultural property development</li> </ul>
Ward/Community/ Urban District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide cultural spaces for community action</li> <li>• Leave unplanned space for cultural creativity</li> <li>• Encourage civil society to contribute</li> </ul>

luxury in times of affluence, it is the most important asset for the future. It is the cultural dimension of Paris, for example, that attracts one million Japanese tourists to the city annually, and soon even more Chinese will be heading to Europe to experience the rich European cultural traditions. These are the attractions, not visiting the headquarters of global French utility enterprises.

- *Region/Land/City region* When it comes to the regional level, spatial strategies and real initiatives and projects have to be formulated for implementing culture-related objectives in regional plans and programmes. Their nature depends on the wealth of local cultural traditions and potentials, identified by careful SWOT analyses. In most cases, a certain division of labour has to be organised between the core city with the central cultural urban facilities and the regional hinterland. Certainly, regional marketing has to promote cultural development, and cultural industries linked to cultural infrastructure and institutes of higher education have to be supported at appropriate locations. Finally, the establishment of civic foundations has to be encouraged in order to involve committed regional stakeholders and citizens in cultural policies and their implementation.
- *City* In most cities in northwest Europe the cultural dimension of city planning is underdeveloped, much in contrast to Italy for example. As a rule action is left to



the cultural affairs departments unless cultural flagship projects are on the political agenda, for which the traditional land use planner has to select sites and seek planning permission. There are many ways to promote city and culture relationships. A holistic policy with strong links to local cultural and local economic development, through reaching out to other policy fields, is required. Integrated cultural development policies, which usually end up with unrealistic cultural shopping lists, may not be the right approach. The city can organise city-wide festivals with all the considerations for the organisation of cultural space. The conservation of the cultural heritage as well as the protection of the cultural townscape have to be regulated. Aesthetic standards have to be formulated and enforced. Public–private partnerships will engage the private sector in the implementation of cultural urban strategies. The local media have to be engaged for support and to help provide a means of communication to the local citizens. Graeme Evans’s book may be a perfect guideline – what else to do, when and with whom.

- *Ward/Community/Urban District* At this lowest level of spatial planning and development the involvement of citizens is definitely desirable. One thing planners should resist is zoning for culture and creativity. This would be counter-productive. Experience shows that creative innovation takes place where the city is in transition, where urban space is undefined, where social polarisation takes place and where contradictions are visible. Integrated cultural planning may not be the right approach as it tends to raise expectations beyond reality. Tiresome culture-related shopping lists are not helpful.

To sum up, spatial planners have to be more creative when it comes to strengthening the cultural dimension in urban and regional development in order to support those who produce culture. Cultural rhetoric will not be helpful, nor hunting for fashionable mainstream events and initiatives at the various tiers of planning and decision making. Cities and city planners have to be prepared for planning in multi-cultural environments. European cultural traditions may alter in a period of globalisation and multi-cultural values, and a balance has to be sought and found with this in mind.

## **Culture, creativity and planning education**

I have argued in this paper that planning has to incorporate culture and has to be more creative. Looking into the curricula of planning education, it seems there is not much about the links between culture, creativity and spatial planning in Cardiff, or in Dortmund. This is not surprising. People leave architectural schools with an outlook which is bolstered by the arrogance of many architects. Culture has been forgotten as a subject in many of these schools. Few sociologists have brought their concepts of

culture into planning education, even when they were very cultivated and culture-minded individuals themselves. Only in a few urban design and conservation courses is the cultural dimension of urban planning touched upon. Graduate students are free to choose their options from other departments' courses, though few actually do, either because they do not see the need or are not being told why the cultural dimension of spatial planning is so important. Let me draw your attention to another observation. Planning schools and planning educators suffer increasingly from a publishing mania in order to prove the academic excellence of the discipline. In order not to perish, they publish whatever refereed journals will accept; and journals accept what their referees like to read or understand. Writing about clusters or governance or communicative planning these days is mainstream and quite safe. It helps to achieve a high ranking, and a high ranking means internal university recognition and appreciation and (more) money. The result is that undergraduate and graduate students are left alone. They have to read and read and read, sum up and analyse, and write analytical essays. They soon know why planning has failed, though they know less and less about what to do. Their creative skills development is neglected, sacrificed on the altar of science. Projects, scenario exercises and futures workshops where creativity can be trained are rarely offered. They are time consuming and do not provide material for scientific publications. As a consequence we have to explore how the cultural dimension and creativity can be reintroduced into planning curricula in order to offer new visions for young planners who are tired of being the social conscience of society, and who do not wish to become city priests, regional missionaries or 'early warning' freaks. Do not draw a wrong conclusion – such warning roles remain extremely important in a world which is becoming polarised and steadily growing unsafe. However, the cultural dimension of planning is our safety net in the struggle for survival as a competent profession.

### **Postscript: Abercrombie and culture**

Let me end this cultural odyssey with a brief tribute to Patrick Abercrombie. He has been a pragmatic planner, a man of culture, though the arts and music have only been a part of his very private life. His professional interest was, as has been documented, more in regional planning and in transport infrastructure than in cultural infrastructure, urban economic strategies or community planning – although he had well-organised local communities in mind when developing his plan for Greater London. In his masterplan, culture is clearly not an issue, nor is creativity (Abercrombie, 1945), though in his paper on rural development he suggested Feng Shui as a cultural concept for rural development and for preserving the English landscape (Abercrombie, 1926). When Peter Hall gave his Abercrombie lecture of 1995, he played with the idea of what Patrick Abercrombie would suggest for Greater London today.

Now if we were to ask Patrick Abercrombie today about his feelings on culture and creativity, I think he would raise an eyebrow and smile about the idea that planners can have any direct impact on culture in the city. Then, after a minute of reflection, he would suggest that without creativity planners cannot fulfil their ambitions to create cultural environments for the cities of tomorrow, and he would agree that only creative planning provides a survival strategy for the cultural identity of the European city and its multi-cultural citizens in a period of globalisation. We have to work on it.

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