CULTURE:
INVENTED OR INHERITED

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Introduction
Cultural Invention and Inheritance in the Context of ECOCs

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The Context

The University Network for the European Capitals of Culture (UNeECC) is an organisation made up of a number of Higher Education Institution within the European Union which contributes toward the 'recognition of the role of European universities in ensuring the success of cities designated with the title of European Capitals of Culture' (UNECC 2018). Such contribution may occur in various forms and as stipulated by the foundation or organisation entrusted with the management of the ECOC title. In its *Guidelines for the cities' own evaluation of the results of their ECOC,* the European Commission (2018), indicates how designated cities may collaborate with local universities to gather and process the necessary data so as to obtain key indications on the impacts specific activities organised by the ECOCs are affecting key stakeholders (e.g. the general public, public cultural organisations, and cultural entrepreneurs among others). While the majority of ECOCs' do involve local academics and universities, the reality with regard to other designated cities may be completely different. Through its members, UNeECC has been regularly taking stock of these synergies and presents the results as case studies during its yearly conference.

This publication is the outcome of the UNeECC annual conference which was held in Valletta, Malta - the European Capital city designated with the title of ECOC in 2018. The Valletta 2108 Foundation was set up in 2012 and was responsible for the bidding process and eventually the cultural programmes. 2012 was characterised by continuous collaboration between the Foundation and the University of Malta (Ayling 2012). A number of flagship projects were designed by local academics and included in the Bid Book; some of these projects were implemented while others never saw the light of day. Needless to highlight the disappointment of academics whose projects were completely discarded despite being included in the bid book – this had even created some friction between University of Malta academics and the Valletta 2018 Foundation. Such disappointment was quickly alleviated months after the confirmation of the title when academics where given the opportunity to collaborate with the Foundation on other similar research projects, notably on the Evaluation & Monitoring research. This team was composed of public

stakeholders, notably government entities and individual academics who carried out primary research based on both quantitative and qualitative studies.

The UNeECC Malta Conference

The main objective of this conference was to develop critical arguments based on two concepts which can be non-homogenous and overlapping at the same time, namely (i) Culture inheritance and (ii) Cultural invention. Key questions relevant to this conference were: (i) 'how does the concept of European Capitals of Culture consider the invention and inheritance of cultures?'; (ii) 'What avenues are being taken by ECoC programmers to strike a balance in the promotion of cultural components which are 'invented' and those based on grass-root identities?'; and (iii) 'What are the core arguments surrounding the questions of whether a culture is invented or inherited?.

Culture is 'the way-of-life in an ecosystem characteristic of a particular people' (Keesing 1981:68). This is only one of the countless definitions given to this term which is 'surprisingly' and 'notoriously' difficult to define due to its dynamic nature (Smith and Riley 2011). Underlying dimensions characterising early and modern Europe, such as the economic situation of specific countries and humanitarian crises may be determining factors by which its collectivist culture has been constantly in flux, particularly in its production and consumption. One would question the affects which these factors may have on the transmission of traditional and popular European cultures and if their core components are, in fact, inherited or invented. Since such arguments may lead to highly theoretical discourse which limits a more 'down-to-earth' discussion, additional supplementary questions were proposed to provide (i) additional focus to the conference and (ii) a more practical framework that will enable the implementation of suggestions and ideas from conference presenters and delegates. Topics related to community behaviour cultural authenticity, community identity, EU dimension, innovation and cultural and social legacy were directly or indirectly addressed during the two-day conference held between the 7-9 November 2018 at the University of Malta, Valletta Campus.

The Content

The first article is authored by Karsten Xuereb, who served as Executive Director of the Valletta 2018 Foundation until June 2017. The author is a researcher in Cultural Diplomacy, and this is well reflected in his writings. Here Xuereb argues how culture is not immune to political influence by governmental bodies who often seek to propagate their ideologies through activities which, may sometimes be superficial, with little consideration to cultural legacy, and as he puts it, may contribute toward the 'gradual erosion of cultural capital' (Xuereb 2019). Xuereb provides examples of

a number of Valletta 2018 projects, notably the regeneration of the Old Market (Is-suq L-antik) and the part-regeneration of Straight Street (Strada Stretta) which, according to him, were a missed opportunity in terms of cultural legacy and community regeneration. He argues that such development 'would outweigh commercial interests and gentrification' and as such, 'there seem to have been a false dawn' about the regeneration of both tangible and intangible Maltese heritage through the title of Valletta as European Capital of Culture.

Similarly, Bill Chambers looks at the legacy left by Liverpool 2008 from a more empirical point of view. The author presents the outcome of structured interview carried out with seven key stakeholders which were directly or indirectly involved in the Liverpool 2008 ECOC process. Chambers argues that almost all stakeholders had their 'political' agendas; however there seem to be a general agreement that most of the activities carried out as part of this large-scale event were key to the overall regeneration of this city. This success also led to a continuing government support at local level and hence the on-going upkeep of cultural, social, infrastructural and financial elements in Liverpool.

Carmel Cassar presents a detailed analysis of Valletta's early modern cultural History. The author illustrates how human resources and talent which was present on the Maltese islands from the 16th century onward had in fact 'revolutionised' the life of the community living here. This also had a direct affect on their culture which, by then, started experiencing a continuous influx of novel behavioural, artistic, and infrastructural elements that eventually became the blueprint of most of the Maltese community.

The study presented by Noel Buttigieg, Marie Avellino and George Cassar seeks to identify the common factor of local culinary heritage, foodscapes and the regeneration of cities. The authors investigate restaurant outlets setting from a geographical point of view vis-à-vis the service, or rather, the type of cuisine they specialise in. Buttigieg et al. argue that Mata's culinary culture has, in the past couple of decades, seen a notable revival; however, they question the actual local interest that might contribute towards the conservation of local cuisine. The arguments are further enhanced by an important example which was also mentioned by Karsten Xuereb, notably the Old Market (Is-suq l-antik). Here the authors deplore that while this should be an important landmark in the Maltese culinary culture, having served as a food market until the early 90s, today the newly regenerated infrastructure comprises restaurant outlets specialising in international cuisine and a high-end food store. The article ends with two open-ended questions, namely: Does Is-Suq tal-Belt and other spaces used for the consumption of food in a social context embody Maltese culture? What does this re-appropriation mean?

The article authored by Hans-Peter Degn et al. draws directly from the presentation delivered during the UNEECC Malta conference and refers to the results and discussions published in the ECOC evaluation report for Aarhus 2017. The content here is an unedited version of (i) the summary and (ii) chapter 7 of the same report, i.e. ARHUS 2017 – BEFORE DURING AFTER. Degn et al., 2018, pp.7-11 and pp. 142-158. Chapter seven of this report discusses the impacts of the ECOC title for Aarhus in 2017 on several components, such as local and national culture, the creative industries, funding, cultural evolution and research. The research was based on both qualitative and quantitative study carried out with key stakeholders. The Editors of these proceedings were given permission from the authors of the aforementioned publication to include parts of it tale quale for ease of reference – the presenter believes that this information shall provide the readers of this book with deeper knowledge and context on recent European Capitals of Culture and their contribution toward a number of cultural elements

Jean-Paul Baldacchino writes about a specific dance type in Malta, i.e. Argentinian Tango, as an important component in identifying origins and reproductions of cultures and identities. The author, who is a cultural anthropologist, argues that culture is a hybrid, i.e. it can be invented and inherited. The study which draws from ethnographic research conducted with the Malta Argentinian Tango community seeks to 'draw out the difference between a question of cultural origins and transmission viewed from a political dimension and the question of culture in terms of its more mythological aspects'. Baldacchino writes about the main characteristics of Argentinian Tango and how those engaging in such activities share the same ritual language, narrative and soundscape.

In their article, Zsolt Kovács, László I. Komlósi et al. present a study on two separate bids submitted by the Hungarian city of Győr for the title of European Capital of Culture. The authors argue that despite both attempts were not successful, the efforts put into the pre-selection phase, including governance strategies, planning, reviewing of cultural policies and other elements which supported these bids, allowed the local administration in Győr to raise awareness and strengthen the cultural influence among its people and, as such, positively impacted the lives of the community living here. The theoretical framework of this study was based on the original Triple Helix Model and how this was later replaced by the Quadruple Helix Model so as to include key objectives that would enhance the various socio-cultural needs within the community.

The study presented by Bálint Filep and László I. Komlósi looks at the extent to which cultural values within the European countries are somehow reflected within the Higher Education sector. The article which takes a very systematically form takes the reader through key events in the History of Europe, such as Melina Mercouri's

work to designate a capital of culture each year and the *Magna Charta Universitatum Europaeum* to the setting up of Erasmus programmes. The chronological section is followed by a brief analysis and discussion which argues that university communities may be the catalyst in promoting cultural empowerment in a socio-cultural space by increasing their cooperation with key stakeholders. In their conclusion the authors stress the importance of trans-disciplinary interaction and cooperation, particularly between academic institution and the general public.

Margerita Pule provides the reader with a down-to-earth piece of writing that stems from her experience as Programme Coordinator at the Valletta 2018 Foundation. She argues that participatory art projects may indeed serve as a democratisation tool in the co-creation of culture, citizen participation, common discussion and free and creative thought. Pule' puts forward the problem that an ECOC programme may face if this is left in the hands of politicians. The reader may find strong similarities with Karsten Xuereb's article. Here, the author suggests that the European Commission should come up with a useful governance framework which protects the title of European Capital of Culture from party politics.

Maria Mininni takes us through the recent history of Matera and how this served as an important international case study following WWII, particularly with regard to town planning and infrastructure, economy and socio-cultural elements. The author discusses the degradation of *I Sassi di Matera* following the Agrarian reform of the 1970s and how it rose 'victor' when winning a contest in the mid-1970 thanks to the strong cultural values of its community and eventually the designation of UNESCO world heritage site in 1993. The author investigates the role that a medium-sized town like Matera can have in Europe today particularly following additional exposure given through the title of ECOC. Mininni argues that this opportunity can further promote the human capital of a town so as to contribute toward its sustainability – higher education institutions such as the University of Basilicata can provide the right platform by which the towns like Matera and its people are provided with the right opportunities.

Editing this conference proceedings has surely allowed me to further understand that culture is a process, that can be both invented and inherited. It had to be an overarching topic such as that of the European Capitals of Culture that allowed me to obtain new understanding into the cultural reality in Europe. The writing of this publication has been made possible thanks to the authors and the UNeECC board who entrusted me with the editing of the proceedings.

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Culture: Invented or Inherited?

Harmony, Dissonance, Silence: A Journey through European Capitals of Culture

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Abstract

In her 2013 European Cultural Foundation award-winning research on governing heritage dissonance in the Balkans, Višnja Kisić notes how recent EU heritage policy is inspired by the definition of heritage as expressed by the Faro Convention, while reproducing cohesion and integration models inherited from nineteenth-century national agendas. She claims that the intrinsic value of European heritage in search of a common identity on the continent, its instrumental value for economic development, and its social value in seeking a sense of belonging oscillates between jingoistic political discourse and open-ended interpretative efforts towards our cultural identities.

Therefore, is culture invented or inherited? As argued by David Lowenthal on numerous occasions, the fabrication of heritage entails both activities. In 1983, Hobsbawm and Ranger reminded us that what determines the selection of heritage to be cherished and what is innovated upon depends on who is carrying out the process of the interpretation of history and the management of culture. And for what purpose.

The European Capital of Culture programme of the EU is a piece of invented cultural heritage in itself, with various instrumental uses. Over more than thirty years, the various governance structures implementing the process of celebrating European culture at trans-European, national and local levels have varied greatly, with regenerative, economic priorities struggling to accommodate and respect social needs and sensitivities. In recent years, the branded profile of the programme has also attracted greater political attention by the authorities. In doing so, it has arguably strained to balance localised and at times even exclusionary communitarianism with a vision for diversity, inclusion and social engagement that is underpinned by mutual respect and openness towards each other. At times, it seems to have followed the populist flow, rather than inspired people to stem it. At others, it has offered us glimpses of a Europe that truly values cultural, and hence human, rights.

Key words: Cultural heritage, European Capital of Culture, European Union, legacy, Malta

Introduction

Forgotten history, forgotten legacy, / Facts of the past sure can influence our future / "Fore they can face the truth, my people fades to black / Back against the wall, living in a world in war. / Ignorance the number one cause of death / Knowledge and faith the only wealth worth collecting / Culture saved from the shade, Black slaves finally free.[1]

These powerful lines are taken from the winner of the Pulitzer prize for music in 2018, Black American hip hop artist Kendrick Lamar. In many of his lyrics, Lamar reflects on the legacy of slavery and colonialism in relation to Blacks in America, in many ways recalling those of Black American writer of Nigerian origin Teju Cole. Lamar's reflections gain poignancy in the light of, or shall we say, in the shadow of, the populist, divisive and un-illuminated politics of Donald Trump. It is intimated that Mark Twain had claimed that there are rhythmic re-occurrences in history. Maybe this is particularly so when song is involved. Indeed, it is ironic that Lamar's lyrics in the song *All the Stars*, a global hit accompanying the filmic representation of the Marvel Comics character *Black Panther*, should recall the words of Matthew Arnold.

In what is a controversial figure today, on the one hand, Arnold embodies "all ye need to know" on earth, to quote Keats, as a Victorian towering figure that channelled the lessons of both the Enlightenment as well as its opposite reaction, Romanticism, in a life dedicated to the pursuit and practice of knowledge and culture. On the other, he is severely criticised for representing conservative and elitist approaches to betterment and education, asserting a firm belief in a canon of what should be considered as worth classifying as culture. In these final lines from *Dover Beach*, Arnold captures his fears at the rising tide of ignorance, and the threat this poses to humanity:

> *Ah, love, let us be true / To one another! for the world, which seems*
> *To lie before us like a land of dreams, / So various, so beautiful, so new,*
> *Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, / Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;*
> *And we are here as on a darkling plain / Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,*
> *Where ignorant armies clash by night.*[2]

[1] https://soundssobeautiful.net/2018/02/14/kendrick-lamar-sza-all-the-stars-meaning-highlight-of-the-african-civilization/ [accessed 20 July 2018].
[2] https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43588/dover-beach [accessed 20 July 2018].

It is maybe no surprise that Welsh left-wing cultural critic Raymond Williams, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, described the word culture as "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language." He says, "this is so partly because of its intricate historical development, in several European languages, but mainly because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought." (1976: 76). This is one of the main strengths of culture, in the way it need not be resolved according to the definitions or constructs of one school of thought or practice as opposed to another. Culture infuses the diversity of meanings and understandings in people, and may be said not only *not* to conform to one definition instead of another, but actively resist efforts to confine it.[3]

Indeed, such forces may take forms that are diametrically opposed. On the one hand, political regimes have inspired, and sometimes dictated, approaches to culture that exclude through efforts at classification and hierarchy. As we shall be seeing, the tools employed by fascist regimes, renewed today by populist forces, aim to hide the fact that our skin colour is exactly that, skin-deep, and that deep down in our genes and formation, we are all human beings.[4] On the other, the populist approach also launches its own democratic rhetoric by preaching accessibility, anti-intellectualism and a criticism of the elite, in order to establish a legacy of mindlessness and celebration, with an agenda of its own.

In light of what we witness in many countries around the world, including those led by governments practising democracy or pretending to do so, in the year 2000 the Italian artist Fabrizio Loschi coined the term "democratura", fusing democracy and dictatorship by reflecting on the way populism has infiltrated democracy by claiming to speak for the people.[5] In a local context, the cultural sector is not immune. For instance, one recalls the frequent salvos of the leadership of the arts council and artistic direction of the European capital of culture organisation against elitism and intellectualism in the arts. At the same time, in an exercise of political convenience and connivance, criticism received is criticised back for not respecting what is claimed to be freedom of speech. Within this travesty of the liberty of expression, for instance, a former Prime Minister of Malta, who had campaigned against Malta joining the European Union, and is now a Member of the European Parliament, claimed it was those who criticised the leadership of the European capital of culture in Malta for acting as a divise element against the practice of European

[3] Adriano Favole makes a strong case for this perspective on a global level in his 2018 publication based on his Polynesian experience in *Vie di Fuga: Otto passi per uscire dalla propia cultura.* Milano: UTET.

[4] This argument was made during Why do Humans have Different Coloured Skin? in CrowdScience on the BBC World Service during the programme broadcast on 16 July 2018: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3cswvwt [accessed 20 July 2018].

[5] http://gazzettadimodena.gelocal.it/modena/cronaca/2015/03/14/news/democratura-la-parola-l-ho-inventata-io-15-anni-fa-1.11043063 [accessed 20 July 2018].

values who were not expressing European sentiments, since they were not allowing for the principle of the freedom of expression in the first place.[6]

Nevertheless, as has been shown by cultural critics like Richard Hewison and Jim McGuigan in the context of New Labour's capitalisation of culture in the UK a few years ago, culture is no one's plaything or domain; rather, it has a tendency to inspire, and hit back.

Recalling a scene of great postcolonial significance in *Black Panther*, a young Black American, who we soon discover to be one of the protagonists of the story, tells the curator of an exhibit of Black African artefacts in what we may take to be the British Museum, that she should not be surprised if, after the colonialists having pillaged the works more than a century earlier, it was now time these were taken back.

The Governance of Legacy

In April 2018, the Maltese Minister for Culture launched yet another board of cultural governance. This time, the matters to be supervised and directed were related to the intangible heritage of Malta.[7] This board was specifically put up to safeguard the intangible heritage of the Maltese people, with a view to develop a series of initiatives with which to raise the recognition of Malta's intangible heritage through the appropriate UNESCO label. At a half-day seminar in March launching the call for citizens to submit proposals for consideration by the board for evaluation and the development of bids to UNESCO, there seemed to a gap in competence between Marina Calvo Pérez, invited to support Maltese preparations by the Ministry for Culture, and members of the local team.

One may argue that such a gap is exactly why people with international expertise are routinely invited to inspire and advise local teams on matters of high-profile, be they UNESCO heritage applications or the European Capital of Culture. In the case described here, the gap seemed to lie in a basic conception and understanding of the value of intangible heritage. The value of our heritage lies in what it means to us. Whether the heritage is tangible or intangible, what we feel is of value is that something special that we invest in the structure, site or monument, on the one hand, and the ritual, celebration or festivity, on the other. As, Paolo Brusasco, an authority on Middle Eastern archaeology, has pointed out, the loss of one or the other matters not only intrinsically, that is, in the value it carries in and of itself, but

[6] The incident refers to the comments by the chairperson of the Valletta 2018 Foundation ridiculing the memory of slain investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Calizia on the occasion of public revelry marking St Patrick"s Day in Malta in February 2018, drawing condemnation on an international scale: http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2018-07-12/local-news/Micallef-would-not-have-kept-his-position-Bonnici-refuses-to-denounce-comments-at-Dutch-grilling-6736193317 [accessed 20 July 2018].

[7] http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2018-03-22/local-news/Board-set-up-to-implement-national-intangible-cultural-heritage-policy-6736186737 [accessed 20 July 2018].

in the lives of the people and the communities that shared a bond with that outward sign of culture and civilisation.

Losing my Religion

The establishment of such a board may seem most appropriate during the European Capital of Culture year in Malta. As Mario Vella, front man for the popular and unruly alternative music band *Brikkuni*, charged the chairperson of the Valletta 2018 Foundation with, one of the two legacies the capital of culture efforts can be really said to have established has been the gradual erosion of cultural capital in Valletta. The most significant aspect of the onslaught on the city has been the development of close to one hundred boutique hotels that now dot the small city. One may argue there is nothing wrong with the economic revival of Valletta. One may argue otherwise. This is so particularly when one takes in consideration the numerous restaurants and bars that have, with legal blessing, taken over much public space in many roads and on pavements up and down the city.

Possibly, the development which best symbolises the encroachment of space is *Is-Suq tal-Belt*, the site of which is the old market right next to the old Grandmaster's Palace, now the Valletta palace of the President of the Republic. In an episode that attracted the attention of activists and artists alike, the space in front of the market was clearly sign-posted as being private property, to the indignation, as well as hilarity, of those who by May still assumed that the careful urban development of the city would outweigh commercial interests and gentrification. A close-second to *Is-Suq* is arguably Strait Street. The one-time sleepy and seedy depository of memories of knightly duels and war-time cheap entertainment has been elevated to a glorified cross-roads of pubs and restaurants, all the while fiercely claiming its difference from the more popular and unpretentious night-spot that is Paceville.

Humorously, this fetish for nostalgia recalls the Italian 1961 comedy film *Totò, Peppino e la Dolce Vita*, directed by Sergio Corbucci, where the not-so-secret lover of a political official, called Magda, from the smart side of Trastevere, played by later erotic horror star Rosalba Neri, falls in love with star comedian Totò's poor habitation, described as "lercio", or filthy, in a way that substitutes repulsion or the objective assessment of a poor situation with fascination. The social situation of the poor lodgers is barely taken into consideration, as the girl and the opportunist politician move on. Totò's dreams for some intervention to take place go unfulfilled. However, given the relentless approach to regeneration, accompanied by gentrification, that has been adopted by many cities worldwide, one better be careful about what one wishes for.

In a rare case of self-awareness and critique broadcast by ARTE, one of the artistic directors of Valletta 2018 and respected cultural personality Giuseppe

Schembri Bonaci, noted how the economic development of the city has run amok with its cultural dimension.[8] He feels it is the duty of people like him to try to put this right by re-establishing some form of balance through an innovative approach towards the arts.

In an exercise that addressed the planned and economically enabled destruction of swathes of tangible and intangible heritage in Malta, a small project by an equally small group of artists and activists made a clear statement on the newly degraded state of many village cores, choosing the once tranquil back streets of Sliema as their site. *Il-Kamra ta" Barra* turned gutted traditional houses inside out, by re-creating the entrance of old family abodes on the street, amid the new architecture of cranes, concrete slabs and swirling dust. The collective Parking Space Events collaborated with Margerita Pulè, who is the person who coordinated the cultural programme for the European capital of culture, before, like yours truly, bearing the brunt of institutional and political bullying and being dismissed unceremoniously a few weeks after having secured the Melina Mercouri prize from the European Commission, and a few months before the start of the year.

In true Melania Trump fashion, or biblical ways in one prefers to stay closer to heritage matters, one may as well say, "oh well", shake off the dust, that from construction sites included, and move on. The occurrence of the European Year of Cultural Heritage during this same year has added poignancy to the contemporary climate.

Not missing this opportunity either, another act of art activism by Pulè targeted the irony of this circumstance, inviting people to reflect on the way we are treating our heritage.[9]

The problem of Solutionism

In the earlier phase of the development of the Nazi regime in Germany, Hitler was wont to lend an ear to the fantastical discoveries of researchers into the Aryan race through the *Volk* mythology of the superior German race traced back to ancient times and legendary places like Tibet. With time, the *Führer* mistrusted such links, evidently missing the irony of thinking they were insane, but the influence on the construction of identity through pageantry in sports and cultural events had made its mark. The excesses of Nuremberg, Munich and Berlin as well as the megalomaniac architectural projections by Albert Speer influenced many more leaders and have

[8] ARTE. 2018. "Valletta Metropolis" https://www.arte.tv/en/videos/083060-000-A/valletta/ , 3:05 [accessed 17 July 2018].

[9] Margerita Pulè runs the blog www.projectdisintegration.org which collects various of her projects of this critical nature. One particularly apt reflection was provoked by an urban action she managed inviting people to engage with "Not The European Year of Cultural Heritage" and the disregard of heritage as Malta's contribution [accessed 17 July 2018].

served as inspiration to manifestations of ostentation up till today.[10] When commenting on this particular historic episode in *Foucault's Pendulum,* Umberto Eco's quip "When did we ever invent anything?" is apt.[11] Such projects achieve a great deal of attraction and influence thanks to the actualisation of ideas and initiatives, developing an interesting tension between, on the one hand, the intention and motivation, and on the other, the end result. The setting up of an industry of *panem et circenses* takes a great deal of work and organisation.

In a local context, it is worth invoking the regeneration of the entrance to Valletta, and particularly Triton Fountain Square. Retrospectively, it is ironic to note that a gate built in Fascist fashion gave way to a prime area for political adulation, as witnessed during the last 1st May celebrations organised by the current government. On the level of spectacles, the example of the Valletta Pageant of the Seas and the Valletta Green Festival, both flagship capital of culture projects, make for a similarly interesting analysis.

These shallow transpositions of a set of island traditions, those of Great Britain and Sicily, to Malta, recalls what contemporary cultural critic Shannon Jackson stated in April 2018 during her keynote speech at Aarhus University referring to Stefan Kaegi's analysis of historical re-enactments.[12] Kaegi says that on such occasions the signifier may be greater than the signified or, in other words, where the event creating the representation of tradition is the meaning of itself, there is little actual value to be found in the way people may relate to the event as a vector of intangible heritage in relation to a historical happening, or context, of recognised importance. David Lowenthal *accepts* that heritage is "not a testable or even plausible version of our past; it is a *declaration of faith* in that past" (1998: 7-8). Therefore, if crafting the means of celebrating a recreation of the past comes through *others"* heritage models, particularly colonial, Lowenthal's claim that "heritage fosters exhilarating fealties" points us towards neocolonial allegiances being reinforced, rather than assessed or even challenged (7).

Clearly, there are different degrees and kinds of cultural instrumentalisation. As noted by critics of cultural governance at European level such as Jeremy Valentine (2018) and Clive Barnett (2001), the influence of New Management Economy praxis on culture within the EU has resulted in growing bureaucratisation and the semblance of much being done, while little being achieved. They recall Zygmunt Bauman"s analysis (2004) of Theodor Adorno's reflections (1991) on the strained relationship between the arts and management, and the love-hate pull-push relationship which draws the two together, while being unable to subsume cultural expression to

[10] Richard, L. (2006) *Le Nazisme et la Culture.* Bruxelles: Complexe.
[11] https://info-buddhism.com/Nazis-of-Tibet-A-Twentieth-Century-Myth_Engelhardt.html [accessed 20 July 2018].
[12] http://conferences.au.dk/culturesofparticipation2018/keynote-speakers/ [accessed 20 July 2018].

administration and strategic use, even if well intention, without depleting the richness of what lies inside.

In reflecting on his travails at Auschwitz in *Se questo è un uomo*, Primo Levi recounts at length the "absurd precision" (1958: 14) that one "gets used to" as one is led by a functional regime and absorbed by the will to survive. In dishing out cultural activities, the wood is often missed for the trees. While governors and administrators may emphasise the technical details, a great deal is gotten away with on the levels of vision, education and challenging cultural expression against mediocrity and mimesis. Speaking of delusions of grandeur, one may speak of a great deal of "sound and fury, / Signifying nothing", recalling Shakespeare's Macbeth.

In a recent analytical text on the lack of value and of delivering any tangible outcomes through a great deal of technical preparation and what is described as "solutionism" Marina Garcés (2017: 8) notes how: "Education, knowledge and science sink, today, in a loss of prestige. They can resurface only if they can show they can offer workable, technical and economic solutions. Solutionism is the alibi of a knowledge that has lost the attribution of making us better, as people and as a society. We no longer believe this is possible, and therefore only ask for solutions and more solutions. We do not believe we can improve ourselves, but only gain more or less privileges in a span of time that goes nowhere, because we have given up on aiming for a better future."[13]

To pursue the references to Nazi perverse solutionism in the context of this paper, a reference to the 1977 comedy by Mino Guerrini *Von Buttiglione Sturmtruppenführer* is apt. In a hilarious scene, yet terrifying for its depiction of pointless precision, a series of soldiers play out their duties in ridiculous circumstances, but with admirable efficiency, until the whole thing falls apart.

What is also "admirable" is the sense of purpose and determination that emanates enthusiasm in efficiently dispatching duties that are set by leaders on their subordinate officials to complete a task. In *Il cavaliere inesistente*, Italo Calvino narrates the story of someone of literally no substance, but whose lack is made up for through enough will and force rooted in a belief in others. Early on in the novel (2001: 17), while inspecting his knights outside the walls of Paris, Charlemagne realises Agilulfe, the inexistent knight in question, is empty within his shiny, white armour, and tells him:

"And how do you see to your duties, since you are not there?

[13] "La educación, el saber y la ciencia se hundan también, hoy, en un desprestigio del que solo pueden salvarse si se muestran capaces de ofrecer soluciones laborales, soluciones técnicas, soluciones económicas. El solucionismo es la coartada (alibi) de un saber que ha perdido la atribución de hacernos mejores, como personas y como sociedad. Ya no creemos en ello y por eso le pedimos soluciones y nada màs que soluciones. No contamos ya con hacernos mejores a nosotros mismos sino solamente en obtener màs o menos privilegios en un tiempo que no va a ninguna parte, porque ha renunciado a apuntar a un futuro mejor."

- On the strength of my will, Your Highness, said Agilulfe, and my faith in the holiness of our cause!".[14]

The dedication of acolytes to the fulfilment of daydreams, as opposed to visions, that may turn to nightmares, offers interesting insights into the study of human behaviour.

When fabricating and posting a news item on an incredible number of people attending one of this year's capital of culture events in Valletta, the reactions were widely varied. Some assumed it must be true, especially when bearing the title of the newspaper that supports the party in government. Others saw through the joke, but did not know what to make of it, or spoil the fun. Others were offended and even worried as this stretching of trust; when a journalist from the newspaper called me to verify what lay behind the story, he said his editor asked him to do so after tens of people called their office to express their unease, outrage or dismay.

The Abuse of Tradition

In *La crise de la culture*, Hannah Arendt writes "Or nous vivons, à l'âge moderne, l'usure de la tradition, *la crise de la culture*" (1972). This roughly translates to "Our modern age is one that abuses tradition, leading us to a crisis of culture." The original title of this 1954 text in English is interesting: *Between Past and Future*. I am referring to this *folio essais* version in French due to a particular circumstance: I happened to come across this small yet dense book at the *Giber Jaune* book-haven, rather than bookshop, in Paris near the Rive Gauche, during a brief yet restorative break, with my Francophile father and daughter, following my dismissal from my managerial duties addressing the European Capital of Culture last year. The irony of the title did not go amiss, and its influence has prolonged the soothing effect of those cool, Parisian afternoons.

According to Quartz, in its own description "a guide to living well in the new global economy", Arendt, became "the go-to thinker to cite" in 2017 as Americans struggled to come to make sense of Trump's presidency. Arendt acted as a reference point since she is mostly known for her 1951 work *The Origins of Totalitarianism* which dissects the rise of Nazism and Stalinism in the 20th century. Quartz notes how the "Arendt frenzy" was first noticeable just days after Trump's January inauguration, when this book sold out on Amazon. In March 2017, Roger Berkowitz, who founded and runs the Hannah Arendt Center, reported "an unprecedented surge of over 100 new memberships" in a piece for the *LA Review of Books*, adding that "our virtual reading group on *The Origins of Totalitarianism* has more than doubled in size." The interest kept going during the rest of the year (Goldhill 2017).

[14] "Et comment vous acquittez-vous de vos charges, vu que vous n'y êtes pas? - À force de volonté, Sire, dit Agilulfe, et de foi en la sainteté de notre cause!"

“Notre héritage n’est précédé d’aucun testament.” Arendt describes this aphorism by war-time Resistance poet René Char as one of the most abrupt such phrases and a distillation of four years of struggle by a generation of European writers and thinkers. (1972: 11). Arendt describes the shock this elite experienced at the fall of France to Nazi Germany and its new leadership being made of a band of “fools, scoundrels and imbeciles”. The strain of incompetence and ill intentions continued in post-war leaders who helped establish and oversaw a political and economic model that distanced public responsibility from private gain and duped citizens into a “sad thickness”. Arguably, this political manipulation made extensive use of cultural means, whereby the main institutions responsible for culture lulled most people into a comfortable routine of dependence on publicly-funded, popular and easily accessible events practising the Roman dictum of “bread and circuses.” In order to get up, stand up, and not give up the fight, to paraphrase another twentieth-century icon of resistance, Bob Marley, René Char believed he should take action to preserve his “treasure”, namely the “truth” he had discovered through experience. This truth consisted of the ability to “go naked”, that is, to remove the masks one wore because imposed by society, or when one felt a mask could offer protection from public attacks.

According to Arendt, it is the absence of this treasure, of truth, that leads to our heritage having been left to us without a testament. Generally, a testament tells the inheritor, or inheritors, what will be theirs by right. In doing so, it assigns a past to the future. On the other hand, without a testament, therefore, without the basis of a tradition that chooses what to transmit and conserve and that points out the treasures and their value, the continuity in time breaks down. Arendt argues that, “humanly speaking”, such a situation erases both the past and the future. Without any relevance assigned, recognised and respected, the present revels in a repeated cycle that is ignorant of what lay before, and of the possibilities that may have lay ahead (1972:14).

This poster refers to the perception of left-wingers of the new Italian government appointed in June 2018. The references are to fascism as an attitude to public life with partial, selective readings of society and convenient critical analyses, if at all and when applicable. Is the role of public intellectuals in European society today, arguably diminished, an element in the shift towards extremist positions expressed by people with different roles to play in society, from political leaders to common citizens?

In the preface to his 1998 collection of essays addressing hyperreality called *Faith in Fakes*, Umberto Eco asserts the tradition of European intellectuals, as opposed to American ones, to take to newspapers to comment about a number of issues, including politics. Some bemoan the loss of titans like Camus and Sartre

writing in post-war France, as well as recent towering figures like Zygmunt Bauman. Eco asserts his belief in writing as being a "political duty" (1998: ix). He claims that "sometimes you have to speak because you feel the moral obligation to say something" (x). In describing American shrines of memorabilia such as President Lyndon Johnson's mausoleum in Texas, Eco notes how such excesses of affirmation, in defiance of a *horror vacuii*, allow for the building of "fortresses of solitude" that propagates cultish, fetishist modes of celebration of one person and their quirks, following "a philosophy of immortality as duplication" (6). In a way, these acts seem to serve as monuments to self-aggrandisement, and provide clones to clowns. Eco also notes how, in order to make up for the fear of leaving a gap, a great deal of emphasis is put by governing and commercial agencies alike on propagating a message in the faith of "more". It is therefore with great irony that one interprets the campaign of Visitmalta, the national tourism campaign managed by the Malta Tourism Authority, declaring "Malta *is* More" (my italics).

The Force of the Past Is in Its Future

Considering Arendt allows one to perceive the past as a force for the future (1972: 20). As intimated by Višnja Kisić, the force lies in an awareness of what makes us who we are in terms of diversity and dissonance, and not to paper over difference and evoke fantastical monolithic and persuasive narratives of homogeneity.

Two years ago Rebecca Comay, Professor of Philosophy and Comparative Literature and the Director of the Program in Literary Studies at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Toronto, practised an interesting reversal of Char's formula. Hence, she asked:

"What if the predicament is not intestacy, as Arendt suggests, but rather a kind of hyper-testamentarity – not a *deficit* but a *surfeit* of testamentary protocol? It is not that the thread has been broken and the family jewels scattered and inaccessible. On the contrary: we are overwhelmed by a surfeit of testamentary material. The past confronts us as a thicket of imperatives, injunctions, promises, exhortations, incitements, excitations – obscure messages from the dead, unsigned and undated but nonetheless time-stamped and indelibly addressed to us. What if the testament itself were the heritage – or rather, if there were no heritage, no patrimonial estate to settle, but only the pressure of a demand as enigmatic as it is insistent?"

With reference to his second *Thesis on History* on a secret covenant between the dead and the living, Comay explores some of the manifestations of this testamentary excess in the context of Walter Benjamin"s writings on history.[15]

[15] https://oca.no/news/8846/_our-heritage-was-left-to-us-withouta-testament-or-is-it-the-other-way-around_lecture-by-r [accessed 20 July 2018].

Therefore, maybe the force of the past lies in learning how to innovate, how to change with change. On the one hand, acknowledging Lampedusa's abused quote about changing everything in order to keep things the same. On the other, to take a key out of T.S. Eliot's exploration of the theme of mastery and escape, and apply our learning to develop fault-lines in structures that may seem powerful due to the forgetfulness that their darkness imposes. Like Edmond Dantès listening to Abbé Faria in Alexandre Dumas" *The Count of Monte Cristo*, it is worth lending one's ears, and solidarity, to those that have preceded us, even in prison conditions, and develop a chance to break out.

If, while trying, like the ill-fated gang in Mario Monicelli's post-war social comedy *I Soliti Ignoti*, the break does not lead to a bank vault, but to the kitchen of an elderly couple in a deserted summertime Rome, helping oneself to *maccaroni* doused in fresh tomato sauce is not a bad ending either.

In a posthumous transmission on the Italian state culture channel Radio3 celebrating the memory of art critic Gillo Dorfles,[16] in answering a question about what the most important thing about the future will be, he affirms that this is "studying the past." Indeed, let's study it, and open it up with curiosity and enthusiasm.

On this note, Adriano Favole notes how "human cultures are slightly cross-eyed: with one eye they look at the past and nurture dreams of identity; with the other they look at the future and develop projects" (2018: 15).

Indeed, societies sometimes look at the idealised past to make up for the vacant present and a lacklustre future.

Written in what Andrew Gallix describes as "the shadow of Brexit and Trump", *Retrotopia* is Zygmunt Bauman's last, posthumously published work.[17] In it he reaffirms that a loss of faith in society"s perfectibility is one of the main distinctions between the "solid" and "liquid" phases of modernity. He argues that the "emancipation of power from territory" has led nation states, with increasingly "porous" borders, to fail in fulfilling their traditional functions. This political impotence, compounded by the rapid pace of change, has redirected the utopian impulse towards the "space of collective memory". People take refuge in the past because it can be "remodelled at will", thus providing the "blissful omnipotence lost in the present".

Conclusion

It is not amiss to conclude this exploration of the value of heritage by seeking a sense of serenity akin to what Victor, the young Ukrainian protagonist in Andrey Kurkov's

[16] https://www.raiplayradio.it/audio/2018/05/LA-GRANDE-RADIO---Gillo-Dorfles-il-divenire-della-critica-de796104-9db7-4ce0-8230-8b25ebac45ae.html [accessed 20 July 2018].

[17] https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/retrotopia-review-a-heavyweight-thinker-s-flawed-last-work-1.3075548 [accessed 20 July 2018].

satire *Death and the Penguin*, finds in a café in Kiev (2003: 12): "This agreeable café interlude, this stop-off between past and future, over cognac and coffee, induced a mood of romance. No longer did he feel lonely or unhappy. He was a valued customer, satisfying a modest demand for inner warmth. A glass of good cognac and already a flow of warmth in contrary directions: up into his head, down into his legs, and a slowing of thought processes."

It is indeed such a slowing down, if not an actual reversal, that prompts these final reflections. I started this presentation by referring to a recent ministerial intervention. I will conclude with another one. In October 2016 the same minister for culture had welcome more than four hundred guests from all over the world for the World Summit on Arts and Culture organised by the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, better known as IFACCA. The occasion had the feeling of his presiding over a new dawn for cultural relations and the way cultural policy matters were managed in Malta, the result of a process of maturity that Malta, after more than a decade of EU membership, was able to put into practice. Indeed, only a few months later Malta would itself be presiding over the Council of the European Union. Looking back, there seems to have been something of a false dawn about that occasion. The past months have seen a darkening in cultural expression and practice across Europe including Malta, as well as other parts of the world. Authoritarian and opportunistic regimes and populist movements seem to have eroded a solidary and creative citizenship in favour of politics that has focused on economic and financial solutionism, that has proved to be attractive in its opportunism.

Earlier, I mentioned the second of two charges that musician Mario Vella aimed at the chairperson of the Valletta 2018 Foundation in terms of legacy left. I did not mention the first one, as while not lacking validity in cultural, social and political terms, it is rather too colourful to put into words.

Therefore, I will show you this image, reproducing an expressive sketch by Seb Tanti Burlò, because it does not need putting into words. It sums up an idea of where hope may lie. Not literally, but in terms of the young people, artists and activists who are intelligent, smart, ready to research and not afraid of putting these aptitudes and competences together to say it the way it is.

If I may end on a personal note, in my case, absence has *not* made the heart grow fonder. Rather, these past months have allowed time for critical reflection, about oneself, one's responsibilities, and the national and European contexts we inhabit. May the legacy to grow with future European capitals of culture extend this critical approach, of an academic as well as a practical nature. It need not look back in anger, recalling John Osborne and, more recently, Noel Gallagher, but may it not hold back

from tearing inadequate foundations down, and create new, invented traditions if necessary.

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Memories of the Major Cultural Institutions of Liverpool 2008

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Abstract
This paper examines, after 10 years, the memories and opinions of Senior Managers and Chief Executives of the major Cultural Institutions of Liverpool of 2008, their year in the European cultural spotlight.
Key words: Liverpool, cultural institutions, memories, survey, interviews

1. Introduction

Liverpool was the UK's European Capital of Culture in 2008. The year was acclaimed as "The best European Capital of Culture" by the President of the European Union, Jose Manuel Barroso (2015) and as 'surpassing all expectations' by Andy Burnham (2009), the British Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

For the University Network of European Capitals of Culture (UNeECC) annual conference in Aarhus, Denmark in 2017 the author carried out an empirical email survey of the perspectives of a sample of 45 Liverpool citizens from the arts, politics, charity, faith and educational sectors on their memories and perceptions of Liverpool 2008. (Chambers, 2018). For the purposes of this paper, the responses of 16 respondents, from 12 major arts organisations were examined and those of 7 CEOs and Directors of the major arts organisations of Liverpool were used in detail.

2. Interviewees and their organisations

The interviewees were Michael Eakin (ME), Chief Executive of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (RLPO); David Fleming (DF), Director of National Museums Liverpool (NML); Andrea Nixon (AN): Executive Director of the Tate Liverpool; Mike Stubbs (MS), Director/CEO of the Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT); Karen Gallagher (KG), Artistic Director of Merseyside Dance Initiative (MDI); Maureen Bampton (MB), Director of the Bluecoat Display Centre and Emma Smith (ES), Director of the Liverpool Irish Festival (LIF).

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (RLPO) www.liverpoolphil.com

The RLPO was founded in 1840 and is the UK's oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra (Henley and McKernan 2010). It delivers over 80 classical

concerts each season in Liverpool with audiences of more than 370,000. In addition it plays in the north-west and in London at the Proms. It often acts as an Ambassador for Liverpool on international tours which have recently included China, Switzerland, France, Spain, Luxembourg, Germany, Romania, the Czech Republic and Japan. For this it received the Freedom of the City award. It is the largest recipient of Arts Council England funding on Merseyside receiving approximately £10.3m per year.

Michael Eakin has been the Chief Executive since 2008. Previously he had run the Hezagon Theatre, Reading and was then Director of Arts and Leisure at Reading Council before his appointment in 2001 as the Executive Director of the Arts Council England North West.

National Museums Liverpool (NML) www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/

The NML comprises 8 museums and galleries in Liverpool and the Wirral. The first city museum, now called the World Museum, was founded in 1851 and this was followed by the Walker Art Gallery in 1877 and the Lady Lever Art Gallery in 1922. The next addition was in 1980 with the opening of the Maritime Museum, then the International Slavery Museum in 2007 and most recently, in 2011, the Museum of Liverpool. In 2017/8 over 3.3 million visitors were received. The NML is funded by the Department for Digital Media and Sport with an income of £25m in 2017/8.

David Fleming was appointed Director of NML in 2001 and retired in 2018. Since he became Director of National Museums Liverpool audiences have more than quadrupled, rising from around 700,000 per year to more than 3.3 million. He started his museum career as founder-curator of the Yorkshire Museum of Farming, York then became principal keeper at Hull Museums which was followed by 11 years as Director of the Tyne and Wear Museums where he led teams delivering major capital developments and massive audience growth.

Tate Liverpool (TL) www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-liverpool

The Tate comprises a group of art galleries specialising in British and International Modern and Contemporary Art from 1900. The first Tate (in London – now called Tate Britain) opened in 1897, this was followed by the Tate Liverpool in 1988, the Tate St Ives (Cornwall) in 1993 and the Tate Modern (London) in 2000. In 2017 628,000 visits were made to the Tate Liverpool

Andrea Nixon was appointed Executive Director of Tate Liverpool in 2006. She led the management and continued development of the gallery from Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture in 2008 until May 2018. At Tate Liverpool Andrea was responsible for Business Planning, Partnership strategies and delivery, financial management and income generation, HR, Policy development, Governance, Learning and Public Engagement, Fundraising, Marketing, strategic development,

and organisational management. Andrea was Director of Development for the Tate in London from 1998 to 2006 playing a key role in the creation of both Tate Modern and Tate Britain.

The Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT) www.fact.co.uk

FACT is a visual arts organisation. It supports, produces and presents world-class visual art that embraces and explores creative media and digital technology and is a world leading exhibitor and producer of video and digital art. It was opened in 2003 and its premises include a partnership with PictureHouse cinemas. In 2017-8 its income was £2,093,535.

Mike Stubbs was jointly appointed in 2007 with Liverpool John Moores University, where he is Professor of Art, Media and Curating. For 11 years he was the Director/CEO of FACT. He has been a key contributor to the development of culture and cultural policy in Liverpool. As a cofounder of ROOT, Burning Bush and the Abandon Normal Devices festivals, a project of FACT and Cornerhouse, Stubbs has commissioned and produced over 350 exhibitions, interactive, site specific, performative, sound and moving-image based exhibition programmes and artworks. Previously he was Head of Exhibition Programs for the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, a Senior Research Fellow at Jordanstone College of Art and Design Visual Research Centre at the University of Dundee and founding Director of Hull Time Based Arts. He has won more than a dozen major international awards including first prizes at the Oberhausen and Locarno film festivals and an award for his documentary, Cultural Quarter at the Copenhagen International Documentary Festival. In 1999 he was invited to present a video retrospective of his work at the Tate Gallery, London.

Merseyside Dance Initiative (MDI) www.mdi.org.uk

MDI is a dance agency, whose mission is “inspiring people through dance”. It works with partners to create a healthy and vibrant infrastructure for dance and works for "the advancement of public education in the arts of dance and related arts, through producing and promoting dance with artists, audiences and participants.” It was founded in 1993 and had an income in 2017/8 of £213,400.

Karen Gallagher was MDI’s founder and Artistic Director from 1994 until 2018. She has created an organisation with diversity and community at its heart, establishing programmes that support health and wellbeing and social inclusion that encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to dance.

She has received numerous awards including a Music of Black Origin award for MDI’s community dance practice (2010), an MBE for services to dance in The Queen’s New Year Honours List (2012) and in 2018 was celebrated by The Women’s

Organisation as one of 21 Women who shape Liverpool. She has been responsible for nationally significant events, such the British Dance Edition as part of Capital of Culture in 2008 and the Decibel Performance Arts Showcase. (2011). LEAP has become the premier dance festival in the UK. She has also been involved in European projects such as Cultiv8, Capital Nights Festival and the Pan European project The Migrant Body.

Bluecoat Display Centre (BDC) http://www.bluecoatdisplaycentre.com/

The Centre is a contemporary craft and design gallery that has been established since 1959 and as a registered charity since 2010. It was founded to support the contemporary craft infrastructure in the UK by exhibiting and selling work of international quality. Its Mission is the advancement of education for the benefit of the public in contemporary applied art and design by raising the public's aesthetic appreciation and the provision of educational lectures, workshops and exhibitions at the Centre Liverpool.

It sells, exhibits and promotes over 350 selected contemporary craftspeople each year working in a broad variety of media. It also runs a series of outreach workshops with local mental health groups and artist residencies with local hospitals. They have worked with a variety of health and social care partners and local hospitals. This has allowed them to extend their audience to those in the local community who might otherwise not had the opportunity to engage with professional artists or explore their own creativity. Income in 2016/7 was £127,000.

Maureen Bampton has worked in the decorative and applied art for most of her working life, initially in the fields of 19th & 20th century objects and later within the contemporary applied arts and crafts as Director of the Bluecoat Display Centre between 1986 and 2017.

She has advised the Crafts Councils of Ireland and England and acted as an External Examiner in various UK universities and colleges. She was a founder member of CraftNet, and has worked in partnership with the Craft Council on the Hothouse programme of professional development for emerging makers.

She is now involved in freelance art consultancy, archive work, ceramic restoration conservation, antiques and vintage.

Liverpool Irish Festival (LIF) www.liverpoolirishfestival.com

The appreciation and celebration of the unique links between Liverpool and Ireland were primary motives for the creation of the Liverpool Irish Festival in 2003. The idea was to create an annual, event to celebrate the Irish contribution to Liverpool’s cultural identity and heritage. The Festival would include performance, participation,

entertainment and education in Irish traditions, music, literature, theatre, and art and reflect their significance in defining Liverpool as a great European city.

It was initially funded by The Liverpool Culture Company and Arts Council and started in 2003 with 20, largely musical, events spread over 4 days. Events emphasise bold, creative programming, delivering something for everyone and enabling the participation of local people as users and providers of arts and cultural services. It now delivers more than 50 events over 10 days each October attracting an audience of 10,000. Project income in 2017/8 was £52,534.

Emma Smith, former Head of Creative Enterprise at the Bluecoat and Executive Director of LOOK, Liverpool's International Photography Festival, was appointed Director of the Liverpool Irish Festival in 2016. She has extensive experience in multi-stream programming and project management in festivals and cultural organisations.

3. The Questions

Seven simple email questions were asked. These were:

1. What do you consider to have been the single most important benefit/legacy?
2. What do you consider to have been 2 other major benefits/legacies?
3. Which of the 7000 events did you enjoy most? (Apart from one of yours.)
4. What was your biggest disappointment?
5. Give 2 other disappointments.
6. Rate the year on a scale of 1-5 where 1= poor to 5 = excellent.
7. Other comments.

Q1: What do you consider to have been the single most important benefit/legacy?

Three of the respondents spoke of the city regaining its confidence after many decades of economic and social decline. Eakin referred to a renewal of self-confidence of Liverpudlians and Nixon referred to the city regaining its cultural, tourism and marketing confidence. Mike Stubbs talked about the growth in confidence that art could make to the city. Fleming wrote about the improvement of the perception of Liverpool's cultural excellence; Karen Gallagher, of the level of promotion and importance of the arts in the city and Maureen Bampton and Emma Smith of the European and international recognition of Liverpool. Finally, Stubbs discussed the importance of the arts as a potential employer.

Table 1:

Name	Organisation	Comments
Michael Eakin	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra	Liverpool's renewed self-confidence.
David Fleming	National Museums Liverpool	Improved perception of Liverpool's cultural excellence.

Andrea Nixon	Tate Liverpool	Liverpool is getting its cultural, tourism and marketing confidence back.
Mike Stubbs	Foundation	The confidence in art to make a difference to a city and that being an artist or creative is a viable career for a new generation of people living here.
Karen Gallagher	Merseyside Dance Initiative	The level of promotion and profile that arts and culture received in the city.
Maureen Bampton	Bluecoat Display Centre	Raising the profile and importance of the arts and that of Liverpool as a European city.
Emma Smith	Liverpool Irish Festival	Aspiration to see beyond the national view of Liverpool; to raise our game and play internationally …. to keep looking ahead….

Q2: What do you consider to have been 2 other major benefits/legacies?

Several (Eakin, Stubbs and Bampton) spoke again of the improved perception and profile of the city in the UK and internationally. Fleming referred to the financial benefits which allowed him to raise funds for a new museum (The Museum of Liverpool) whilst Stubbs alluded to continued investment in the arts sector.

Most notable however was the recognition of the success of collaborative working across the arts sector. Three major partnerships were identified by 3 of the institutions (Tate, MDI, LIF) as of importance for collaboration, partnerships and joint funding: LARC (Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium) a partnership of the 7 major arts organisations; COOL (Creative Organisations of Liverpool) was formed in 2007 and comprises 32 smaller arts organisations whilst 36 smaller organisations are part of CLIP (Culture Liverpool Investment Programme 2014-19) funded by the City Council to the value of £2,779310 in 2015-6. Whilst not mentioned in the questionnaire survey responses, this partnership working is an extension of the long standing collaboration between these arts organisations and the higher education sector through the City of Learning and Culture Campus networks.

Table 2:

Name	**Organisation**	**Comments**
Michael Eakin	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra	Improved perception of the city elsewhere in the UK; a strengthened cultural sector.
David Fleming	National Museums Liverpool	Enabled NML to raise money for the Museum of Liverpool.
Andrea Nixon	Tate Liverpool	Politicians really understanding the importance of culture to place making; familiarity of cultural organisations working together via LARC and COOL for collective rather than individual benefit.
Mike Stubbs	Foundation for Arts and Creative Technology	International profile for Liverpool; continued investment.

Karen Gallagher	Merseyside Dance Initiative	Ability to engage and produce some world class events; collaboration and development of networks such as COOL and LARC.
Maureen Bampton	Bluecoat Gallery	More international visitors; more appreciation of the arts as a tool for regeneration.
Emma Smith	Liverpool Irish Festival	The development of COOL/LARC Networks and the LCC Clip Funding; ongoing collaboration that put arts and culture at the centre of things.

Q3: Which of the 7000 events did you enjoy most? (Apart from one of yours.)

Apart from high culture end and predictable blockbuster events such as the performance of the Turangalila Symphony by the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Liverpudlian Simon Rattle, the Klimt exhibition at the Tate and the ever-popular Opening Ceremony headlined by Beatle Ringo Starr, the most surprising, most enjoyed event was *One Step Forward, One Step Back* by DreamThinkSpeak in the immense and inspiring Liverpool Cathedral. This, inspired by Dante's Divine Comedy and asking the question 'What is Paradise?' took place in a magical landscape moving through the hidden interiors of the Cathedral whilst accessing views of the surrounding urban landscape.

During the Capital of Culture year it received little local publicity although was well reviewed by the national quality press yet both Michael Eakin of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Andrea Nixon of the Tate considered this to be the most enjoyable event they attended confirming the national press reviews of it as "an extraordinary promenade, unforgettable" (The Independent); "it will sustain you for a lifetime" (The Guardian); "it is transforming and timeless" (The Times) and The Observer which described it as a "fascinating creation by the architecturally inspired *DreamThinkSpeak*".

Other events enjoyed by the Arts Directors and CEOs included the (late) reopening, after refurbishment, of the oldest Grade 1 listed building in Central Liverpool, the Bluecoat Arts Centre (built 1717) and the exhibition by Pipilotti Rist, the leading contemporary Swiss artist, famed for her visually stunning sculptural video installations, major exhibition at FACT with the UK premiere of *Gravity be My Friend* by Mike Stubbs of FACT.

Table 3:

Name	**Organisation**	**Comments**
Michael Eakin	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra	One Step Forward, One Step Back, DreamThinkSpeak. Liverpool Cathedral.
David Fleming	National Museums Liverpool	Can't remember.

Andrea Nixon	Tate Liverpool	One Step Forward, One Step Back, DreamThinkSpeak. Liverpool Cathedral.
Mike Stubbs	Foundation for Art and Creative Technology	Pippilotti Rist new commission/exhibition Gravity be my Friend (FACT); Berlin Philharmonic/Simon Rattle.
Karen Gallagher	Merseyside Dance Initiative	Opening Ceremony.
Maureen Bamford	Bluecoat Gallery	Klimt at the Tate.
Emma Smith	Liverpool Irish Festival	Reopening of the Bluecoat Arts Centre.

Q4: What was your biggest disappointment?

Overall there were few big disappointments and many of those identified said more about the politics of the leaders than widely held views. Michael Eakin would have liked more truly international artists and companies. Presumably his taste in music and venue did not extend to the performance by Paul McCartney at Anfield, the home of Liverpool Football Club!

Two people referred to the timing of events. One (Andrea Nixon) talked of "running out of steam towards the end of the year" and another (Mike Stubbs) talked of congestion of programming. Nixon also referred to the disbanding of the North West Development Agency, a UK government organisation which helped fund regional development and from which Merseyside benefitted.

Strategically there was a comment about the lack of a cultural strategy to follow the Capital of Culture Year by the characteristically critical David Fleming. Karen Gallagher of The Merseyside Dance Initiative commented on the lack of availability of sponsorship following the Capital of Culture Year. (This organisation subsequently lost its major funder, The Arts Council England.) Other random disappointments related to the late completion of the Bluecoat Gallery (Bamford) and another (Emma Smith) was concerned about the lack of job opportunities and low salaries paid to arts professionals and the preference given to national and international artists.

Table 4:

Name	Organisation	Comments
Michael Eakin	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra	Would have liked a few more truly international artists and companies.

David Fleming	National Museums Liverpool	Failure to follow up with a cultural strategy.
Andrea Nixon	Tate Gallery	We all ran out of energy at the end and the NWDA was disbanded in 2010.
Mike Stubbs	Foundation for Art and Creative Technology	Too much programmed in similar periods.
Karen Gallagher	Merseyside Dance Initiative	Lack of sponsorship opportunities post 2008.
Maureen Bampton	Bluecoat Gallery	We could not be in our space because of project delays.
Emma Smith	Liverpool Irish Festival	Lack of job opportunities and salaries to mid-skilled roles: preference given to national/international workers and apprentices and interns.

Q5: Give 2 other disappointments

As mentioned above, there were few other recurrent disappointments identified, at least to the arts leaders of the city. Three of the seven CEOs and Managers could identify no other disappointments (Nixon, Gallagher and Bamford).

In terms of disappointments associated with 2008 and the years leading up the Capital of Culture, one impact which caused disappointment was the 'Big Dig' ie the disruption caused by the roadworks and building activity associated with major developments such as hotel building, Liverpool One Retail Park and the Echo Arena riverside developments (Stubbs).

Subsequent disappointments have included a perceived loss of status compared with neighbouring cities such as Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham (Eakin); a relatively minor national enhancement of the perception of Liverpool (Smith); a failure to fully establish Liverpool as a Human Rights City and maximise the city's status as a World Heritage site (Fleming) and an inability to sustain the same level of expenditure and the continued recognition of the value and importance of culture to the city (Eakin and Stubbs). None of these views were widely held.

Table 5:

Name	**Organisation**	**Comments**
Michael Eakin	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra	We have lost some ground against peer cities in recent years in terms of cultural investment and growth; still some who don't recognise the importance and quality of culture in the city.
David Fleming	National Museums Liverpool	Failure to establish Liverpool as a human rights city; failure to make most of World Heritage Site status.

Andrea Nixon	Tate Liverpool	No response.
Mike Stubbs MS	Foundation for Arts and Creative Technology	Roadworks, city disruption; not able to sustain same level of expenditure in subsequent years.
Karen Gallagher	Merseyside Dance Initiative	No response.
Maureen Bampton	Bluecoat Gallery	No response.
Emma Smith	Liverpool Irish Festival	Arts jobs still vastly underpaid especially in the north and outside of education; national perception only moved fractionally.

Q6: Rate the year on a scale of 1-5 where 1= poor to 5 = excellent

The lowest score allocated to the European Capital of Culture was 4 and the highest was 5. The mean score was 4.6. This, from an experienced and critical group of arts managers is a very positive score.

Other comments

When asked to make other comments on 2008, many positive comments were made. Michael Eakin noted a step change in the city and cultural sector which he attributed to key city leaders and to the ability of the sector to deliver a strong and memorable programme.

Karen Gallagher paid a similar compliment to the vision of the city council for continuing to embed art and culture in their policies and strategies. But David Fleming was concerned about the city being frightened of being strategic in the cultural heritage field (possibly?) because it might conflict with other strategic agendas.

Stubbs saw the year as a great way to build collaborations within the city and across Europe. Similarly, Gallagher thought ECoC had created a positive opportunity to re- present Liverpool as a major City player across the UK. By way of warning, Emma Smith thought Liverpool needed to "think of the damage Brexit may create for our city and that we must make sure our European and Irish population is made to feel continually welcome, represented and expressed through our culture and arts." Stubbs wondered what Liverpool would be like if "we had not won the bid" but concluded it had been "worth moving to Liverpool from Melbourne for the ECoC year." From a totally different perspective Maureen Bampton "loved the way the grass roots people/taxi drivers embraced the year."

Table 6:

Name	Organisation	Comments
Michael Eakin	Royal Liverpool	A step change for the city and the cultural sector; maintained the momentum because of key leaders in the

	Philharmonic Orchestra	city and the sector; the cultural sector delivered a strong and memorable programme.
David Fleming	National Museums Liverpool	Liverpool has been frightened of being strategic especially in the cultural heritage field. Why perhaps because it might conflict with other agendas.
Mike Stubbs	Foundation for Arts and Creative Technology	What would Liverpool be like if we had not won the bid? What a hoot, worth moving from Melbourne to Liverpool. Great way of building collaborations within the city and across Europe.
Karen Gallagher	Merseyside Dance Initiative	ECoC created a positive opportunity to re-present Liverpool as a major City player across the UK and the Liverpool City Council should be applauded for continuing to embed art and culture in their policies and strategies.
Maureen Bampton	Bluecoat Gallery	Liverpool was a model of good practice for the year - loved the way grass roots people/taxi drivers embraced it.
Emma Smith	Liverpool Irish Festival	We need to think of the damage Brexit may create for our city. We must make sure our European and Irish population is made to feel continually welcome, represented and expressed through our culture and arts.

4. Conclusions

The views of the Senior Arts Managers reported in this paper were inevitably subjective and reflected in many ways the personalities, politics and agendas of each individual. However, the conclusions drawn and reported in this paper present a broad cross section of perspectives not dissimilar to the responses reported in the previously published survey of a wider cross section of respondents from a variety of sectors eg education, charity, politics, faith communities (Chambers 2018).

The overwhelming positive perception of the Senior Arts Managers of the ECoC year ten years on was the raising of self-confidence and aspirations of the population, the city council and the cultural organisations.

There was also a general agreement that the perception and reputation of Liverpool both nationally and internationally had been enhanced.

This confirms the views of the wider community reported in Chambers (2018).

More distinctively, it was widely accepted that 2008 had made a convincing case for the view that culture had a significant economic role to play in the city's development.

Also, the key role of collaboration and partnership between and within the city and the cultural organisations was recognised.

As was the acknowledgement of the importance of the continuing political support of the City Council and its leaders.

Finally, the ability of the arts to provide an economically viable career opportunity in all sectors except arts in education, in all regions except in London, and at all levels except the very highest was noted.

Turning to the negative views, a significant number of people had no negative comments to make about the impact of the ECoC. The most common negative comments related to the specific impact on the organisation to which the respondent was attached; to practical project disruption and delays and a fear that post 2008 funding would not continue to be available.

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VALLETTA: A Catalyst in the Central Mediterranean and the Hospitaller Order of St. John (1530-1798)

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Abstract

As the administrative centre of the Maltese islands, Valletta came to dominate and condition all spheres of life from the late sixteenth century. Soon after the Hospitaller Order ofSt John moved to their new convent/city in 1571, the city came to be inhabited by concentrations of people performing a wide variety of activities which enabled the fortress-city to be singled out as the urban centre par excellence of the new Island-State. Over the centuries, Valletta, together with the other Harbour towns, served as the economic, political, social, and cultural hub of Malta. The power of the Grand Master, and the highly concentrated nature of trade, combined and contributed to the vast development of the Harbour enclave which included the neighbouring fortified towns of Vittoriosa, Senglea and Bormla. The virtual monopoly of Valletta, over importation of all commodity items and exports including that of cotton (the major cash crop) enabled the new city, from very early on, to control all the production and redistribution within the Maltese islands: it was, above all, the central sorting station. Whether bound inland or abroad, everything had to filter past through the Valletta harbour. This growth imposed an order on the area it dominated and established a wealth of administrative and trading connections. In the long term, the immense surge of activities generated both by the foundation of Valletta and by the presence of the Hospitaller Order of St John - with its manifold interests – transformed Malta into one of the busiest centres of the Mediterranean. It served to create a cosmopolitan atmosphere that impressed itself on the character of Valletta and helped to enrich the Island-State especially in the more creative activities like art and architecture.

The Mediterranean Political Scene

The sixteenth and seventeenth century Mediterranean has been described as 'a battleground' between the two great empires of Catholic Spain in the west and the Muslim Ottoman Empire in the east. It was an age during which the two great empires, supported by their respective allies, gave evidence of their formidable might.

Before the rise of the Habsburg kings, Charles V and Philip II, the Catholic Kings of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella, who were responsible for the unification of Spain, played as vital a part in creating the Spanish Empire. They were responsible for the establishment of various Christian enclaves along the North African coast stretching from Morocco to Tripoli (Libya).

Likewise, the Ottoman Sultans, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, were intent in expelling the remaining satellite territories of the Christian minor powers, particularly Venice, and by 1522 managed to expunge Knights Hospitallers of St John from Rhodes, and its territories, in the Dodecanese and the tip of Anatolia.

After their expulsion from the island of Rhodes in 1523 – at the hands of Sultan Süleymân the Magnificent – the Knights of St John accepted, with considerable reluctance, the islands of Malta and the Spanish fortress of Tripoli in North Africa as a feudal fief. However, the ruling Grand Master Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam (1521-1534) vainly hoped for something better, and it was only in 1529 that the Order accepted Malta and its dependencies. The Order occupied both localities in 1530, thus freeing the Hapsburg Emperor Charles V of direct responsibility in maintaining the security of these two southernmost and more exposed of his vast possessions. The terms offered by the Holy Roman Emperor were so generous that with time the Order turned the island into a veritable sovereign state in all senses of the word. Various categories of foreigners, attracted by good work opportunities, settled in Malta, importing social, cultural and ideological components which were different from those originally predominating in the island.

The Early Years of the Hospitallers in Malta

The political implications of securing Malta and Tripoli meant that the Order inherited from Spain a situation fraught with all sorts of perils and difficulties. Following the conquest of Granada in 1492, the Spanish zest for the Reconquista had over-spilled onto the Mediterranean shores of North Africa. Such was the impetus of the Spanish crusaders that in the decade between 1500 and 1510, they had conquered Ceuta, Oran, Sfax and Tripoli, apart from establishing a protectorate over Tunis. The Spanish hold on strategic points on the coasts of North Africa was rather precarious, surrounded as they were by a multitude of Muslim inhabitants with thinly veiled hostile intentions. But the alliance of the Ottoman Empire with the Barbary corsairs helped to transform the Ottoman navy into a major military force in the Mediterranean. The frontier of the giant conflict between the Spanish and Ottoman empires had shifted to the Central Mediterranean, that is, to Tripoli, Tunisia, Malta, Sicily and Southern Italy, all held by Spain and its allies, the Knights of St John. In these operations, Turgut Reis – better known as Dragut - succeeded as Chieftain of the corsairs of Algiers in 1546 and was soon proclaimed Admiral of the Ottoman navy. He planned to dominate the Central Mediterranean and his main objective was the capture of Malta and Tripoli. On the 18th July 1551, the Ottoman armada appeared off Malta. At first the Ottomans made a half-hearted attempt to lay siege on the port-town of Birgu, where the Knights had established a new fortified city which

had become the military, naval, and civil headquarters of the Order as well as the seat of its convent.

Owing to the strength of the new defences, the Ottoman generals soon turned their attention to the weaker defences of Mdina, which before the arrival of the Knights, had been the administrative centre of Malta. After a brief and unsuccessful siege, on the 21st July, the Ottoman fleet decided to besiege the neighbouring island of Gozo. The weak castello of the island was invested and bombarded in a very short time. The situation at the Gozo castello was so desperate that by the 26th July the governor, Fra Galatian de Sese, asked for terms of surrender. Except for forty old and infirm inhabitants spared by the conquerors, as well as a number of intrepid individuals who scaled down the castello walls by means of ropes, the entire population of Gozo was carried away into slavery - most of them never to return again. This greatest of Malta's calamities left the island of Gozo deserted and in later years, it had practically to be re-settled anew by newcomers from Malta and Sicily.

Turgut's strategic plan by-and-large overlapped with Ottoman strategic interests namely, the expulsion of the Christian outposts in North Africa. Consequently, Tripoli, Tunis, La Goulette (and other smaller Spanish enclaves in Tunisia), Malta and Gozo were in the eye of a rising maelstrom. Ultimately the strategy advocated by Turgut Reis failed in realizing its main objective – to dominate the central Mediterranean – even though none of the enormous resources of the Ottoman Empire were spared. But Turgut's plan came near to succeeding when Tripoli was liberated in 1551, and Tunis and La Goulette were finally freed in 1574; yet Malta, Gozo and Sicily remained firmly in Christian hands.

The Ottoman Siege of Malta and the Building of Valletta

News of plans to send an Ottoman Armada began to filter into the West early in the spring of 1563. By winter of 1565, there were no doubts that the Sublime Porte – the French term for the Ottoman Court, Bâbiâli ("High Gate," or "Gate of the Eminent") - was determined to send an Armada in the West. In Malta, the rhythm of preparations took on a feverish pace. Friday, 18th May 1565 must be counted as one of Malta's great appointments with destiny. In the memorable words of Giacomo Bosio, the chronicler of the Order of St John:

…a little before sunrise, the Turkish armada could be distinctly viewed some 15 or 20 miles from Malta beyond Marsaxlokk; it was all in full sail, in such a manner that with its white and cotton canvas it was covering half the horizon to the east…

The Armada that reached Malta in May 1565 was the biggest Ottoman naval effort to date, sailing under the direct order of Piyale Paşa, the ambitious but competent son-in-law of Sultan Süleymân. It was surely an awful moment, when everyone's heart in Malta must have missed a beat.

According to Francisco Balbi di Correggio, a diarist of the siege, the Ottoman fleet carried 28,000 fighting men, including an elite force of 6,300 Yeniçeri (Janissaries) - one-third of the entire Yeniçeri corps - and 6,000 volunteers.7 The entire population of Malta, including the Order of St John and its retinue, consisted of less than 25,000 heads. The Siege of Malta has to be viewed as one of the crucial events in a clash of mentalities that, during the sixteenth century, manifested itself as a power-struggle, under the guise of a war of religions. During these bloody events, none of the two sides entertained any doubt that they were fighting for an ideology and a way of life. The circumstances presented the kind of choice that left no room for waverers; one and all had to stand by their culture, beliefs and traditions, or else renegade. There was no middle course. Great heroism as well as unspeakable barbarity marked the times, with some rushing to certain death, and others reduced to slavery. In the end, the Siege of Malta proved to be the psychological turning point that eventually helped to establish a balance of power in the Mediterranean, roughly along politico-cultural lines.

It may be said that the Ottoman Siege of Malta of 1565 brought about a radical transformation to life in the island. For most people it marked the end of an old era and the beginning of wider horizons. This break with the past manifested itself at all levels. Immediately after the siege, increased migration to Sicily coupled with the continual evacuation of the countryside by a peasantry attracted to city life, led to extensive rural depopulation. The wide-spread destruction of houses, fields, livestock changed the villages physically. New buildings and churches in a different style were set up.

The new system created a dual social structure that develops immediately after the Knights Hospitallers set foot on Malta and becomes even more apparent after the siege of 1565 and the building of Valletta. This duality did not only exist at the social level, but it also pervaded the mental and cognitive structures of Maltese society.

Two different cultural blocs, strictly separated from each other, formed two opposing camps, namely, Mdina and its suburb of Rabat as the seat of the countryside; Birgu (Vittoriosa after 1565) - and later Valletta - the seat of the urbanized harbour area.

On the one side there were the typical classes of an agrarian society, consisting of landowners, a small class of notaries, priests and clerks, and a mass of peasants. These had their own ‘cultural traditions’, to which they were strongly attached. On the other side, there were the new town dwellers and other settlers, often in the direct employment with the Order, who were ‘alien’, lived in the city, cosmopolitan in their orientation and with no ‘ancient culture’ of their own. Yet in the Harbour towns social distinctions prevailed, the fundamental difference based on

economic affluence. The property owners and independent members of the town such as merchants, artisans, shopkeepers and professionals spurned those who were subservient or economically dependent by virtue of being labourers, apprentices and servants.

The Order came to represent a concentration of international capital, which coupled to an incredible reserve of human resource, made possible a vast programme of urbanization, successfully carried through, since the Order set foot on Malta in 1530. Even so, it is surprising to realize that it was possible to achieve all this on an island with a population-base of merely 30,000 (1590).

The creation of a new urban area around the Grand Harbour had effectively revolutionized the human geography of Malta and the life of its people. Nevertheless, after 1565 the emergence of Valletta - as the administrative capital of the Maltese islands – came to dominate and condition Maltese life. Urban theory recognizes cities to be, not merely dense concentrations of people, but above all, concentrations of people doing different things, where the urban character derives more from that variety of activity than it does from sheer numbers.

In reality, to speak of the Harbour area is to speak of a conglomeration of four towns: Valletta was the political and economic capital. In the upper part of the city, the Grand Master, the Grand Council and high society lived and exercised their authority. The common people lived mostly in the lower districts. The 'Three Cities' of Vittoriosa (known as Birgu before 1565), Senglea (or Isola) and Cospicua (previously known as Burmola) stood on the south bank of the Grand Harbour. Between them, the four towns had a population of around 10,000, that is, approximately one-third of Malta's population in 1590. The 'Three Cities' eventually came to form part of the popular district, together with lower Valletta with their narrow streets packed with foreigners, merchandize, sailors and slaves.

Valletta dominated the entire economy of Malta. The political influence of the Harbour towns on the countryside, the power of the Grand Master, the highly concentrated nature of trade, all combined and contributed to the vast development of the Harbour area. This growth imposed an order on the area it dominated and established a wealth of administrative and trading connections. By the early seventeenth century, the Harbour zone had not only developed into a very busy area, but it practically handled all Malta's foreign trade, and had become a cultural centre of some value.

The Harbour towns were multifunctional and together they performed roles that were essential for the whole society. The creation of an efficient and well-organized bureaucracy was to form the basis for the economic and political dependency of the countryside. Thus, the more technically efficient the Harbour towns became, the more they increased the potential dependency of the countryside.

The virtual monopoly of Valletta, over importation of all commodity items and exports including that of cotton (the major cash crop) enabled the new capital, from very early on, to control all the production and redistribution within the Maltese islands: it was, above all, the central sorting station. Whether bound inland or abroad, everything had to filter past through the Valletta harbour.

The Harbour town dwellers were well aware of the influence that the state had on their daily existence. The intensification of traffic and trade, the new technical possibilities of administration, and the economic development of the Harbour area, are part of the picture of the systematization of authority and the strengthening of the Grand Master's political role.

The Emergence of an Urban Culture

The heavy influx into the new urban areas of foreigners and people from the countryside, starting from the sixteenth century onwards, altered the ethnic character of the population of Malta. The newcomers may not have brought a distinctive culture of their own, as the case seems to be. Nevertheless, their physical preponderance managed to transform the distinctiveness of the Maltese lifestyle whose cultural patterns are usually associated with an urban lifestyle. After all, what is essential here are not the internal contrasts of urban culture, but its different character from peasant approach.

It was common for the early modern middle classes to mingle with the ordinary folk because of the ever-growing demographic pressures. Thus, both wealthy Maltese and the Knights often occupied sumptuous buildings, while the workers lodged wherever space was available. The ground floor of these imposing edifices usually contained a stable, stores and a workshop with an entry from the street, sometimes with displays extending into the street itself.

Very often a number of families had to share the same dwelling in order to be able to pay the rent bill. Matrimonial contracts indirectly refer to the shortage of space within the Harbour towns. Thus, whereas it was normal for peasants to own a normal house, maybe consisting of some rooms at ground floor level, it was common for poor artisans to live in one-room cellars, whose only means of light and air was the street door. The middle floors [mezzanines], constructed above them, were likewise small and ill ventilated. Except for the houses of the rich, most tenements in the harbour area could pass as cheap housing. Such an atmosphere made family life difficult, and therefore most of the socialization processes took place not in the family, but at public levels.

Urban culture did not simply renew or transform earlier cultural practices but organized them according to fundamentally new principles based on a 'market economy'. Obviously, city life, independent of class attachments, ethnic identity, and

other traditional prejudices, were labelled as 'alien' by the indigenous population right from the very beginning of the Order's rule.

The immense surge of activities generated both by the foundation of Valletta and by the Order's presence - with its manifold interests - made the island one of the busiest centres of the Mediterranean. The Order of St. John had managed to establish a ruling system which seeped down the social scale and gave character to the Harbour area.

But these dominant cultural patterns failed to infiltrate the entire structure of peasant society. Philip Skippon, writing in 1664, could visibly distinguish city dwellers from villagers. He sums up the situation, by noting that while most city dwellers speak Italian well, the natives of the countryside speak a kind of Arabic. The Maltese historian Godfrey Wettinger tends to agree with Skippon's view. He argues that,

Gradually the townspeople became largely indistinguishable in outlook from the inhabitants of other towns in southern Europe... In the countryside, however, old forms of cooking, old musical instruments, much of the old types of houses... remained very much in use. There they still repeated the same old Maltese proverbs... worked the land in largely the same old way, hunted... and held homely festivities.

In practice, however, the Great Tradition certainly influenced village life that went on to absorb and adopt elements of city life in a way to make it its own. The cosmopolitan character of Valletta helped enrich the island-state, especially in the more creative activities. The architectural boom spilled from the new city into the surrounding countryside and by the early seventeenth century, the parish churches of larger villages like Birkirkara, as well as, smaller ones like Balzan, Lija, and Attard, could boast of a parish church that was built on a magnificent scale. Probably the Cathedral Church at Mdina is the best example. Thus, one could say that urban culture possessed such a great integrating force that it quickly achieved hegemony. It was able to create a mode of behaviour and a way of life, largely, acceptable to the whole society.

The political centrality of the city underlined its cultural magnetism. Functioning as an administrative capital, Valletta broadcasted the fashions and values of the Grand Master's court. 'Ideas and styles, fashions, manners, and habits, artists, architects, and Belgian tapestries, were all imported from "trading Europe", and paid for by the Order's accumulating capital'. It attracted litigants to its Law Courts and passed on the government's proclamations to the rest of the island.

In the economic field, the city became the harbinger of modernity with markets that 'were as much a meeting place for social intercourse as they were for business transactions'. Valletta, like any other early modern European capital, was the powerhouse of cultural change. The dissemination of artistic and cultural

influence, information, and news reached the Maltese countryside. Together with the other towns of the Harbour area, it monopolized the economic and administrative resources of the new state.

Thus, a city which was originally conceived as a 'convent', and fortified enclave for the defence against possible Ottoman attack by a monastic military order, was transformed into a central Mediterranean hub of complex trading networks, intense commercial activity, and movement of people that resulted in the widest possible cultural diversity.

However, by the late seventeenth century, the Ottoman Turks had ceased to be a real threat in the Mediterranean. On its part the Order of St John continued to keep the North African corsairs in check, but its function gradually became less important in the eyes of the Great European Powers. The Order's role gradually became outmoded and exceedingly difficult to develop new functions or to maintain its position in relation to the other European Powers.

The Order was highly dependent upon outside agencies. It had to worry about the reaction of the Holy See to its actions. Likewise, France was a protector that provided the largest contingent of knights and had to be respected. At the same time, relations with Spain could not be jeopardised since Malta was still formally part of Sicily, which at the time belonged to the Spanish Empire. Furthermore, Malta of the knights was not simply a nominal fief of the larger nearby island but depended on Sicily for most of its food supplies. However, despite all the diplomatic complications, the Order's fate depended primarily on France, which was its greatest source of revenue. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Order's financial situation was dealt a great blow as a result of the French Revolution, when the Order, an aristocratic and religious body, received less and less sympathetic hearing.

By 1792 the Order had ceased to be an economically viable organization, particularly after the confiscation of its French possessions. Yet, the magnificent system of fortifications built by the knights themselves and Malta's strategic position in the central Mediterranean, induced the major European powers of the time to take an interest in the island.

French Occupation

Thus, the French Revolution marked the beginning of a new era for the Order. In 1792 the estates of the Order, like other estates belonging to religious entities in France - were confiscated. This confiscation was extended to their estates in other parts of Europe as the French armies advanced. At the same time the French had long been nurturing hopes of occupying the island. The opportunity presented itself on the 9th June 1798. On that fateful day, General Napoleon Bonaparte stopped off Malta, on his way to Egypt, and demanded entry into the Grand Harbour to enable his ships

to take water. When the request was refused, French troops were put ashore. Resistance was so weak that by the 11th June, Grand Master von Hompesch (1797-1798) asked for an armistice.

The terms offered by Napoleon in the capitulation led to the expulsion of the Order of St John from Malta, so that the island became a possession of the French Republic. Within a few days Grand Master von Hompesch and his followers were bundled out of Malta.

Concluding Remarks

During its 268 years' stay in Malta, the Order came to represent a concentration of international capital which, coupled to an incredible reserve of human resource, made possible a vast program of urbanization, successfully carried through, since it set foot on Malta in 1530. The creation of a new urban area around the Grand Harbour had effectively revolutionized the human geography of Malta and the life of its people. But the factor which dominated and conditioned Maltese life after the Ottoman Siege of 1565 was the emergence of Valletta as the administrative capital of the Maltese islands.

Valletta originally built to serve as the convent of the warrior monks of Malta in the mid-sixteenth century, had within a few decades, been transformed into the political, economic and cultural centre of an emerging minor power in the Mediterranean. Valletta's leading role over the tiny fiefdom cum state of the Hospitaller Order of St John was terminated with the departure of the Hospitaller Order of St John in 1798 when the French took over Malta.

During the very brief French occupation in 1798 Valletta and the rest of Malta were integrated as part of metropolitan France. British occupation, first as a protectorate (1800-1815) and later as a colony meant that Malta came to be perceived primarily as the first line of defence of the British great Indian empire. The British not only stationed troops and the fleet in the Malta Harbour area, they even strengthened their legal claims on Malta which helped transform Malta into a fortress in the British imperial defence system. Valletta was now ruled, with only one exception, by a military governor sent from Britain to follow Britain's imperial policy. It was only after independence from Britain in 1964 that Valletta came to serve, once again, as the pride of the tiny island nation-state of Malta.

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Cultural Foodscapes of an Island Nation

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Abstract

Sourcing an argument put forward by Clifford Geertz, 'Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun,' what applies for the individual applies no less, to the collective identity of a group or a nation. The series of symbolic and mythical mental representations activate a mind map that locates and maintains cultural meanings. The emphasis on what constitutes a nation and its culture, forms an integral part of the broader interest in defining identity. The construction of national identities has attracted increasing attention among researchers over the past four decades, generating a panoply of views on the theme and its permutations. This study continues the debate, focusing primarily on a Maltese case-study. An attempt will be made to explore those vectors that generate some of the meanings surrounding Maltese food and particularly the way in which food is used in shaping the wider meanings attached to Malteseness. Food carries with it an emotional baggage. It is a fantastic background for storytelling, an inspiration for the narrative of an individual, a group or a nation. Whether it is the result of an "imagined community" or "banal nationalism" or "cultural hybridity", food and food culture is as well rooted in defining otherness. Among the reasons underlying food choices, such labels as "traditional", "authentic" and "quality", are today used interchangeably as blueprint terms to simplify an arguably rather complicated matter. Just as defining what constitutes a nation is in itself difficult to establish with precision, so also is the concept of a national culinary identity.

Key words: Foodscape, Valletta, culinary identity, food culture, Maltese cuisine.

Introduction

Food is a signifier. Existing scholarship on food and food culture, recognizes food as 'good to eat' but also 'good to think'.[1] Food provides more than physical sustenance. Food is loaded with meanings. As a 'total social fact' it marks special occasions, draws boundaries, differentiates and distinguishes.[2]

Food carries with it an emotional baggage. It is a fantastic background for storytelling, an inspiration for the narrative of an individual, a group or a nation. Whether it is the result of an 'imagined community' or 'banal nationalism', food and food culture is as well rooted in defining otherness. Among the reasons underlying

[1] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963).
[2] Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986): 3.

food choices, popular terms such as 'traditional', 'authentic' and 'quality' are today used interchangeably as blueprint terms to simplify an arguably quite complicated matter. Just as defining what constitutes a nation may at times prove difficult to establish with precision, so also the concept of a national culinary identity.

This study will continue in line with such debates, focusing primarily on a Maltese case-study. An attempt will be made to explore those vectors that generate some of the meanings surrounding Maltese food and particularly the way in which food is used in shaping the wider meanings attached to Malteseness. This study aims to explore the confluence between culinary heritage, foodscapes and the regeneration of cities and discuss its relevance as a tool to help further understand determinants of food-behaviour generated by out-of-home eating foodscapes. Furthermore, this study aims to employ foodscapes as a tool to understand and describe how out-of-home environments can further attest to food-related behaviours as indicators of the culinary identity of a place.

Foodscape is here employed as an analytical tool to present a study of the types of restaurants in Valletta as part of the regeneration process leading towards the Valletta European City of Culture 2018. Food identities evolve simultaneously with the geography of a location, opening a window onto an exploration of the character of the foodscape.

The foodscape approach allows for an alternative view to uncover aspects of Malta's culinary identity, including insights into consumption and class. The research of Johnston, Rodney and Szabo indicates how consumption patterns are shaped by both neighbourhood and social class, and that 'cultural capital is located not only in social but in physical space too.'[3] Food retail outlets located within an area impacts both the identity of the neighbourhood but also the status of the residents. Apart from displaying and perpetuating class differences, the choice of particular out-of-home food retail outlets provides interesting insights into Malta's evolving culinary culture, especially when considering the facilitation of this process as part of the regeneration developments leading towards Valletta's undertaking as a "city of culture".

Foodscapes

Foodscapes contribute towards the provision of a conceptual framework which lends itself to understand and describe those vectors influencing food related human behaviour. The idea of a "scape" is now being considered by researchers in different fields as an effective tool. As an analytical tool the humanities and social sciences have explored the complex physical, social and cultural contexts within which human behaviour manifests itself. The term "foodscape" is used by researchers in

[3] Josée Johnston, Alexandra Rodney and Michelle Szabo, "Place, Ethics, and Everyday Eating: A Tale of Two Neighbourhoods," *Sociology* 46, no.6, (2012): 1092.

geography-related studies,[4] urban agriculture, social science and public health,[5] where the term highlights the human generated relationships between food environments and the geography of food in what concerns policy, identity, location of food outlets and the human response to associated behaviours such as food-related diseases. The study of Sonnino presents the term foodscape as a method of ethnographic research of senses, meanings and materiality.[6] From a theoretical perspective, foodscapes generate a discourse of policy and power relations, production and consumption issues generating social injustice, economic inequalities, discrimination, and unequal opportunities towards adequate nutritional health.[7]

The notion of foodscape offers several advantages when seeking understanding and studying cultural and societal behaviours. As Brembeck and Johansson argue, it allows the researcher to observe human behaviour that is 'unevenly distributed in space and appear in a variety of shapes and contexts.' Burgoine also concurs about the effectiveness of foodscapes as an analytical tool since 'the actual sites where we find food allows the researcher to explore those opportunities available for consumers when obtaining food within a given region'. Furthermore, Johnston et al. signify the importance of the built environment as well as the food service setting and defines foodscape as 'the spatial distribution of food across urban spaces and institutional settings.'[8]

Pollock considers 'foodscapes' as an integral part of Appadurai's ethnoscapes which he defines as 'the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers and other moving groups and individuals who constitute an essential feature of the world…' .[9] Furthermore, 'mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, ideoscapes and foodscapes present us with those irregular shapes, imagined in their complexity, and the product of deeply perspectival constructs'.[10] Therefore, foodscapes allow us to gain insights into the shifting world of modernity and identity.[11] Moreover, the 'scape' approach

[4] Michael K. Goodman, "Food Geographies I: Relational Foodscapes and the busy-ness of being more-than-food," *Progress Human Geography* 40, no.2 (2016): 257-266.
[5] Thomas Burgoine, "Collecting accurate secondary foodscape data: A reflection on the trials and tribulations," *Appetite* 55 (2010): 522-527. See also Bent E. Mikkelson, "Images of Foodscapes: Introduction to foodscape studies and their application in the study of healthy eating out-of-home environments," *Perspectives in Public Health* 131, no.5 (2011): 209-216; Helen Brenbeck and Barbro Johansson, "Foodscapes and Children's Bodies," *Culture Unbound. Journal of Current Cultural Research* 2 (2010): 797-818.
[6] Roberta Sonnino, "Local Foodscapes: place and power in the agri-food system," *Acta Agriculturae Scandinavica* 63, no.1 (2013): 2-7.
[7] Maggie Roe, Ingrid Sorlöv Herlin and Suzanne Speak, "Identity, food and landscape character in the urban context," *Landscape Research* 41, no.7 (2016): 1-16
[8] Josée Johnston, Alexandra Rodney and Michelle Szabo, "Place, Ethics & Everyday Eating" 1091-1108.
[9] Nancy Pollock, "Food and Transnationalism: Reassertions of Pacific Identity," in *Migration and Transnationalism. Pacific Perspectives*, eds. Helen Lee and Steve Tupai Francis (Canberra: The Australian National Press, 2009): 103. See also Arjun Appadurai, ***Modernity at large. Cultural dimensions of globalization*** (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996):33.
[10] Pollock, "Food and Transnationalism," 103.
[11] Ibid.

provides a modicum to understand complex social behaviours in which humans, objects and environments interact.

Valletta is a melting pot of international cuisines. Malta's historical past, and particularly the case of Valletta, indicates how foodways became a reflection of the various 'scapes' since its inception in the late sixteenth century. To further understand the association of foodscapes with historical overview in just useful. Taking heed from advice offered by S.W. Mintz, 'it is analytically useful to link up what is happening now to what has already happened'.[12] Tracing transnational influences through foodscapes provides opportunities to explore concepts of continuity and change as communities choose to adopt (and reject) culinary practices that enhance their identity further, particularly through an understanding of the food and beverage industry.

Malta – An Archipelago in the Mediterranean Sea

The group of islands sited in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea are collectively and politically known as 'Malta'; yet the archipelago is composed of a number of island with the three main ones being Malta, Gozo and Comino – in that order according to size and population. None of the others has any permanent residents.

While the total area of the Maltese Islands is that of 316km^2 and has an estimated population (2018) of more than 475,700, the largest island is called Malta; it is the most urbanises with an area of 246km^2 and hosts most of the archipelago's population. Gozo, the second island, covers 67km^2 and though still more rural, the urban sprawl is undoubtedly on the advance. Comino, which measures 3.5km^2 had three residents in 2018.

With a geographical location flanked on the northern side by Europe and on the southern side by Africa, Malta and the Maltese can actually say that they have been living between 'two worlds' all through their history. Sicilian and North African influences have permeated the way of life of the population from time immemorial. Features of this reality have been evident and identifiable up to this day in Malta's social, linguistic, economic and religious environments. Not least affected is Malta's foodscape – a rich and varied accumulation of food and foodways from two continents. These have been turned into something more local by the Maltese who have adopted and adapted what came to their island; and is now being termed as 'Maltese cuisine'. Furthermore, with Malta joining the British Empire when it became a colony of Great Britain from 1800, an Anglo-Saxon food repertoire continued to season and extend the Maltese kitchen and recipe book.

[12] Sidney W. Mintz, "Food, history and globalization," in *Journal of Chinese Dietary Culture* 2, no.1 (2006): 4.

The Food of the Maltese

Being an island, and a poor and arid one at that, the supplies of foods and ingredients have proved to be perennially problematic. The people had to be fed but to do so required as fertile a land as possible; and Malta was not one such island. This meant that the government of the archipelago, whoever it was, could not bank solely on local agricultural produce. Bread was a staple from time immemorial for a people who could afford little more. The Middle Ages were already a difficult time and food was an imported commodity, much was imported. The staple food product was of course wheat, which with other cereals and pulses was imported regularly from Sicily, to which Malta politically belonged. To make the imports expenses as bearable as possible for a people who were generally far from wealthy, export duties were waived by the Sicilian authorities. In years when local harvests were more generous, the Maltese could export quantities of wheat and barley and thus gain some much needed foreign income.[13] Other food products were also imported and were used to create Maltese dishes of all sorts.

Malta's donation to the Order of St John by Emperor Charles V in 1530, was accompanied by the offer that Sicily would continue to supply grain at privileged prices to help meet Malta's needs as bread was the main food item on the people's tables and the central commodity which had no substitute. The supply and use of wheat was always under the scrutiny of the authorities who wanted to make sure that millers and bakers were abiding by the strict laws by which this commodity was regulated.[14] However, with the Order came a wider European foodscape of ingredients, tastes and recipes which slowly seeped into the Maltese kitchen of the well-to-do with the consumption of such novelties as ice cream, coffee, and chocolate. The peasants and poor folk however continued to eat what they could garner from the fields and from the markets according to their purse and means.[15]

After the Order lost Malta to the French – a short interlude – the island was taken over by the British in 1899. Grain remained a government monopoly so that supply could be better assured and administered as closely as possible. Such control did not, however, guarantee good quality bread – just its availability. In the first decade of the nineteenth century the traveller John Galt did not miss pointing out that, 'The bread in Malta is the worst I ever tasted'.[16] With supplies being stored in the granaries, which consisted of underground silos or excavations in the rock along the

[13] George Cassar, *What they ate: Food and foodways in Mdina and beyond – from Roman times to the Middle Ages* (Malta: Heland Project, 2015), 28.
[14] Joan Abela, *Hospitaller Malta and the Mediterranean Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2018), Ch. 2.
[15] Kenneth Gambin and Noel Buttigieg, *Storja tal-Kultura ta' l-Ikel f'Malta* (Malta: PIN Publications, 2004), Ch. 5. Pamela Parkinson-Large, *A Taste Of History – The Food of The Knights Of Malta* (Malta: MAG Publications1995).
[16] John Galt, *Voyages and Travels, in the years 1809, 1810, and 1811; containing Statistical, Commercial, and Miscellaneous Observations on Gibraltar, Sardinia, Sicily, Malta, Serigo, and Turkey* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strand, 1812), 117.

Valletta ramparts, the oldest grain was always given to the bakers first, and thus these had to make their bread with what they had. As could be expected, the quality was generally poor. The Maltese passed with little. Galt noticed their frugality 'a little garlick (*sic*), or fruit, with a small piece of bread, is their common repast,' while eating butcher's meat was a rare luxury.[17]

In his observations of life in Malta, Thomas MacGill notes that the Maltese peasantry baked their own bread at home and ate it with a '*companatic*, or relish' which included cheese, olives, onions, garlick (*sic*), dried fruit, salt-fish, and oil. Other food items on the common people's tables were those products found in season – melons, prickly pears and vegetables eaten raw. MacGill added that they drank wine 'in moderation', while in the evening, after a day's hard work, peasants and commoners would help themselves to a hot meal consisting of a *minestra* (Maltese: *ministra*) made with cooked vegetables and made tastier with some oil or grated cheese.[18] MacGill was speaking from experience and direct observation as he had been one of the first Englishmen to settle in Malta in 1806 and lived on the island until his death in Valletta in 1844.[19]

Though butcher's meat was not part of the daily repast, and a rare occurrence left for the special occasions, yet MacGill continues to recount, Maltese *caulata* (Maltese: *kawlata*) was 'an appetite stirring dish' made with a mix of vegetables boiled in a little water and relished with a piece of pork. The traveller could not miss Maltese *ravioli* (Maltese: *ravjul*) either. He noted that these were considered by the high-fed to be a 'dainty dish'. *Ravioli* were made with fresh cheese, *ricotta*, beaten eggs and chopped parsley. This mixture was stuffed in a thin pastry which was then boiled and then stewed in a savoury sauce made with tomato juice. MacGill was so fascinated by these Maltese specialities that he had to exclaim: '…what are all your *vol-au-vents*, or fried frogs when compared with the savoury *caulata* and *ravioli* of the maltese (*sic*), but they must be cooked by a country girl; they would be ruined by the first *maitre de cuicine* of Paris.'[20]

For those who wanted to find food items for any desired dish, one only needed to go to the Valletta market. In his *Guida* (guidebook) of the 1840s, written in Italian for the foreigners who wished to visit the colony, J. Quintana describes what he calls the small marketplace situated in the centre of the city flanked by the three streets *Mercanti*, *San Paolo* and *Teatro*. The author notes that though small in line with the number of inhabitants, yet it is this same smallness that rendered it remarkable. In a space measuring 124 ft on each side, one could find '*ogni genere di vettovaglie*' (any type of provision) – all sorts of meat, poultry and game, fish, fruit,

[17] Ibid., 118.
[18] Thomas MacGill, *A Handbook, or Guide, for Strangers visiting Malta* (Malta: Luigi Tonna, 1839), 34.
[19] Albert Ganado, "Bibliographical notes on Melitensia – 2," *Melita Historica* 14, no. 1 (2004): 93.
[20] MacGill, *A Handbook*, 35.

vegetables, bread, biscuit, flour, pasta, legumes and seeds, coffee, sugar, tea, groceries, butter, sheep cheese, and an assortment of cured meats. Quintana informs the visitor that any food one craves for may be found in abundance here, at discrete prices and at any time of the day from dawn till dusk.[21]

An eye-witness account from the early twentieth century picks up more popular food in an ever-growing Maltese foodscape. Frederick W. Ryan's 1920 publication looks among other things at the feasts and feastings of the Maltese. He recounts the festive atmosphere in Valletta on the day of a religious festival. The Maltese came to the capital city and primarily attended to the spiritual part of the feast – procession, high mass and benediction. When the requirements for their soul had been observed, they turned to the needs of their bodies – eating, drinking and making merry. They congregated at the Upper Barracca which in the past was a roofed public space. Here the people from the villages would settle down to rest and picnic. Along the streets and in the squares outside the churches, booths were set up selling street food including pastries and confectionaries, cheesecakes (Maltese: *qassatat* and *pastizzi*), nougat, and high piled pyramids of honey and almonds. Other stalls sold a variety of fruits. To quench their thirst especially on the hot Maltese days, boys would go round selling tumblers of iced water poured from a barrel slung across their shoulder. Wine was also available, which, according to Ryan, was however of the very cheap and sour type. Yet this alcoholic drink, sold from the cask, was synonymous with these celebrations and had thus a fixed and expected presence. On normal days the Maltese peasant was however much more frugal – eating as a rule bread or pasta, some olives, a little oil and goat's cheese (Maltese: *ġbejniet*).[22]

Throughout the twentieth century, though affluence has penetrated among a wider portion of the population, yet the Maltese have continued to hold on to many dishes which are widely considered to be local and traditional. Pies include that filled with ricotta and broad beans (*torta tal-irkotta*), that filled with pumpkin and rice (*torta tal-qargħa ħamra*), and the more seasonal, filled with a mixture of dorado fish, onion, tomato, cauliflower and potato (*torta tal-lampuki*). The Maltese have also developed over the years a way how to use leftover vegetables. These are mixed with tuna and then fried in oil. These fritters are known in Maltese as *pulpetti* and in more recent years these are served with fried eggs and potato chips.[23]

However, with the island becoming increasingly globalised, and further internationalised with the surge in tourist numbers (around 2.7 million in 2018), coupled with the tens of thousands (amounting to about 100,000 in 2018) coming from all over the world to settle or work, Malta's foodscape has grown out of its more

[21] J. Quintana, *Guida dell'Isola di Malta e sue dipendenze* (Malta: the author, 1844), 189–190.
[22] Frederick W. Ryan, *Malta* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1910), 108-109.
[23] Ken Albala (ed.), *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood, 2011), 234-235.

traditional, typical and staple foods and recipes, which had been so much in evidence up to the early 1970s. The Maltese are now much more likely go for a pizza, a burger, chicken nuggets, noodles, and the wide spectrum of food from across the world. Eating out for a Maltese family would include a choice of restaurants covering all sorts of international and ethnic cuisine – from Chinese to Indian, African to Mexican, Greek to Japanese to Eastern European to Turkish, just to mention some – or else go for fusion outlets; eat in or take away.[24]

Indeed, as Elise Billiard has observed, Maltese food culture 'gathers together tradition and modernity and plays inconsistently with this dualism.' She continues that it is interesting to note how 'the Maltese have managed to remain a people after having integrated so many different civilisations'.[25] This succinctly denotes the ability shown by the Maltese in managing the diversity of cultural influences through time up to the present and adding them to the island's food repertoire. Some cultural elements have been integrated, others have been adapted, while the more recent ones, are more probably just tolerated.

The Valletta Restaurant Foodscape.

An analysis of the licensed food outlets in Valletta reveals that there are 126 snack bars and 38 restaurants. According to the legal notices a "restaurant" is 'a catering establishment accessible to the public, where the primary purpose is the sale of food for consumption on the premises, on a table service basis in accordance with the standards as set out in the Second Schedule'. A "snack bar" on the other hand is 'a catering establishment accessible to the public, where the primary purpose is the sale of food for consumption on or off the premises, on a table or counter service basis, in accordance with the standards as set out in the Third Schedule'.[26]

Although licensing falls under the remit of the Malta Tourism Authority, there is no indication that applicants are obliged or encouraged to open up catering establishments which reflect what may be considered as "Maltese food culture".

Since the license data does not indicate the type of food which is provided for, it was decided to carry out an analysis of the type of food that is offered in these establishments based on Trip Advisor categories. According to Trip Advisor there are 130 establishments amongst which some are restaurants that form part of hotels and

[24] Ibid., 235.

[25] Elise Billiard, "Lost in tradition: An attempt to go beyond labels, taking Maltese food practices as a primary example," in *Eating Traditional Food: Politics, identity and practices*, ed. Brigitte Sebastia (London: Routledge, 2016), 49.

[26] Laws of Malta. Subsidiary Legislation 409.15, Catering Establishments Regulations, 1st January, 2005, Legal Notice 175 of 2004, as amended by Legal Notices 426 of 2007 and 290 of 2010. (Malta: Government of Malta), 1.

other types of establishments also offering accommodation facilities as well as coffee shops. If one filters restaurants in Valletta by food type it emerges that there are:

26 Seafood
26 Pizza
76 Italian
7 Chinese
4 Steakhouse
10 Healthy
11 Fast Food
40 Café

If then one searches for Maltese cuisine, not even one venue comes up, whilst if one searches for Mediterranean, then 150 outlets are indicated.

The filter for fine dining returns 11 restaurants all indicating a Mediterranean cuisine, and another 6 that offer a European kitchen.

Another filter applied was that for Local Cuisine resulting in 51 outlets, the majority of which featuring Italian, Mediterranean and European concurrently. Again Maltese cuisine does not feature as it has not been set by Trip Advisor as a filter category. So it was decided to go through the reviews of the Local Cuisine category and a number of what could be considered as local features were highlighted. These were: rabbit, Maltese bread, fish, and local beer and wine.

Another main feature that was mentioned referred to the venue itself.

Restaurants and Geography

Restaurants are primarily sites of production and consumption. Yet such foodways manifest themselves through dialogues staged between the chef and the diners. The restaurant becomes a staged performance as the chef creates a culinary experience, a micro ambience that allows diners to uphold their identity.

The development of bars, restaurants, cafes and other food-related outlets forms an integral part of the cultural process negotiating the regeneration of cities of culture. Undoubtedly, Valletta's gastronomic foodscape became one of the most democratised aspect of the cultural product enjoyed by both the Maltese and the thousands of tourists and other foreigners who visit Valletta every year.

Against this background, geography immediately communicates a foodscape that aligns with Zelinsky's conclusion that class and tourism are strong predictors of the most popular types of food restaurants.[27] Another interesting observation is related to the geography of mainstream cuisines versus the less-mainstream ones. Although Zelinsky's study might be considered passé, it is interesting to consider how particular cuisines, considered as rather unique and exclusive, such as Chinese,

[27] Wilbur Zelinsky, "The roving palate: North America's ethnic restaurant cuisines," *Geoforum* 16, (1985): 51-72.

are no longer exotic, unpopular or even marginalized. The internationalization of the Chinese cuisine has resulted in the incorporation of particular Chinese foods in the palate of the Maltese, also widely recognised by the westernized consumer who also visits the Maltese islands as part of the tourism experience.

The foodscape of out-of-home food services in Malta has recently been undergoing some interesting developments. One remarkable factor is related to the entrepreneurial flair of those investing substantial funds to provide a unique restaurant experience. In recent years, persons who have decided to migrate to Malta have also joined in such ventures.

A phenomenon that had been developing over the past five years or so, is that involving out-of-home food related services offered by immigrants hailing especially from Sub-Sahara Africa and the Middle East. These restaurants, rather limited in number when compared to the more familiar westernised culinary experiences, are providing a rather unique ethnic cuisine experience. Immigrants hailing from continental Europe have also been influencing the Maltese foodscape, and conspicuously the many coming from Sicily and other Italian regions intending specifically to provide an Italian culinary experience in Malta.

Distinguishing between mainstream and less mainstream cuisines is in itself an important aspect that is worth exploring further. For the purpose of this study, it is important to understand the role of the migrant communities, their culinary identities and the manner in which these are incorporated within the foodscape of a place.

Evidence of the nomenclature used to identify Italian cuisine restaurants in Valletta is immediately indicative of those mind-sets recognizing the acquired taste of the local and the visitor. The longstanding familiarity of Malta with Italian products and food provides enough justification to explain this process of culinary inculturation. The proliferation of Italian cuisine is a clear reflection of the incorporation of this foreign culinary practise into the Maltese palate. The integration of Italian culinary practices in other parts of the world further attests to the success of such restaurants within Valletta's landscape. Revered as one of the leading cuisines within the Mediterranean and beyond, Italian food culture also emanates from the current popular association of Mediterranean cuisine with healthy living. The sum of all brings together the confluence of culinary culture, the regeneration of Valletta and the foodscape through the geography of migration.

Food travels with people, and the spread of culinary cultures is influenced by demographic movements and settlement patterns. Yet, in Valletta a total lack of cuisines representative of immigrants hailing from Sub-Sahara Africa and the Middle East is starkly evident. The most obvious reason is squarely influenced by an economy of scales. The regeneration of Valletta witnessed the exponential increase in the value of property. Property rent and prices vary according to the location within

the city streetscape, and this is generated a hierarchy of restaurant classes, service and experience. Distinction is immediately communicated between one culinary culture and another through the financial capacities of the investor, which as yet has not attracted any interest to tap into the Valletta market from entrepreneurs from the regions discussed here.

The absence of a sustainable market for such cuisines brings forth other considerations related to settlement patterns and the acquired taste of the Maltese with respect to cuisines from Sudan, Ethiopia, Syria and Lebanon, among others. A concentration of immigrants hailing from such countries have settled in the towns of Hamrun, Marsa and Qormi – situated within a ten-kilometre radius from Valletta. As these individuals pour into these neighbourhoods, they also bring with them their cultural experiences, including culinary practices and tastes. Although such culinary experiences have, up till now, failed to become part of the Valletta foodscape, the main street in Hamrun became a main focal point of various restaurants and other food outlets run by these immigrants. Therefore, apart from economic considerations, the concentration of particular nationalities within a geographical space provides an opportunity for a particular foodscape to develop within a settlement.

Ray explains how ethnic restaurants provide immigrants with various opportunities that transcend economic advancement.[28] As a direct experience of home-away-from-home, such eateries offer opportunities for the immigrants to communicate their cultural identity also through food. The supply side is also squarely dependant on the consumer and the consumer's appropriation of the offered experience.

Food Trends

The adoption of food experiences by a wider audience depends on trends and trend setters. From long ago food became a symbol of power and authority. Humans consider food as another currency defining status within a society. Reminiscing of repasts triggers food-related memories that could narrate a person's identity.[29] As an intangible form of cultural heritage, food generates its own social life. Depending on time and place, humans assigning food meanings and imagine related food trends.[30]

The recognition and integration of mainstream and non-mainstream cuisines brings forth another complex issue associated with the main proponents of cultural capital. Bourdieu defines taste as a system of classificatory schemes that are barely conscious. Cultural capital encompasses the knowledge, skills and tastes that help signify one's status in society. Park argues that tastes are inextricably linked to one's

[28] Krishendu Ray, "Dreams of Pakistani Grill and Vada Pao in Manhattan: Reinscribing the immigrant body in metropolitan discussions of taste," *Culture & Society* 14, no.2 (2011): 243-273. See also Krishendu Ray, *The Ethnic Restaurateur* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016).

[29] David Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts. An anthropology of food and memory* (Indiana: Berg Publishers, 2001).

[30] Alessandra Guigoni, "Tradizione, innovazione e vintage nei foodscapes contemoranei. Il case study dei dolci sardi," *ANUAC* 1, no.2 (2012): 40-56.

social status and economic background, producing a 'taste of luxury' or a 'taste of necessity'.[31] Along the same thinking, Bourdieu considers consumers with high cultural capital as the diners who experience 'the world freed from urgency and through the practise of activities which are an end in themselves, such as … the contemplation of works of art.'[32]

Foodies could be considered as consumers with high cultural capital. Foodies approach food as an object of study and aesthetic appreciation. For Johnson and Baumann the interest of foodies in food is manifested in their cultural capital through 'education, identity, exploration and evaluation'.[33] Like food critics, consumers with a high cultural capital can also influence what is hierarchically categorized as mainstream and less mainstream cuisines. This cultural classification also differentiates between "foreign cuisines" and "ethnic cuisines". The former enjoys a high-ranking position, including Continental, Mediterranean, Italian, French and more recently, Chinese cuisine.

Culinary hierarchy is not necessarily a clear-cut binary high and low, simply categorised as mainstream and less-mainstream cuisines. Michael Pollan's reflections on the 'omnivores' dilemma' is enough to indicate how food consumers also differentiate themselves when choosing to consume foods that distinguish them from others within the same group.[34] During such processes, groups decide to adopt and value particular foods over others. Such behaviour is neither a continuum as relegated foods could be rediscovered and reinvented.

Maltese Cuisine

Malta's culinary culture is quite eclectic, one may describe it as a fusion cuisine. Malta's dependency on large quantities of food imports and the cosmopolitan nature of the harbour area generated an environment of sharing and adopting various culinary practices. However, as already indicated above, food provisions were not always readily available to meet the basic needs of a growing population. Hunger was an omnipresent fear, since general conditions only started to improve very slowly during the post-World War Two period. Significant improvements in the general standard of living was experienced during the closing decades of the twentieth century.[35] The regular and abundant availability of food, coupled with a growing interest in restaurant food, made it possible for the Maltese to finally start to liberate

[31] Kendall Park, "Ethnic Foodscapes: Foreign cuisines in the United States," *Food, Culture & Society. An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 20, no.3 (2017): 368.
[32] Pierre. Bourdieu, *Distinction. A social critique of the judgement of taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 46.
[33] Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann, *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction in the Gourmet Foodscape* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2010).
[34] Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma. The search for the perfect meal in a fast-food world* (London: Penguin Press, 2006).
[35] Kenneth Gambin and Noel Buttigieg, *Storja tal-Kultura*.

themselves from the shackles of the past. This mindset was best manifested in the way several sought new foods and tastes, partially abandoning foods that have formed part of the regular fare of the Maltese, especially among those living in rural areas. Malta's culinary culture experienced an exogenous shock as culinary practices changed rapidly and in an incomprehensible manner.

During the past two decades Malta's culinary culture is again enjoying "front burner" status. While at home the Maltese still prepare foods considered to be an integral part of their culinary heritage. On the other hand, there is a lesser likelihood that these Maltese would seek to eat "traditional" food in a restaurant setting. Without engaging into the complexity of defining what might constitute "authentic" and "traditional" Maltese food, the Valletta regeneration project presents the interested diner with one opportunity of choice.[36] As the Maltese have developed a taste for cuisines ranging from Mediterranean to Continental, from French to Italian, the Valletta product provides them with ample opportunities for choice.

Influenced by Bourdieu's concept of habitus, Billiard also attributed Malta's attention to traditional cuisine to a high cultural capital aficionado.[37] Almost two decades later, the Maltese are increasingly becoming cognisant of the impact of globalization on their island's culinary identity. This growing awareness is the product of a "trickle down" effect, in Bourdieu's words, 'downclassing and upclassing'.[38] The availability of restaurants offering a Maltese culinary experience outside of Valletta, mainly located in towns still enjoying some connotation with "rural" life, provides elements for further consideration.

The quasi-absence of Maltese cuisine from the Valletta regeneration product could arguably be considered a missed opportunity both on the local as well as on the international level. Gezici and Kerimoglu explain how 'cultural heritage is the main attraction of cities; cultural heritage conserves the cultural values of the place and connects people to their collective memories'.[39] Since cultural resources form an integral part of the making of a place, then tangible and intangible cultural assets should be celebrated to reflect both the place and the experience.[40]

Several researchers have drawn their attention to problematic practices when mobilizing urban cultural resources employed for the regeneration of cities. Harvey

[36] Noel Buttigieg, "Towards a Maltese culinary identity: Some considerations," *Melita Historica* 16, no.3 (2014): 69-80.
[37] Elise Billiard, "When tradition becomes trendy: social distinction in Maltese food culture," *Anthropological Notebooks*, no.12 (2006): 113-126. Also, Elise Billiard, "Searching for a National Cuisine," *Journal of Maltese History* 2, no.1 (2010): 47-58.
[38] Bourdieu, *Distinction.* 163.
[39] Ferhan *Gezici* and Ebru *Kerimoglu*, "Culture, tourism and regeneration process in Istanbul," *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 4, no.3 (2010): 252-265.
[40] Soren Smidt-Jensen, "The roles of culture and creativity within urban development strategies: Scandinavian cities," *Centre for Strategic Urban Research*, no.8 (2007).

describes regeneration as a 'carnival mask',[41] Ritzer as 'cathedrals of consumption',[42] Amin and Thrift refers to 'selling places for pleasure',[43] and Berg considers the economic drive behind prestigious projects as exercises leading towards a 'citadel of spectacle'.[44]

While culture-led regeneration projects play a significant role in the reconstruction of urban economy and image, financial goals, property development and entrepreneurship take priority over the protection of local identities and quality life. The "trickle down" effect through foodscapes within the regeneration process bring forth also possibilities of gentrification as people feel the lack of social justice or inclusion. The attention on some flagship projects is enough to attest to those developments that bypass the local community.[45]

Space and place: Is-Suq tal-Belt (The Valletta Market)

The preparation and consumption of food is also tightly connected to place. Lefebvre, a leading theorist, has articulated the tripartite formulation of the production of space. He proposes the concept that space is socially reproduced through three modes that exist in dialectical tension – (material) spatial practices; (mental) space of representations; and (lived) representations of space. In his famous *The Production of Space*[46] Lefebvre argues that: 'An existing space may outlive its original purpose and the *raison d'etre* which determines its forms, functions, and structures; it may thus in a sense become vacant, and susceptible of being diverted, reappropriated and put to a use quite different from its initial one'.

By way of an explanation one may compare *Halles Centrales*, Paris and *Is-Suq tal-Belt*, Valletta. Both were inspired by leading architects. *Les Halles* Market was designed by Victor Baltard. Hector Zimelli, the Superintendent of Public Works in Malta, was inspired for his design of the Valletta market by Baltard, and by Sir Charles Fox of Crystal Palace (London) fame. The final building erected in the open space, which during the time of the Order of St John was known as the Piazza del Malcantone, was completed under the direction of the ubiquitous Maltese architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia in collaboration with British architects Scamp and Barry.[47]

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[41] David Harvey, "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation in urban governance in late capitalism," *Human Geography* 71, no.1 (1989): 3-17. See also David Harvey, "Voodoo cities," *New Statesman and Society* 1 (1988): 33–35.

[42] George Ritzer, *Enchanting a disenchanted world: Continuity and change in the cathedrals of consumption*. (California: Pine Forge Press, 2010). See also, Greg Richards and Julie Wilson, "Developing creativity in tourist experiences: a solution to the serial reproduction of culture," *Tourism Management* 27 (2006): 1209-23.

[43] Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, "Cultural-economy and cities," *Progress in Human Geography* 31, no.2 (2007): 152.

[44] Jonathan Berg, *Positively Birmingham* (Birmingham: Birmingham Picture Library, 2003).

[45] Beatriz Plaza, "Evaluating the influence of large cultural artefacts in the attraction of tourism: the Guggenheim museum Bilbao case," *Urban Affairs Review* 36, no.2 (2000): 264-74. See also Graeme Evans, "Measure for measure: evaluating the evidence of culture's contribution to regeneration," *Urban Studies* 42, nos. 5 and 6 (2005): 1-25.

[46] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991) – this book was originally published in French in 1974, and later published in English in 1991, translated by the ex-situationist Donald Nicholson-Smith.

[47] https://issuqtalbelt.com/about-us/

In the case of *Halles*, this building was re-appropriated in the late 1960s whereby from a wholesale produce market it was 'transformed into a gathering-place and a scene of permanent festival – in short, into a centre of play rather than of work – for the youth of Paris'.[48]

Lefebvre observes that 'The diversion and re-appropriation of such spaces are of great significance, for they teach us much about the production of new spaces'. *Is-Suq tal-Belt* was the space which in the public eye was similar to how Emile Sola described *Les Halles* – 'the belly of the city'. Though on a smaller scale it was, nonetheless, the space where food was concentrated and then distributed throughout the city.[49]

In 2015 the Government of Malta declared that the former market building was to be restored in preparation for the Valletta ECOC 2018. In 2016 Arkadia Co. Ltd was granted a 65 year lease. Today *Is-Suq tal-Belt* or Valletta Food Market, is promoted as 'The New Destination in the City',[50] which from an iconic Victorian-era structure in Valletta it slowly became a derelict rundown structure, and then was transformed 'into a state of the art destination, where one can grab a bite, shop for food and relax in the city'. The website claims that 'The new and restored is-Suq tal-Belt brings to life a site which was neglected for years and was in danger of collapsing, returning this masterpiece to the public to enjoy while preserving the iconic Suq tal-Belt for future generations".[51]

On the one hand it can be argued that providing an international choice of cuisines is not promoting Maltese heritage and does not portray the Maltese cultural identity; on the other hand one can also counter argue that it is the activity which is performed in the space and the product of the activity which gives a place or a space its meaning, and by extension a sense of identity.[52]

At this point one may conclude with a question or two: Does *Is-Suq tal-Belt* and other spaces used for the consumption of food in a social context embody Maltese culture? What does this re-appropriation mean?

[48] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 167.
[49] Sarah Bonnemaison and Christine Macy, *Festival Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2008), 296.
[50] https://issuqtalbelt.com/
[51] https://issuqtalbelt.com/about-us/
[52] Marie Avellino, "The Maltese Gift: Tourist Encounters with the Self and the Other in Later Life," (PhD diss., London Metropolitan University, 2016).

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Impacts of Aarhus 2017: The Citizen Perspective

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Abstract

This presentation was delivered during the UNEECC Malta conference in 2018 and draws from the results and discussions published in the ECOC evaluation report for Aarhus 2017. The content below is the unedited version of (i) the summary and (ii) chapter 7 of the same report, i.e. AARHUS 2017 – BEFORE DURING AFTER. Degn et al., 2018, pp.7-11 and pp. 142-158. The Editors of this proceedings were given permission from the authors of the aforementioned publication to include parts of it tale quale for ease of reference – the presenter believes that this information shall provide the readers of this book with deeper knowledge and context on recent European Capitals of Culture and their contribution toward a number of cultural elements. The original version can be found online - https://projects.au.dk/fileadmin/projects/IMPACT_2017/Aarhus2017_before_during_after.pdf

The effects of the European Capital of Culture Aarhus 2017 are examined through a research-based analysis conducted by rethinkIMPACTS 2017 at Aarhus University. The evaluation is based on five years of collection and processing of large amounts of diverse data (interviews, questionnaire surveys, monitoring data, document analysis, etc.). The analyses of this data have been presented in a number of thematic reports as well as this main report. The evaluation of Aarhus 2017 points to the following major findings:

INTERDISCIPLINARY COOPERATION – AARHUS 2017'S DNA

•A particular strength of Aarhus 2017 was that the European Capital of Culture project was based on many different types of collaboration. These collaborations included cross-municipal cooperation as host of Aarhus 2018, decentralised programme production with the involvement of many cultural operators and sponsorship cooperation with the business community.

• Central Denmark Region and all the region's municipalities supported Aarhus as European Capital of Culture. The cross-municipal cooperation has continued after Aarhus 2017 in the form of the European Region of Culture project, initially over a two-year period, 2018-2019.

• Sponsors have expressed considerable satisfaction with their cooperation with the Aarhus 2017 Foundation. Some of the sponsors are interested in the preservation of the platform Aarhus 2017 created. This might take place through the business clubs of the local cultural institutions.

• Many new relationships, networks and constellations have been created and developed as a result of cooperation with and between local cultural institutions.

MANY PEOPLE CONTRIBUTED TO THE REALISATION OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE PROJECT

• Eighty per cent of the programme production was handled by other culture operators than the Aarhus 2017 Foundation itself, primarily local content providers (cultural institutions, artists and others). In this way, the European Capital of Culture project challenge participating institutions and culture producing environments in the region, as well as helping them become more visible and competent.

• Aarhus 2017 Foundation had various roles along the way, as funder, monitor, artistic content producer and co-developer. For some cultural institutions, this led to frustration and confusion, while others expressed recognition of the fact that the artistic dialogue with the foundation helped improve and develop projects.

• Aarhus 2017 Foundation placed a high emphasis on cooperation with reliable, stable partners, and placed a somewhat lower priority on collaboration with up-and-coming players and some of the newer and smaller cultural operators.

• The Aarhus 2017 Foundation was operationally reliable, stayed within its budget, lived up to its own key performance indicators and managed to sustain political support for the project.

• The loan of employees from the municipalities and the region to the Foundation Aarhus 2017 secretariat contributed to the reduction of the foundation’s operating expenses, a smoothly operating secretariat and competency development for the employees.

LARGE PROGRAMME–FOR THE TRADITIONAL CULTURE AUDIENCE

• The programme was of high international artistic quality. The traditional cultural genres constituted most of the programme.

• The foundation's own programme contributions were particularly focused on internationally renowned artists. Only to a lesser extent were connections made between these artists and local artists.

• The theme ‘Rethink' worked well as a framework for a rich cultural programme, and balanced the qualities of being binding, inclusive and inspiring in an appropriate way. On the other hand, the three values (democracy, sustainability and diversity), only had peripheral significance.

• The vast majority (90%) of the audience had a positive experience of the various events.

• Overall, the composition of Aarhus 2017 's audience reflected the usual cultural audience. The majority of the audience members were already regular cultural consumers.

• One-third of the cultural institutions believe that they reached out to new audiences during the European Capital of Culture year.

• A significant barrier to audience participation was the perception that the programme and how it was communicated were confusing. A clearer programme structure and better communication about the programme could have made citizens' access to cultural experiences easier.
• No effects on general cultural consumption can be demonstrated as a result of Aarhus 2017.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP CENTRED ON THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

• In relation to active citizenship, the volunteer programme 'ReThinkers' had a major effect. Volunteer work was centred in and around Aarhus. A quarter of the participating ReThinkers were 'new volunteers'.
• The volunteers' experience with the work was positive, and in particular they stress the high degree of variation in and influence on the performance of their tasks.
• The most extensive involvement of citizens took place in the application phase. Subsequently citizen involvement primarily took place in relatively few specific cultural projects in which citizens were involved and co-producing in various ways.

VISIBILITY AND STORYTELLING

• Aarhus 2017 achieved high visibility, not least in local and regional news media. At the same time, the European Capital of Culture project achieved a high degree of awareness among the inhabitants of the region – and the rest of the Danes.
• The media's presentation of Aarhus 2017 was composed of many different stories. These stories were generally positive and not marked by major crises. In this way, Aarhus 2017 distinguishes itself from quite a few other European Capital of Culture projects.
• Aarhus 2017 became a positive brand that citizens associated themselves with, especially on Instagram. In this way, the European Capital of Culture project made both the city and culture into positive identity markers for citizens.
• To an increasing degree, citizens in the Central Denmark Region perceive both Aarhus and Central Denmark Region as "an interesting place for culture".

EFFECTS ON THE ROLE AND VALUE OF CULTURE

• The role and value of culture has received increased attention among politicians, government officials and sponsor companies.
• In the wake of the European Capital of Culture project, politicians and local government perceive culture as a relevant development driver to a higher extent, also in addition to the cultural sector.
• On the other hand, this is not accompanied by an increased economic prioritisation of culture, understood in terms of municipal spending on culture per capita.

• The European Capital of Culture project has made a local and regional impact. Especially in the City of Aarhus, the European Capital of Culture project has had a major impact, while its significance has been slightly lower in the region's other municipalities. The national impact is very minor.
• The European dimension is particularly visible in connection with the establishment of international partnerships and networks. In terms of content, the European/international dimension is less apparent.

In conclusion, Aarhus 2017 has already had effects, particularly in relation to the development of interdisciplinary cooperation and a strengthened role for culture.

RETHOUGHT (THE FINALIZING CHAPTER OF THE EVALUATION REPORT)

The overall theme of the European Capital of Culture project was 'rethink'. The framework for rethinking was formulated in the application's six strategic goals. With reference to these, Aarhus 2017 has had effects on a variety of areas.
While the Capital of Culture year is over, there is a clear expectation that the effects and the value of the project will continue to develop in the years to come. In some areas, this value may only become apparent in the long term.

But all medals have two sides, and this is also the case here. In the concluding chapter of this report, we summarise both short-term and long-term effects, as well as potential that remains unrealised. We also reflect on our own role as evaluators, evaluating the evaluation and whether the approach to evaluation has been rethought.

SHORT- AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS

COLLABORATION

The cross-cutting collaborations are some of the major positive effects. This applies not least to the cross-municipal collaboration between the 19 municipalities and the region, as well as to the strengthened collaboration between culture and business, just as many of the cultural institutions and the other content providers – across traditional boundaries – now have new collaborative relationships. Aarhus 2017 made its mark as a strong catalyst for the development of collaborations.

This meant that many cultural institutions now have the courage to raise their ambitions and think in terms of new kinds of collaboration. This has also meant that culture has a gained a new expanded role at cross-municipal and regional level, which (to our knowledge) it does not have elsewhere in the country.

The cross-municipal cultural collaboration has been prolonged in the form of the European Region of Culture, which will present a new regional cultural festival in the summer of 2019. To begin with, for two years only, and on a significantly

smaller scale than the European Capital of Culture project. We assume that the regional collaboration will continue to exist – given one prerequisite: that the region continues to exist. Without the region as a cohesive force that supplies extra resources, it is doubtful that the municipalities can and will continue the regional collaboration in relation to culture.

In any case, the dimension of collaboration is something we predict will have a long-term effect. So many new relationships were created in and around the European Capital of Culture project that some of them will doubtless still exist in ten years. New connections have been created between culture and business and industry. Entirely new cultural outputs that will provide inspiration have seen the light of day as a result of cross-cutting collaboration. Personal relationships have been created, and crossinstitutional collaborations have been successfully tested. Even if the concrete collaborations do not continue, they will in any case serve as inspiration and precedent for the formation of new ones.

QUALITY AND AUDIENCE SATISFACTION

Aarhus 2017 consisted of a generally high-quality cultural programme with a mix of locally produced events, local-international co-productions and import of international names. Overall this contributed to enabling the European Capital of Culture to promote and strengthen the long-term development and significance of culture. In relation to audiences, the Aarhus 2017 Foundation met its targets in relation to attendance figures. The vast majority of the audience members had local/ regional affiliations, but the programme did succeed to some extent in attracting a national audience as well. International tourists only constituted a small proportion of the audiences at Aarhus 2017 events.

Aarhus 2017's funds were not spent on construction and permanent physical infrastructure, as has been the case in a number of other European Capital of Culture projects. The programme budget was spent on projects that were either audience-oriented and/or were aimed at developing capacity and competencies among the region's artists, cultural institutions and creative operators. According to our assessment, this was a good choice, even though one consequence is that the visible traces of the European Capital of Culture project may quickly fade and be forgotten. The depth and quality of the intangible traces and impact will have the greatest possible effect if the permanent players actively work to sustain and further develop these effects.

THE STRENGTH OF CULTURE

Politically speaking, culture has gained a new and more significant role as an agenda-setting and cocreating driver of development in political processes, also outside the

cultural sector. Not least in Aarhus, culture has served as a catalyst of collaborations across sectors and municipal departments. Aarhus 2017 has shifted our perception of culture as a peripheral and isolated policy area. The various connections between culture and eldercare or urban development, for example, will most likely continue to develop. The results achieved in regard to strategic and interdisciplinary collaboration have created new traditions for collaboration that we assume will continue to maintain the culture and the cultural infrastructure at a higher level in relation to planning and development in the years to come.

The cultural sector has been strengthened in the form of the competencies developed during the European Capital of Culture project. In ten years, there will be cultural institutions that will be able to look back on Aarhus 2017 as decisive for their strategic development. And artists who will be able to look back on Aarhus 2017 in ten years as a decisive career boost. Many employees have gained experience on a scale they would otherwise not have. This applies not least to some of the Aarhus 2017 Foundation's employees, whether on loan on or staff. Some of these employees have already moved on to jobs that must be characterised as career leaps, as a direct consequence of their involvement in Aarhus 2017.

THE AARHUS 2017 STORY

The start-up phase with its broad process of inclusion created a widespread and strong sense of ownership among citizens, cultural operators, business and industry and other stakeholder groups. The Aarhus 2017 Foundation took over when the title was awarded, and generally speaking, it has functioned reliably. Making it through a European Capital of Culture project with balanced accounts, without significant managerial or planning failures and with broad political support is definitely not a given. We know from other European Capital of Culture projects and from a number of large Danish cultural events that budget overruns, managerial challenges and a lack of political support are often the rule rather than the exception.

At the European level, it is likely that Aarhus 2017 will stand as the story of a successful, stable and well-run European Capital of Culture project, the hallmark of which was in particular the regional and cross-municipal perspective, and thus a statement that such projects do not only benefit the principal city. In addition, experience with working internationally has been gained by a large proportion of the region's cultural operators. Internationalisation must be supported and prioritised, but if that happens, the traces will most likely still be visible in ten years.

Aarhus and Central Denmark Region as travel destinations are now on the map, locally, nationally and internationally. While most likely very few foreigners will be able to name Aarhus as European Capital of Culture in 2017 in ten years, Aarhus as a brand has received a lot of positive coverage internationally, and the

many visitors before, during and after Aarhus 2017 mean that even more will know the city and remember it for something positive.

THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

The volunteers ended up playing a pivotal role. The volunteer programme became an important part of Aarhus 2017's success, both before and especially during the European Capital of Culture year. A good framework for volunteer efforts was created early on, including a good milieu that citizens wanted to participate in. The value of the volunteer programme and not least the new initiative with volunteer cruise ship hosts has had a clear effect, both internally in Aarhus and outwardly in relation to tourism. In the years to come, the volunteer programme and effort will be continued under the aegis of VisitAarhus.

SPONSOR AGREEMENTS

Business and industry got involved through the Aarhus 2017 Foundation's partnership programme. This allowed the Aarhus 2017 Foundation to reach out to a variety of different companies that got involved in the European Capital of Culture project for philanthropic and network-oriented reasons – not for financial gain. Going forward, there is potential in continuing the network-related aspect, either under the aegis of the European Region of Culture or – even better – through the business clubs of the local cultural institutions.

UNFULFILLED POTENTIAL

'Rethink' is an ambitious theme for a project as large and prestigious as Aarhus 2017. Although the theme generally functioned well as a challenge to the cultural sphere and others, there are naturally also areas that were not rethought, or where the potential that lay in the European Capital of Culture title was not realised.

UP-AND-COMING TALENTS, THE SMALL AND THE NEW

The large players were favorised, not least the least the large cultural institutions in Aarhus, both financially and with regard to opportunities to supply content for the programme. There were very few points of entry for participating, producing and influencing the programme during the last years leading up to the European Capital of Culture year itself. As a consequence, it was difficult for up-andcoming talents, new operators and citizen-driven initiatives to find opportunities to contribute. At the same time, the long-time horizon was also an advantage for large and permanent operators.

Part of the explanation for the long-time horizon lies in EU's demand that a large part of the programme must be decided on during the application phase. In

addition, there were personnel changes among central managers. This created considerable confusion, which in turn meant that some of the smaller, more loosely organised operators got decoupled from the project.

In addition, there could have been a better connection between the international content, which was primarily the programme director's responsibility, and the locally produced content. That this did not occur to a greater extent was, in our opinion, due to the programme director's late arrival and lack of prior familiarity with the regional cultural scene, as well as her significantly more internationally oriented than Danish oriented network. The Danish and regional art scene could have derived greater benefit from more exchange, and the diversity of European culture could have been strengthened considerably more.

AUDIENCE COMPOSITION

The programme only succeeded in reaching nonhabitual cultural consumers to a limited extent. The events were primarily attended by typical cultural consumers. The challenge in developing new audiences is a classic problem, and it is difficult to achieve really significant results. If this is to succeed, it takes awareness of the target audience, a longterm effort and close engagement with the intended target audience.

That Aarhus 2017 did not achieve greater success in developing audiences is also due to the fact that the programme was based around the conventional genres of culture to a large extent. When attempting to reach new audiences, it is an advantage to take a more target audience-oriented approach and to work in genres that appeal more directly to these groups.

Although Aarhus 2017 has not had an effect on total cultural consumption among the region's citizens, the experience among cultural institutions is that a number of these have attracted more and new visitors. The institutions see additional potential in the years to come. Further work should be done on this, both by the individual institution and in a regional perspective, which should go beyond the limited activities associated with the European Region of Culture. In addition, Aarhus 2017 had challenges in presenting the programme to citizens in a clearly organised way, particularly in relation to the programme. A more centrally coordinated communication effort would have been advantageous. At the same time, it is to be desired that Aarhus 2017 had 'rethought' and solved a general challenge for major cultural projects by communicating an extensive programme in a way that citizens and audiences found easy to understand. A 'rethought' solution to this challenge could have been a significant contribution to other large cultural events.

THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

No strategic efforts were made to use Aarhus 2017 as a catalyst for the development and creation of growth in the creative industries. More Creative Events worked fine as an isolated project, but the initiative was not linked to long-term business development potential. Viewed in the light of Central Denmark Region's own analyses and development projects, which show that the region is home to a very large and growing creative industry, it is regrettable that this opportunity was not exploited. The foundation's own anticipated effects included a focus on the creative industries, with quite high ambitions. But the initiative lacked strategic heft.

THE MUNICIPAL CULTURE BUDGETS

Despite the fact that Aarhus 2017 was a major cultural policy initiative, generally speaking, it has not led to increased municipal culturerelated expenditure (per inhabitant). However in some municipalities, including the City of Aarhus, additional financial resources were transferred to culture in the years around the European Capital of Culture project.

If the goal of the major public strategic commitment to Aarhus 2017 was a significant, lasting boost to the priority assigned to culture, the extent to which it is necessary to reflect this commitment in the municipal economic prioritisations must also be considered.

WORKING STRATEGICALLY WITH THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS

The Aarhus 2017 Foundation produced a legacy strategy[1] that was presented at a conference in March 2017. The strategy outlined the expected effects, but did not have a forward-looking, actionoriented perspective. The foundation did not consider itself responsible for following up on the strategy, which has subsequently not achieved much visibility or impact.

In different ways, the permanent players (the region, the municipalities and the cultural institutions) have taken responsibility for working with the long-term effects strategically. But no common regional process that reaches beyond the municipal administrations and also includes cultural institutions, business and industry and perhaps even citizens has been established. The permanent players should take responsibility for a coherent development process.

So far, it appears that most of the efforts to create long-term effects take the form of a continuation of individual projects and initiatives. For example, a number of cultural institutions and other operators are continuing projects and collaborations that were initiated and carried out in connection with Aarhus 2017. The European

[1] "Vores varige spor: En ny begyndelse" (Our lasting traces: A new beginning), the Aarhus 2017 Foundation (March 2017).

Region of Culture is a step in the right direction, although there is little funding available for transferring knowledge, and the initiative will initially only last for a two-year period. An extension depends on whether the parties behind the project achieve visible results, and that the European Region of Culture as a joint regional project finds its place in relation to the regional cultural agreements.

SELF-EVALUATION

Finally, we would like to reflect on the evaluation process itself. rethinkIMPACTS 2017 was the expression of an ambitious idea conceived in the application phase and realised in the period 2013-2018. This is the first time in Denmark that a university has taken on such a large evaluation project in the cultural sphere. This alone has meant that the project has led to increased competencies and created networks linking the city, the region, the cultural scene and the university that, through knowledge development and exchange, put all parties involved in a stronger position than before the evaluation of the European Capital of Culture project began.

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

Since the beginning, there has been a strong emphasis on interdisciplinarity and on the development of method. Both aspects have shown themselves to be a challenge. Taking an interdisciplinary approach in particular has been challenged by the fact that the university is a large organisation divided into separate fields with researchers whose work is characterised by a high degree of autonomy and freedom of research. In some fields, it can thus be difficult to get researchers to involve themselves in projects in which the parameters of the study are more or less-predefined (on account of the evaluation criteria) in a situation offering very limited opportunities for workload reduction/co-financed research time. These factors have created difficult conditions for research collaboration across the university's faculties.

However, a certain degree of interdisciplinarity has been achieved – particularly in relation to the Master's degree students, but also to some degree among research staff, as the European Capital of Culture year drew closer and became increasingly perceived as a relevant research topic. Nevertheless, there were clear defects: such as the economic and method development perspective, in relation to which we would have like to collaborate with more researchers than it turned out to be possible to engage in reality. This applies not least to the development of new and sorely needed indicators and more accurate models for the market and welfare economy effects.

We see a current need for and great potential in continuing to develop methods which are based on a broader understanding of cultural value and effect.

RETHOUGHT METHODS AND APPROACHES?

The evaluation is primarily based on data collected through traditional, well-tested methods, such as interviews and questionnaire surveys, so in this regard very little rethinking has taken place. Along the way, numerous ideas for the development of new methods arose which could not be realised for various reasons. For example, we wanted to collaborate with the foundation to use the European Capital of Culture programme app to collect data about attendance figures, experiences, etc. Other innovative and rethought methods of data collection were also conceived.

But in line with our conclusions regarding the foundation's operational stability versus the courage to experiment, in relation to the evaluation, we must also acknowledge that methodological experiments are risky. Because we were under an obligation to produce an evaluation that accurately reflected the effects of the European Capital of Culture year based on solid data, we had to prioritise operational stability in rethinkIMPACTS 2017's choice of method.

On the other hand, we have developed and tested a new approach to evaluation that involves operators to a much higher degree, which has not only resulted in better-quality data, but which also provided the participating operators with an opportunity for learning and reflection. We find that in addition to establishing a solid basis for evaluation, this also provided operators and stakeholders with a deeper understanding of what was at stake in different aspects of the European Capital of Culture project.

We have also produced a basis for evaluation that includes many different perspectives which can be worked with for many years to come. Some possible topics of analysis (in addition to the need for new economic methods of measurement and calculation models) include analyses and research on cultural journalism and media coverage of culture, the development of new audiences, the optimisation of interdisciplinary collaboration based on culture as well as comparative studies of selected themes in relation to other European Capital of Culture projects.

THE DUAL ROLE OF EVALUATION

The evaluation brief had two components: a formative learning objective during the process, with a focus on development, communication and competency upgrade, and a concluding summative evaluation that analyses the effects of Aarhus 2017.[2] There are at least two challenges connected with this.

In the first place, the dual focus itself was not unproblematic. A challenge in formative evaluation that is well-described in the literature is that it presumes that the

[2] rethinkIMPACTS 2017 's approach to evaluation is largely inspired by Peter Dahler-Larsen's research on evaluation. See, for example, "Evaluering af projekter – og andre ting, som ikke er ting" (The evaluation of projects – and other things that are not things), Peter Dahler-Larsen, Syddansk Universitetsforlag (2013).

evaluated party is open to the evaluator, even in regard to his or her weaknesses, as this is where the greatest potential for learning lies. But in a situation like this, this can be difficult for the evaluated part, well knowing that the evaluator's role will shift from coaching and dialogue in connection with the formative evaluation, to summarising the effects of the evaluated party's efforts in the final phase, and in that connection also pointing out precisely the weaknesses. On the other hand, this process provides the evaluator with unique insight into the project's development and thus a deep understanding of the process, the different operators' perspectives and the changes that take place along the way.

Secondly, it was a challenge in a decentrally organised project such as Aarhus 2017 to facilitate a learning process involving a large and diverse group of individual, local and quite autonomous projects. In retrospect, it is possible that we ought to have focussed more on the local projects, for example in the form of special in-depth case studies. The learning perspective was valued, for example when we invited project managers to final workshops in 2017 and 2018. But particularly in relation to the foundation, it has been a challenge to generate learning in a project that was subject to a strong pressure to deliver followed up a wind-up phase. People learn best when there is a forward-looking perspective, and so we hope that the learning process is not yet over, but that this evaluation will contribute to continued learning on the part of the permanent partners (for example government officials and directors of cultural institutions), both in relation to sustaining and creating the effects of Aarhus 2017 and in relation to other major cultural events.

In a European perspective, the scope and approach of the evaluation have been ambitious. This has been noted by several of the coming European Capital of Culture projects, which have shown particular interest in our focus on involving operators as well as the partnership model between the university and the supplier (the foundation). From the EU's side, the framework for the evaluation is very broad, and this permits a wide variety of different evaluation practices in the individual European Capital of Culture projects, in relation to autonomy, and in relation to who performs the task. It is our hope – and expectation – that the work of rethinkIMPACTS 2017 will contributing to setting a standard for the organisation, planning, implementation and communication of European Capital of Culture projects – and of culture in general.

Tango Between History and Myth: Malta and the Globalisation of Argentine Tango.

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Abstract
In this paper I seek to propose a certain subjective displacement of history in favour of myth. The question of the origin and reproduction of culture is often caught up in debates of authenticity and its associated politics of identity. Starting from the premise that 'culture is always hybrid' this paper takes as a case study Argentine tango in two moments in time. It looks at the way it rose to popular consciousness in the immediate post-war period and then again at its current global appeal. The study draws upon ethnographic fieldwork in Malta and historical and literary discussion in order to draw out the difference between a question of cultural origins and transmission viewed from a political dimension and the question of culture in terms of its more mythological aspects.
Key words: Tango, Globalization, Myth, Lacan, Social Dancing, Malta

Introduction- Cultural Genesis and Reproduction.

The debate over the original or invented qualities of culture is a long-standing one within the cultural sciences. It is often tied to debates over national identity. Discussions over cultural identity have tended to result in little more than vindication of nationalist or indeed orientalist stereotypes. Anthropologists have become much more interested in understanding the ways in which stereotypes about cultural identity are used in social practice.[1] In many senses the opposition between 'culture' as either invented or inherited is somewhat of a false dichotomy. Both of the terms at stake 'inherited' and 'invented' are not mutually exclusive since they are used to address quite different questions. On the one hand there is the question of origins and on the other hand the question of transmission. While the two questions are distinct they are of course inter-related affairs: genesis and reproduction. Not all forms of genesis however are necessarily a matter of invention just as much as not all forms of cultural

[1] Michael Herzfeld, "Practical Mediterraneanism," in *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, ed. William V Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 59.

reproduction are the result of inheritance. Globalisation and indeed colonialism for example can be considered as modes of cultural reproduction while hybridity and discovery can be considered as alternative models of genesis.

We are often accustomed to addressing these questions in relation to more specific inflections of the 'culture' concept as in, for example, the idea of culture behind notions of 'Tradition' as discussed by Hobsbawn and Ranger[2] in the eighties and generations of historians thereafter. In this sense the question seems more straightforward. When discussing the 'invention of tradition' the issue is oftentimes a matter of trying to ascertain under what conditions an element of culture becomes re-cognized as part of a tradition. A question that becomes more salient when newly minted states are seeking to legitimise their claims of political autonomy or indeed when groups are staking a claim for autonomy. In this context culture is almost always heavily embroiled in political questions, as we see for example in the context of land right claims by indigenous Australians where inherited cultural traditions become a determining factor in rights to land.[3] When considering the issue within the context of the European Capital of Culture the question of culture as tradition or invention can shed some interesting points for reflection. This 'European tradition' is very much part and parcel of the process of nation building within the European community – an identity which is rapidly getting strained at its seams and destabilised from within.

Hobsbawm and Ranger define an invented tradition as 'a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms or behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past'.[4] On the one hand therefore the European Capital of Culture can be easily considered as an invented tradition being also rather easy to date historically, 1985 as a matter of fact. Its reproduction on the other hand is secured by a supranational European regulatory mechanism that systematically enjoins a civic identity with a continental one. The European Capital of Culture initiative can be considered as part of broader EU Cultural Politics aimed at generating a sense of European citizenship through the instrumentilsation of culture. As the anthropologist Chris Shore observed in his analysis of EU Cultural Policy: "European identity is thus portrayed simultaneously as a transcendental historical given founded upon "fundamental values" that are distinctly "European" and at the same time as something so insipid and non-existent in the mind's eye of

[2] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[3] See for example the interesting discussion in David S. Trigger "Land Rights and the Reproduction of Aboriginal Culture in Australia's Gulf Country," *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice* 41, no. 3 (1997): 84-106.
[4] Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1

ordinary Europeans that it has to be created instrumentally by elites, "using culture as a vehicle".[5]

In this context original moments are as important as foundational narratives. It is no accident that the first European Capital of Culture was indeed Athens in a symbolic process that enchains together this new annual tradition with the foundational mythos of Europa. As Calligaro notes; 'Laudatory and teleological discourses on European cultural identity, referring to glorious expressions of European genius often related to Athens, Rome and Christianity, have been central in the first decades of EU cultural action.'[6] Questions on whether 'culture' is inherited or invented need to always be asked within the particular political context that gives rise to the salience of such frameworks in the first place. In the following sections I will take one particular cultural element –Argentine tango – to approach the question of genesis and transmission from a structural perspective. I will be bringing together discussions from the historical literature as well as literary texts together with original ethnographic fieldwork in the island of Malta.

Do the Maltese Not Dance?

As part of the research programme of the Valletta 2018 Foundation focusing on 'Cultural Mapping' I had proposed to undertake an anthropological study of social dancing in Malta.[7] I was at first intrigued by the marked absence of social dancing within the canon of what goes by the name of 'Maltese dancing'. Beyond some very obvious attempts at contemporary invention largely catering for a tourist market using anachronistic peasant costumes, there is no real record for a 'Maltese tradition' of dancing, which is quite unique in this regard within the regional context. This, of course, hasn't stopped enterprising groups and individuals from recreating their own visions of certain largely extant carnival dances – again with the almost ubiquitous anachronistic peasant costumes. The data for contemporary social dancing in Malta also paints a rather interesting picture. According to the 2013 Euro-barometer Survey[8], dancing ranks as the most popular artistic activity in Europe. When asked whether or not they either sang or danced in the preceding twelve months, 12% of the European respondents said 'Yes'. Malta, however, has the lowest percentage in

[5] Chris Shore, "'In uno plures' (?) EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe," *Cultural Analysis* 5 (2006): 7-26.
[6] Oriane Calligaro, "From 'European Cultural Heritage' to 'Cultural Diversity'? The changing core values of European cultural policy," *Politique Européenne* 45 (2014), 79.
[7] Jean Paul Baldacchino, "Communities of Dance: Social Dancing in Malta," in *Capitalizing on Culture? Malta and the European Capital of Culture,* ed. Vicki Ann Cremona (Malta: Mediterranean Institute, University of Malta, 2018), 127-147.
[8] TNS Opinion and Social, *Special Eurobarometer 399: Cultural Access and Participation Report*. (European Commission, 2013)

Europe in terms of participation in singing or dancing, with only 2% having participated in one of the two activities. From a 'mapping' perspective it didn't seem there was much that one could easily point to in terms of dancing in Malta beyond a largely invented ceremonial tradition.

Even though statistics seem to point towards a marked absence of social dancing in Malta, it is interesting to note that over the last fifteen years or so, new social dance styles have been introduced to the Maltese Islands. These include Salsa, Argentine Tango and Line dancing among others. While Ballroom dancing in the Maltese Islands can be dated to the period just before World War I[9], its current organizational structure was established circa twenty years ago through the establishment of two NGOs. There is also some interesting historical evidence to the presence of Argentine tango in Malta in the late 1920s – bit I will return to this shortly. There is a significant number of foreigners who act as dance instructors, and in fact many of these dance styles could be said to have been introduced to the Maltese Islands thanks to the charismatic personalities of foreign dance instructors.[10] Aside from the few NGO's there are also a number of dedicated teachers who run dance classes and organize social dances and parties in order to generate and sustain a 'dance community in Malta. It would be beyond the scope of this paper to dwell at length on the findings of this research in terms of demographics and organizational structures however I would like to use the data derived from this study to address the issue raised in the introduction to this question – the matter of cultural genesis and transmission. It is safe to say that in Malta the only real social dancing that one can find is deeply embedded in 'Other' cultures and form part of 'Other' traditions. Of course, this could be explained by the increased globalisation of cultural flows-though it would be a mistake to assume that such global forms of cultural transmission are unique to our age as the discussion on Argentine tango will show. The fact that these are not 'inherited' dances has not prevented them from capturing the hearts and feet – of populations far beyond their original publics.

Argentine tango is a particularly interesting case in point to discuss questions of cultural origins and flows. Argentine Tango is both a style of music and a dance form originally danced almost exclusively in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Although primarily associated with *porteño* identity (Buenos Aires citizen), the tango is now Argentina's national music to the point where in 2009 it was inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Argentine Tango enjoys a growing following across the globe. Thanks in no small part to its popularized, stereo-typified caricatures in the global media, tango has

[9] Vicki Ann Cremona, *Carnival and Power: Play and Politics in a Crown Colony* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).
[10] Baldacchino, "Communities of Dance", 130.

spread to the far corners of the world from Japan to small American towns, from major European metropolitan centers to European island peripheries. This global growth of tango leads one anthropologist to conclude that 'never before has tango been danced by so many people and in so many different places as it has today.'[11] Tango is at once firmly embedded in local identity (*porteño*), yet metonymically national (Argentine) and profoundly global. In fact it is by and large its globalization that has sustained Argentine tango, as Goertzen and Azzi note: 'Much of the modern support of the tango in its birthplace comes from outsiders, especially tourists.'[12] The global appeal of tango is, as Olszewski notes, however, is 'largely a function of its authenticity'.[13]

Hybridity and the Origin and Spread of Argentine Tango

The question of the origins of tango continue to be a source of lively debate. Historians of the African diaspora link the word 'tango' to the word 'tambo' – the African word for the slave markets.[14] 'Milonga', one of the types of tango etymologically come from Bantu.[15] Others connect tango to the Cuban candombe or the Andalusian tango. It certainly seems the case that tango cannot be traced to any single Argentine source.[16] The absence of any firm historical record for the birth of tango has not stopped a myth of origin from forming around it a birth which was in itself nostalgic. One of the most and enduring popular myths, and one that can definitely be proved false, is that it was actually the *gauchos* (cowboys from the South American pampas) who danced tango.[17]

While shrouded with nostalgia Argentine tango is actually relatively speaking a recent tradition born out of immigrant encounters. Buenos Aires is a port city (the *porteño,* quite literally meant the port-sider) whose growth is inseparable from its multi-cultural populace. Buenos Aires in the late 19th century hosted a large number of European migrants in search of economic opportunity. According to one estimate by 1900 three-quarters of the population of Buenos Aires was European-born: 'Even though these groups thought of themselves according to their country of birth, they were absorbed into *porteño* life and politics without any group making much trouble'[18] The historical record of tango can only really begin in the 1880's among the displaced native and European immigrants competing in the job market in

[11] Kathy Davis, *Dancing Tango: Passionate Encounters in a Globalizing World*, 1.
[12] Chris Goertzen Chris and María Susana Azzi. "Globalization and the Tango.", 69.
[13] Brandon Olszewski, "El Cuerpo Del Baile: The Kinetic and Social Fundaments of Tango." *Body & Society* 14, no. 2 (2008): 63.
[14] Jo Baim, *Tango: Creation of a Cultural Icon* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2007), 17
[15] Ana Cara-Walker, "Borges' Milongas: The Chords of Argentine Verbal Art," in *Borges' Milongas: The Chords of Argentine Verbal Art,* ed. Carlos Cortínez (Fayetville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1986),
[16] Jo Baim, *Tango*, 17.
[17] Jo Baim, *Tango: Creation of a Cultural Icon,* 20.
[18] Jo Baim, *Tango: Creation of a Cultural Icon*, 17.

Buenos Aries. Tango facilitated to serve to facilitate the integration of the millions of European migrants pouring into the city. In the words of Marta Savigliano, 'it was the marginal, hybrid, and low working-class local sectors that had originally created and practiced the tango'[19] At the turn of the century it was associated with male underculture and its lyrics were peppered with the sensual lower class dialect of Buenos Aries and Montevideo (*lunfardo*). Initially, therefore, the Argentine upper class largely disdained the tango. Even the themes of these early tangos were themselves very much a reflection of their class origins; 'family love, pure sex, social and political criticism, and attached to all of the above, betrayal – gave voice to the discontent and frustration of the lower class'.[20] As such upper class males would cross class and racial boundaries entering the world of tango seeking an exotic and dangerous adventure. It was only once tango became popular in the fashionable circles of Paris and other European cities that it became legitimated in Argentina. Savigliano argues that the necessity of European validation before it became accepted among the upper classes, and indeed becoming a canonical marker of Argentine identity, is an 'episode of cultural imperialism within a broader and long-standing struggle between formal independence and substantive self-determination.'[21] As tango took Europe by storm it provoked strong condemnations from both ecclesiastical and secular authorities.[22] By the post-war period Carlos Gardel firmly cemented tango's global appeal launching it into its *Epoca de Oro* and doing much to elevate tango's class profile. It's sanitization and reinvention at the hands of European dance instructors led to its introduction into the ballroom repertoire. Suffice it to say that the history of Argentine tango is marked by hybridity and globalization ever since its origins.[23] Even when considered as a marker of a national identity ever since its early days tango was indelibilly marked with a desire for a sense of exotic, dangerous and somehow lost authenticity.

Take for example the following lines written in 1930 from Jorge Luis Borges, Argentina's famed national poet in his biography of Evaristo Corregio: "I maintain that tango and the milonga are a direct expression of something poets have often tried to say in words: the belief that a fight might be a celebration… For myself, I confess that I cannot hear 'El Marne' or 'Don Juan' without remembering an apocryphal past,

[19] Marta E. Savigliano, *Tango and the Political Economy of Passion,* (Boulder: Westview, 1995), 137.
[20] Jo Baim, *Tango: Creation of a Cultural Icon*, 29.
[21] Marta E. Savigliano, *Tango and the Political Economy of Passion*, 138.
[22] In Germany officers were threatened with dismissal if caught dancing the tango while Vatican condemned the tango as 'offensive to the purity of right-minded people.' Mark Knowles *The Wicked Waltz and Other Scandalous Dances: Outrage at Couple Dancing in the 19th and early 20th Century* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2009), 124.
[23] Chris Goertzen Chris and María Susana Azzi. "Globalization and the Tango." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 31 (1999): 67-76; Kathy Davis, *Dancing Tango: Passionate Encounters in a Globalizing World.* (New York: New York University Press, 2015).

simultaneously stoic and orgiastic, in which I have thrown down the challenges and, in silence met my end in an obscure knife fight".[24]

Already in 1930 tango, at the hands of Borges, tango was steeped in feelings of nostalgia for a lost authentic world. But perhaps it is not surprising that the world of tango was such an inspiration for Borges. In one of his latter works Borges writes: 'Poetry works with the past…Poetry demands nostalgia, the patina – albeit slight -of time.'[25] Borges himself became the poet of Argentine tango writing a book of 'milongas'. Even Piazzolla turned to his poems in their famous ill-fated 1965 *El Tango* collaboration that set Borges' poetry to tango music.[26]

It is interesting to note that even at the time Tango had also found its way to the Maltese capital. Ġuże Ellul Mercer, notable Maltese modernist, socialist writer and politician penned an interesting short story in 1928 that appeared in the socialist periodical 'il-Ħmar' entitled 'Number 13 Tango Argentina'.[27] In this story Mercer takes us through a walk in a cold February evening through the capital city of Valletta. He stumbled upon a milonga as he walked past the Royal Opera House (at the time Malta was still very much a British colony). Stepping inside the Opera House he encountered dazzling world of exotic smells, vibrant colours and laughter where he was greeted by a carboard sign told him this is 'No.13 Tango Argentina'. He was then overcome by the 'sweet wave of the chord that melts the human heart, and I notice that the orchestra is playing the sweet 'Tango Argentina''.[28] The structure of the short story consists in little descriptions of each couple as they rotated past him. Each little descriptive vignette is prefaced by the words 'Tango Argentina'. Interestingly enough he depicts a milonga which had people dancing of all ages – young women with older men but also older men with younger women – but also people from different social classes dancing together, indeed as one would expect in a contemporary milonga. The vignettes however are mostly quite skeptical in tone. He describes couples where a woman is likened to a wasp threatening to devour a naïve young man, an older man in his forties who has abandoned his family for a dalliance, a masked aristocratic woman enjoying dancing with a tanned, strong working lad, a woman enjoying the silk stockings and gifts of the elder captain she was dancing with or else a greasy man who if it wasn't for his perfume masking his

[24] Cited in María Susana Azzi "The Tango and Borges", *Review: Literature and Arts of the Americas*, 34 no.63 (2001), 41.
[25] Jorge L. Borges and Norman Thomas Di Giovanni. "Three Views of Evaristo Carriego." *The Antioch Review*, 40 no. 4, (1982), 389.
[26] See the interesting discussion in John Turci-Escobar, ""Rescatando el Tango Para Una Nueva Música": Reconsidering the Collaboration between Borges and Piazzolla." *Variaciones Borges*, no. 31 (2011): 3-29
[27] Ġuże Ellul Mercer, "Nru. 13. Tango Arġentina," in *Ġuże Ellul Mercer Il-Kitbiet Miġbura Vol.1* (Malta: Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1985), 31-35.
[28] Ġuże Ellul Mercer, "Nru. 13. Tango Arġentina," 31. One can only imagine what tango he must have heard - perhaps Ellul Mercer is referring to the famous 'Tango Argentino' written A. Bigeschi and Juan Maglio Pacho later immortalized through Carlos Gardel's voice.

smell 'belonged to a manure heap.' Towards the end however there is a ray of hope as he views a young couple very much in love 'two young people that for the moment don't imagine that the world is anything but an endless tango' which evoke a sweet nostalgia for a time that can never come again.[29] He ends the story when as if woken out of a trance, he was asked to dance by a young spritely woman. Begging her forgiveness for not answering earlier he embraced her and entered the dance floor so that 'like the rest he too will play his part in one of the endless comedies of life- in the Tango Argentina'.[30]

A great many authors have written histories of tango and it would be beyond the scope of this paper to add to this discussion. The preceding discussion serves merely to serve as a historical cautionary tale on the manner in which questions of cultural origin and transmission need to take into account the politics of (colonial?) cultural appropriation. At the same time, I have tried to draw attention to the fact that even since its early days the history of the tango was marked by a certain poetical dimension drawing together exoticism, gender relations and national identity in a nostalgic reconstruction for authenticity.

Nostalgia and Desire for Authenticity

The narratives circulating around the origins of tango become the repository for a social imaginary wedding a desire for authenticity with nostalgia and embodied identities. The contemporary milonguero/a seeking to recreate a lost world is him or herself engaged in a double act of nostalgia for tango in its very origins was poetical- if we take Borges' terms. If even by the early 1930's tango was marked by a certain nastalgia for certain gendered ideals this seems to be equally true of its most recent global turn. In Malta members of the tango community tend to be middle-class and college educated with an average age of 40 even though at any given milonga one is likely to find a mix of people of all ages. For many of the dancers tango becomes a significant part of their lives with many seeking to have a life-partner who also dances. Through tango, people share the same referential universe of music and dance but also a form of nostalgic connection to sense of a 'golden age'. One anthropologist describes this experience as follows: "You clutch your shoe bag with a feeling of excited anticipation, but also some nervous apprehension. The faint, oh-so-familiar music in the distance, slightly scratchy with a whiny male voice, is full of Golden Age nostalgia, all melancholy, unrequited love, and longing."[31]

[29] Ġuże Ellul Mercer, "Nru. 13. Tango Arġentina," 34.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Kathy Davis, *Dancing Tango*, 56.

This nostalgia is produced out of a shared *imaginary* built of a ritual language, narrative and soundscape. From week to week one is likely to hear some of the same tangos repeated till they become ingrained into one's acoustic and embodied memory. Some pride themselves in being able to back this sensory knowledge with a more 'academic' capacity to identify composers and singers, if not years of composition. This nostalgia however is for a world that the dancers have never inhabited outside its imaginary constructions. Even though it exists purely as an exotic imaginary it is sustained through travels to Buenos Aires – the repository for authenticity. For many *tangueros/tangueras* in Malta as elsewhere, Buenos Aires is still the ultimate destination of their travels- the 'mecca of tango'.[32] Local dancers who have spent a period of time in Buenos Aires speak (and dance) with an air of authority, even though, as some cynically observe, their dance has not particularly improved. Veteran dancers often speak nostalgically of a Buenos Aires that has become filled with '*gringos*', frequently failing to realize that they themselves are '*gringos*' in Buenos Aires.

I believe that this *imaginary* is fundamentally constituted as 'pre-modern'. It is a nostalgic and explicit performance of 'traditional' gender roles characterized by a hyper-femininity and hyper-masculinity. This however is not something which we can easily explain with reference to modern transformations in gender roles since even in its early years nostalgia seemed to inhabit the tango as soon as it became appropriated by the middle classes and its international publics. One of my female informants confessed to me that the first time she ever wore shoes with heels was to learn tango. In fact one of the reasons why she learnt tango is precisely to master that feminine skill. For the dances (*milongas*) women carefully select their outfits accentuating gendered ideals. Women's tango outfits oftentimes have exposed backs and slit skirts with the almost ubiquitous stiletto heels. Men on the other hand, especially the more traditionalist, are encouraged to wear suits. While generally averse to dancing Maltese men make an exception to tango since it reconstructs a particular 'traditionalist' masculinity through the dance. This gendered identity is sustained and re-enforced through three mechanisms: firstly, the rituals of asking for a dance; secondly, the role (Leader/Follower) within the dance itself; and last but not least the actual kind of dance steps themselves. In tango, the gender roles are very pronounced with a male leader who decides the steps and a female follower whose focus is on following the steps of the leader. Some welcome this clearly gendered world and indeed find comfort in it. Women who otherwise command the attention of many others in managerial roles, for example, find themselves having to relinquish control to a male leader. In fact, one of the followers I spoke to singled out this precise

[32] Kathy Davis, *Dancing Tango: Passionate Encounters in a Globalizing World,* 12.

aspect as one of the most difficult yet enticing things about dancing tango. Men learning to dance are taught how to dance in a specifically *masculine* fashion while the femininity of dance steps is emphasized for women. Men are told not to allow for any hip motion and to keep a constant level avoiding bobbing steps while maintaining a straight back. Men are taught to step with confidence and have an assertive 'presence'. Followers' workshops on the other hand emphasize learning how to 'read' your oftentimes male leader and how to move your legs with feminine grace. Many followers are keen to learn about women's 'footwork' and how to do proper *adornos* (embellishments) with their heeled shoes.

Of course, one must be careful not to overstate the case. There are a number of motivations behind dancing tango. For some of my informants it was also a potential way to meet a partner, although many of these people would oftentimes stop learning tango once they found a partner. It is also true that people's desires change throughout their 'tango life', what might have initially started out as a way to expand one's social circle might develop into a passion for the music and the dance itself. There are also innovators in tango – in particular tango communities and *milongas* are often divided between the newer style (*nuevo*) and the more traditionalist ones (*milongeuro*) with each respective community dancing to different kinds of music and adopting different – if not diametrically opposed – dance styles. At least since the late 2000's there is also a growing presence of 'gay' and 'queer tango' which arguably destablises the gender roles and hierarchies in traditional tango.[33]

From History to myth: displacing origins.

I have started this brief intervention by questioning the logic behind the framework of the opposition of culture as 'invented' or 'inherited'. Trying to identify origin narratives behind culture is inseparably linked to the politics of identity and such questions tend to become salient when collective identities begin to have political currency. In looking at the history of tango I have tried to show how such narratives however are always much more complex and indeed 'all cultures are always hybrid'[34] which makes the question of origins always overlain with a mythological/poetical mode. The origins of tango are intertwined with the history of an emerging immigrant nation. Globalized and steeped in nostalgia since its early days, however, tango remains paradoxical in its capacity to define at once both a local nostalgia and yet create a global affective community. By way of a conclusion to this paper I would like to reconsider the overall theme to this volume by shifting our discussion of

[33] Kathy Davis, *Dancing Tango*, 127-154.
[34] Pnina Werbner, "Introduction: The Dialectics of Hybridity," in *Debating Cultural Hybridities: Multicultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism,* eds. Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood (London: Zed Books, 2015), 14.

cultural origins and transmission to a mythic framework. Claude Lévi-Strauss warned us that even ostensibly scientific accounts are not invulnerable to their founding mythologies: 'When we try to do scientific history, do we really do something scientific, or do we too remain astride our own mythology in what we are trying to make as pure history?'[35]

Myth serves to 'provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction'[36] even though it never accomplishes such a task. One of the tasks that myth is often charged with producing is explaining origins – origins of all sort of things from human culture, to sex to the origins of peoples themselves. From Prometheus to Oedipus from aboriginal Dreamtime to Korean creation myths the question of origins has been at the heart of myths across the world. When Freud was seeking to describe the origins of culture as well as the origins of our sexed beings he indeed resorted to a mythological framework- that of Oedipus. As Lévi-Strauss reminds us, however, it was perhaps Freud's cardinal error that when discussing the origins of culture he treated mythology as history in his *Totem and Taboo*.[37]

Historical analysis can demonstrate the power of myths to shape the currents of history, it can help us identify the ways in which they become subject to political mobilization in various forms – those of invented traditions for example. Understanding the birth and transmission of tango at a mythological level we are well placed to address two enduring dilemmas. One of the interesting contradictions at the heart of the early history of tango comes from the way in which an ethno-national narrative was developed out of a loss. Tango was always about lost worlds, a birth which is simultaneously the marker of a loss. This constitutive loss continues to mark the narrative of tango as it spreads to new worlds where the reference to lost worlds through its nostalgic mode becomes a mark of its very authenticity. The analysis of tango at a mythological level allows us to understand how differing forms of identity are reconstructed and reconciled including such tensions as those between the local and the global.

In the case of Argentine tango however we are also given a framework that provides the possibility for re-enacting and marking an overdetermined gendered subjectivity. Indeed the question of the sexual relation is the other pole of our mythological frame. The French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan argued in his early piece, 'The Neurotic's Individual Myth'[38] that the imaginary can be understood as functioning in an analogous manner to myth in the experience of neurotics. The

[35] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning*, (London: Routledge, 1978), 18.
[36] Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth", in *Structural Anthropology 1* (London: Penguin Books, 1963), 219
[37] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Forms of Kinship,* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 491-492
[38] Jacques Lacan, "The Neurotic's Individual Myth." *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly.* 48 (1979): 405-425.

symptom, much like a myth, functions as an imaginary solution to address fundamental questions. As such it 'provides a discursive form for something that cannot be transmitted through the definition of truth,'[39] and in this myth is closer to poetry than scientific history. The myth provides an 'objectified representation of an epos or as a chronicle expressing in an imaginary way the fundamental relationships characteristic of a certain mode of being human in a specific period.'[40] A fundamental dimension of this 'mode of being human' is constituted through the construction of our sexed beings.

Tango, in this regard, fulfills an important mythic function by means of an imaginary reconstitution that has helped its reproduction through the allure of an exotic other. Argentine tango is a complex cultural phenomena that allows us to address the ways in which the tension between the one and the many, between autochthonous and heterochthonous origins - and the relations that produce and reproduce them - are transposed on the bodily enactment of a mythic ethos in a nostalgic mode that insists that the truth of the matter is always in another place and another time.

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[39] Jacques Lacan, "The Neurotic's Individual Myth", 407.
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Cultural and Social Adaptability in the ECoC Process: the Concept of FLOW in the ECoC-bid of Győr, Hungary

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Introduction

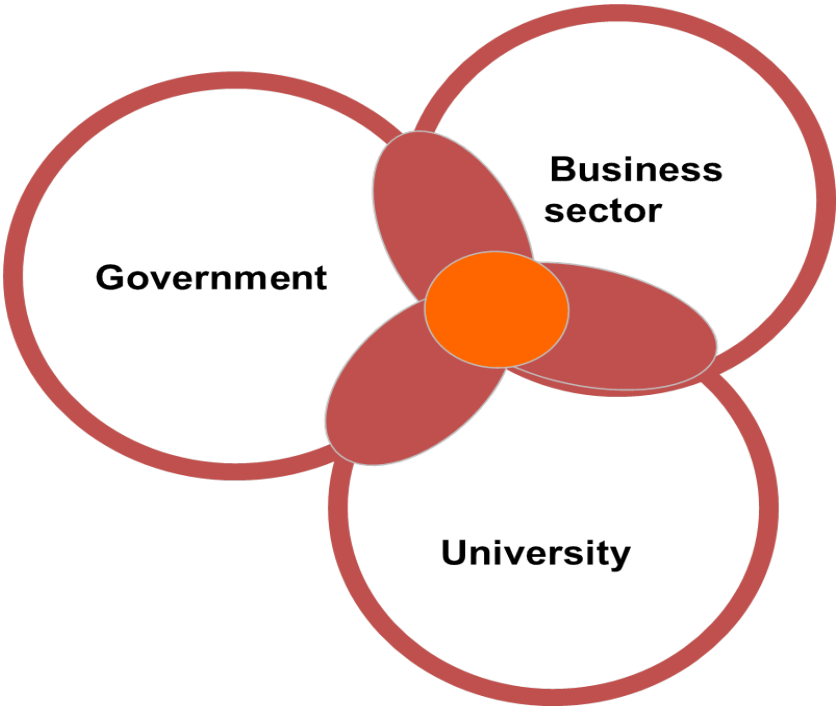
Our talk is a case study of the history and the subsequent complex, positive impact of two non-winning ECoC bids from the same municipality: the city of Győr in Hungary. Although we take a historical perspective as a starting point, we will focus on the positive impact the conceptualization of the bids and the preparation for the cultural and social changes undertaken by and entailed in these processes have exerted on the civil society in Győr and its surrounding regions together with changes in the governance practices and cultural policy of the self-government of the municipality.

Backgrounds

The city of Győr prepared and submitted a bid as a Hungarian candidate for the ECoC 2010 in the year 2006 which did not come up as a winning bid in the competition of the Hungarian candidate cities. It is always an independent, international jury who decide on the final winner for each country. In 2010 the city of Pécs was nominated as a European Capital of Culture for Hungary.

It was visible in 2006 that the city of Győr as the industrial center of Western-Hungary boasted with positive and favorable economic figures and rightly aspired to become an educational and cultural center for the region as well. With such intentions in mind, in the first bid in 2006 the city of Győr developed a program for *cultural integration* among the stake-holders in the socio-economic environment based on the *Triple Helix Model*. This model emphasized the involvement and cooperation of the local government, the industrial partners and the university, each of them representing a major employer in the city.

The concept of cultural integration was to refer to the city with favorable geo-eco-political position to function as a bridge and an *economic and cultural gate to the west*, especially to Austria, Slovakia and Slovenia, and further to Germany and Italy.



The Triple Helix Model
adopted for the stake-holder relations in the city of Győr

We have analysed the characteristics of the first bid in an earlier paper published in the UNEECC Forum (see Barabás et al. 2017). Let it suffice to conclude here and now – in retrospect - that the municipality in Győr in 2006 failed to engage all those cultural institutions and civil organizations which would and could have contributed to the creation of a colorful ensemble of different cultural streams in the city of Győr.

A decade later, the dynamically developing city prepared and submitted a second bid for the ECoC 2023, having realized in the meantime the emerging need for cultural adaptability and a novel concept of cultural diversity to foster a beneficial and sustainable cultural development and a citizen-driven organization of the cultural fabric of the community.

The bid for ECoC 2023 in Győr, Hungary - submitted in December 2017 – was based on the pragmatic attitude according to which "You cannot step into the same river twice". The metaphor of FLOW in a city of three rivers conceptualizes the natural evolution of the cultural fabric of a community in which the dynamically developing environment promotes the identification of novel and feasible objectives in culture-creation and cultural cooperation.

It was decided by a team of city administrators, leaders of cultural and social institutions and active participants in civil organizations that the new bid be based on an increased cultural sensitivity together with a more diversified and complex approach to the stake-holders and the beneficiaries of a long-term and sustainable development of the cultural landscape of the city and its regional partners.

The slogan of the second bid runs as follows:

"We are the FLOW!"

- the flow on The Ways and Cross-Roads of History,
- in the Creative Energies of The City
- amidst Invigorating Dialogues of the diverse streams of cultural entities.

"We are the flow"

The visualization was intended to reflect that the ECoC proposal originates from a city of three rivers and the bid focuses on three central aspects of "flow-dynamics": *the cross-roads of history, the creative energies and the diverse streams of dialogues*.

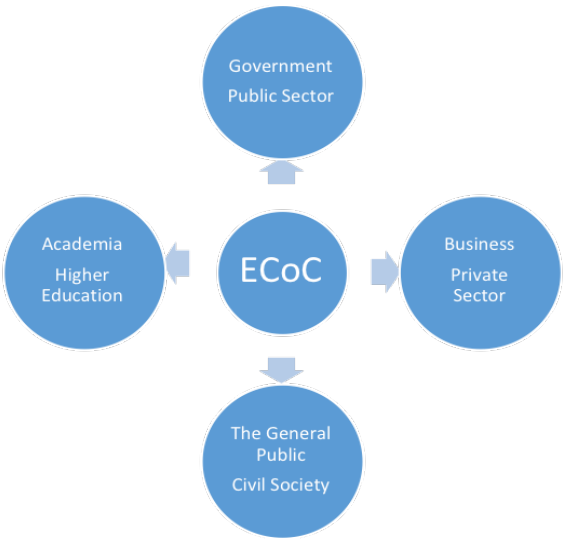
We have also presented an analysis of the corner-stones of the second bid of the city of Győr (see Géczy et al. 2018). However, the paper had been written before the city of Győr was nominated on a short-list of three Hungarian candidate cities (Debrecen, Veszprém and Győr) by the international jury. What's more, our presentation on the 12th UNeECC Conference in Malta in November 2019 took place a month before the final decision concerning the nomination of a Hungarian city for the ECoC 2023 was made. The three short-listed cities were requested to submit a

final, revised version of their bids by mid-November 2019 (see ECoC bid of Győr submitted and signed (final Hungarian version) and Announcing the Hungarian bid-winner for ECoC 2023 in the References).

A Fine-grained Analysis of the Process of Conceptual and Attitudinal Changes to ECoC

The distance of ten years between the two ECoC bids has brought a lot of economic, social and cultural changes in the life of the city of Győr. A positive consensus had been established by 2016 among the stake-holders in the city that a *Quadruple Helix Model* should figure as the conceptual basis of cooperation for establishing a vibrant cultural landscape of the city and its cultural catchment-are, in which the local government, the industrial partners, the university and all the social-cultural institutions, including entities in the civil society, should be involved.

It was felt that with a successful bid for European Cultural Capital, the institution of ECoC could fulfill the central function of the cultural revival of the city. ECoC was envisaged as the catalyst, the engine and coordinator of various tendencies and movements in the FLOW.



The Quadruple Helix Model
adopted for the stake-holder relations in the city of Győr

As a result of focused changes in the cultural policy of the municipality from the beginning of 2010 onwards, more and more cultural organizations and social institutions became visible and prevalent in the public eye. Let us list some of the

most outstanding cultural achievements of high standing in the City of Győr by the time of the second bid:

- The Ballet Company of Győr (former ateliér of Maurice Béjart and Iván Markó)
- The Philharmonic Orchestra of Győr
- The Music and Dance Academy of Győr
- The Women's Handball Team (European Champion)
- The Five Churches Festival
- The European Youth Olympic Festival

In the design-process of the novel network of cultural stake-holders, the notion of FLOW as a metaphor was taking root in the public thinking and began to be applied to describe the new sense of *life-world* in the city. This was a natural evolution of the sense of community on a subtle and more intertwined level than ever before. All the vibrant activities of the city were straightforward evidence of the fact that everything was in the state of flux. Thus, the metaphor FLOW to prompt the intended meaning of the cultural complexities emerging from the cooperation of the stakeholders was chosen as a central notion of the second bid of the city for ECoc2023.

Soon it was acknowledged and conceptualized for the public that it was not only the three rivers which make a dynamic confluence in the very center of the city, but it is the city itself as a social space which experiences a constant flow of workforce, dynamically developing companies, social and cultural organizations, grass-root civil initiatives, international intellectual streams that create new *life-worlds* and meanings for the citizens of Győr.

The creation of a new sense of life-world for the citizens found support in the added-value of the concept of FLOW in the context of a new sense of community created and constituted by parameters of everyday life engagements and activities: conditions that influence the feelings of citizens concerning their way of life, living standard, employment opportunities, level of social connectedness and interaction, social comfort, social and public security, intellectual and cultural gratification, only to name the most decisive phenomena. Here, we need to bring into our discussion of *flow* one of the philosophical and social-psychological foundations of feeling and enjoying social and individual gratification, namely positive psychology.

This experience is discussed in the works of Mihály Csikszentmihályi who spent decades investigating the relevant conditions for creative activities, innovative attitudes in people, and – in general terms – the pursuit of happiness of the human kind. His investigations also focused on finding out the failure of people to find gratification and happiness in work, in social contact and in life in general.

In his seminal work under the title Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (see Csikszentmihályi 1991) he describes a special state of mind (and a phenomenon) called flow in which individuals experience increased and creative mental activities due to a relaxed and liberated mental state.

It is not by accident that Daniel Kahnemann devotes serious thoughts and profound discussion to the phenomenon of the flow-experience as elaborated by Csikszentmihályi. In Thinking Fast and Slow (see Kahnemann 2011), he makes a distinction between two kinds of systems in human thinking processes: cognitive ease and cognitive strain. According to him, thinking in the mental state of cognitive ease is automatic and effortless, allows for a free flow mode of cognitive and affective processes, including first intuitions and emotions to induce MOVES. Thinking in the mental state of cognitive strain, on the other hand, takes extra concentration and effort in looking for reasons, evaluating options to achieve the desired OUTCOME.

Our analysis shows that diversity in creative cultural interactions is desirable and will always be an inherent feature of and a driving force in a community. The social division of labor applies to the cultural sector as well. There are – and there had better be – many different ways of expressing pressing and critical thoughts and ideas and presenting it to the society of fellow-citizens.

Cultural Strategies after the Non-winning Decision for Győr

The main objective of our paper is to show how an engaged and committed ECoC bid of a city that has not received the title "Cultural Capital of Europe" can be turned into a long-term and sustainable cultural project for a community whose cultural stake-holders actively take part in the process of social and cultural changes in the framework of a participatory, interactive cultural sharing.

On December 14th, 2018 the final decision of the International Jury concerning the Hungarian nomination for ECoC 2023 was made public: the city of Veszprém and the Balaton Region will hold the title *European Capital of Culture 2023*. The mayor of Győr, Mr. Zsolt Borkai congratulated the mayor of Veszprém in a friendly letter. At the same time, the ECoC Team of the city of Győr designed and made public their plans for a future cultural action plan incorporated in a novel cultural policy of the city of Győr. The leader of the team, Dr. Dávid Fekete, deputy mayor of the city, will manage the coordination of the cultural activities in line with the program specified and elaborated in the revised ECoC bid of November 2018.

The ECoC Team of the City of Győr

It is important to mention that the decision of the International Jury was considered by the Team as just and fair, realizing that the efforts invested in the ECoC bid in Győr can and ought to be utilized and realized in the near future provided the commitment of the stake-holders can prevail and remain active. It is also important that the Széchenyi István University, as one of the key players in the Quadruple Helix Model, is highly engaged and committed to sharing in the realization of the novel cultural policy of the municipality. A wide range of contributions are expected to come from the university, including achievements of artistic, architectural, engineering, managerial and legal nature.

Concluding Remarks

The main objective of our paper has been to show an interesting and highly desirable phenomenon originating in the changing conditions of designing and carrying out ECoC bids and their intrinsic cultural programs. Some bids are successful and deserve the title of being a European Cultural Capital, thus they are obliged to carry out and be accountable for the programs identified and specified in their bid-planning phase. Other bids might be just as well designed, however, they do not receive the title aspired to by the committed skate-holders participating in the cultural proposals at stake. What happens to the invested efforts of designing and planning a bid for a complex cultural program?

Quite a lot of ink has been spilled on research analyzing the preparation-phase, the delivery-phase and the assessment-phase of successful ECoCs. A majority of the findings have shown that there is a huge discrepancy between the projected

(i.e. proposed) cultural programs and the realized, carried-out programs. Many ECoCs have shown serious anomalies in the realization of planned contents, expected sustainability of cultural cooperation among the stake-holders, clash of interests on various levels and, most commonly, achieving financial stability of the overall program.

We have chosen to analyze (as a necessity by Fate), the impact of an engaged and well-designed ECoc bid which was selected for a short-list in Hungary, but did not receive the title European Cultural Capital at the end of the day. In our research we have found that the municipality of Győr, with its designated Team of designing the ECoC-bid for the city, was determined to carry out the proposed cultural program with inevitable changes in the realization. They set up a post-decision strategy to establish a framework to encourage and facilitate the stake-holders involved in the cultural revival project.

Thus, we have shown the backgrounds for the longitudinal conceptual change in the design of two ECoC bid for the same city. In our case study we looked at the main features of two bids submitted for an ECoC title by the municipality of Győr and made an attempt to reconstruct the process of re-conceptualizing the cultural needs and potentials of the candidate city in the long run, after the unfavorable decisions for their efforts. We have shown how the original Triple Helix Model has been replaced by the Quadruple Helix Model to amend the genuine objectives of a community in creating a cultural sense of the community. The new bid takes into consideration the social-cultural needs of the city and the desired output offered to stake-holders which are to be carried out despite the lack of nomination for the title of European Cultural Capital.

We have argued that an increased awareness among cultural organizations of the community and a flexible cultural policy of the leadership of the self-government of the municipality can lead to the strengthening of the cultural influence and cultural impact on the lives of the citizens of Győr and the surrounding region together with enhancing their sense of community.

The efforts of the second bid, facilitating the acceptance of the conceptual change in the minds of the bid-writers concerning the realization of the necessity and need for increased cultural sensitivity and adaptation together with a more diversified and complex approach to the stakeholders and the beneficiaries, have consciously been turned into a strategy of long-term and sustainable development of the cultural institutions of the city and its cooperating regions after the unfavorable decision.

The morale of the two non-winning ECoC bids prepared and elaborated by the municipality of Győr, Hungary is the positive, long-term outcome and visible, novel impact that has become the cultural-social asset of the citizens over the past two decades in Western-Hungary.

Note: The bid-writers in 2016 profoundly cooperated with experts from the university in Győr in creating the new concept of the bid. We are convinced that the genuine cooperation will continue and the experience from the UNEECC tradition will be fruitful for any candidate community effort in the future.

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The Impact of Universities in Enhancing Cultural Values in ECoC Contexts

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Abstract
Our paper investigates to what extent European cultural values – whose common roots have produced a colorful diversity across European countries and communities within these countries – are manifest in higher education and how the shared cultural values can be fostered and enhanced by conscious cultural policy adopted by institutions cooperating with universities. As a result of our investigation together with first-hand experience of an ECoC bid we claim that higher educational communities can and ought to facilitate cultural empowerment in a wider social-cultural space via closer cooperation and lively interaction with the cultural stake-holders. We propose a model of participatory interaction between the entities involved (university and the civil society) to increase social responsibility and decrease the gap between theory and practice in cultural issues. Our findings reinforce the mission of UNeECC and provides a critical look at the results of the organization made visible over the past 12 years. Our paper offers a genuine confrontation with future challenges and emerging trends embedded in digital culture.

Enhancing European Cultural Values

The history of the European Capitals of Culture /ECoC/: Melina Mercouri and Jack Lang

In 1985, Melina Mercouri, minister of culture in Greece and her French counterpart Jack Lang came up with the idea of *designating an annual Capital of Culture* to bring Europeans closer together by highlighting the richness and diversity of European cultures and raising awareness of their common history and values.

It was strongly believed by the initiators that the institution of ECoC would significantly maximize social and economic benefits, especially when the events are embedded as a part of a long–term culture-based development strategy of the city and the surrounding region.

The practice was introduced according to which the Commission of the European Union manages the title and each year the Council of Ministers of the European Union formally designates the European Capital of Culture titles.

- An ECoC title provides an opportunity for the designated city to generate considerable cultural, social and economic benefits while it can help foster urban regeneration, change the city's image and raise its visibility and profile on an international scale.

/Bart Molendijk / Anefo - Nationaal Archief
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Capital_of_Culture#/media/File
Melina Mercouri in 1985

European Values in Higher Education

A. The history of the Magna Charta Universitatum

- The *Magna Charta Universitatum Europaeum* was drafted originally as a document to celebrate university traditions and encourage bonds among European universities. It also serves as a universal inspiration and is open to universities throughout the world. It was founded by the University of Bologna and the European Rectors' Conference in 1988. The *Magna Charta Universitatum* was formally signed by 430 university rectors in September 1988 in Bologna to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the founding of the University of Bologna.

- *The Magna Charta Universitatum* is a reference for the fundamental values and principles of the university, in particular institutional autonomy and academic freedom.
- The 30th anniversary of MCU was celebrated in Salamanca in September 2018 to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the Salamanca University. As of today, there are over 900 signatories to this document.

University of Salamanca
Festive senate meeting on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the Spanish alma mater

B. A Brief History and Mission of the ERASMUS Program

The Erasmus Program - ***E**u**R**opean Community **A**ction **S**cheme for the **M**obility of **U**niversity **S**tudents* - is an EU student exchange program established in 1987. Erasmus Plus is the new program combining all the EU's current schemes for education, training, youth and sport, which was started in January 2014.

The purpose of the ERASMUS program is to provide foreign exchange options for students from within the European Union and associated countries. It involves many of the best universities and seats of learning on the continent and offers an excellent chance of experience abroad.

Students can go abroad for 3 to 12 months (including a complementary traineeship period, if planned). The same student may receive grants for studying or being trained abroad up to 12 months maximum per each cycle of study:
- during the first study cycle (Bachelor or equivalent)
- during the second study cycle (Master or equivalent)
- during the third cycle as doctoral candidate (Doctoral level)

C. Universities for cultural empowerment and social responsibility

Decreasing the gap between theory and practice in cultural issues

The traditional involvement of universities in arts and culture

- Faculties of Arts – art history, music, dance, visual arts, etc.
- Faculties of Architecture and Urban Development
- University orchestras and choirs, student theaters
- Campus art galleries, art exhibitions
- Extramural courses in arts and culture

More recent practices

Despite the fact that many universities have launched educational programs in sociology of culture, cultural management, art therapy, etc., the gap between educational theory (art education) and communal culture creation remains visible. One obvious answer to this problem was the utilization of the ECoC events for building a bridge between academia (art education and culture research) on the one hand and the cultural industry on the other.

The ECoC phenomenon: facilitating urban regeneration, international visibility and social and economic benefits of a designated city and its surrounding region.

- **A timely revelation of universities by 2006 - critical observations**

Several universities have witnessed the phenomenon that the cultural agencies (ECoC companies) of the designated cities were mainly concerned with financial profitability, festival-like event organization and selected involvement of artistic and cultural players without inviting and involving artistic and cultural experts from universities either in the bid-writing or in the conceptual unfolding of the cultural events and program during the ECoC year.

Patras 2006 showed a rather controversial outcome of the ECoC year with ambivalent results.

University involvement in the ECoC 2010 in the city of Pécs, Hungary

- The bid-writing for the City of Pécs in 2005 involved a great number of faculty members from the university: art historians, historians, sociologists,

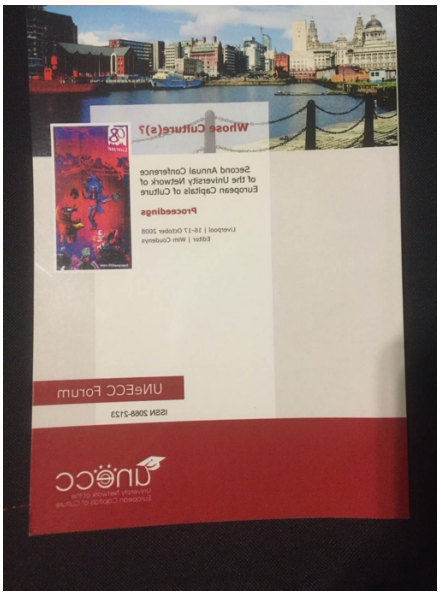
professors of literature, political scientists, economists, cultural managers, etc.

- After a successful bid for ECoC 2010, the ECoC management rejected and quit almost all university cooperation and went through a series of internal conflicts (clash of interests between financial management, art management and municipality).

D. The mission of the University Network of European Capitals of Culture (UNeECC)

The call for systematic research and evaluation methods for ECoCs

- The University of Pécs, Hungary circulated a call to European universities to consider the establishment of an organization for joint ECoC research at universities whose host cities had been or might be European Capitals of Culture.
- 17 universities responded to the call in December 2006.
- In December 2006 the University Network of European Capitals was established with the determination of having scientific conferences each year in current ECoC cities fostering and encouraging relevant evaluative research by young researchers, especially graduate (doctoral) students. The was established with a clear mission and transparent organizational structure.
- The series started with the first annual conference in Sibiu, Romania in 2007 which tradition has not been broken ever since.
- UNEECC has over 50 member institutions today.
- An ambitious presumption (claim) was formulated then:
  Universities can and ought to contribute to cultural and social change in their community in non-trivial ways!
- The proceedings of the conferences have been published in the series UNEECC Forum /ISSN 2068-2123/.
- Volume 10 containing contributions to the 11th international conference held in Aarhus became available in Valletta, Malta in November 2018.
- Volume 11 containing contributions to the 12th international conference held in Valletta, Malta will be available in Matera in November 2019.



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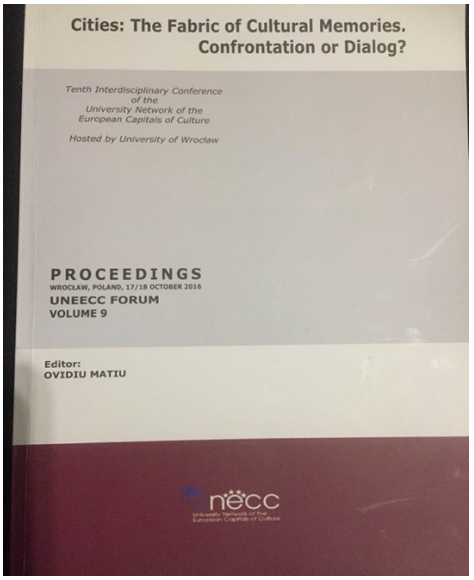

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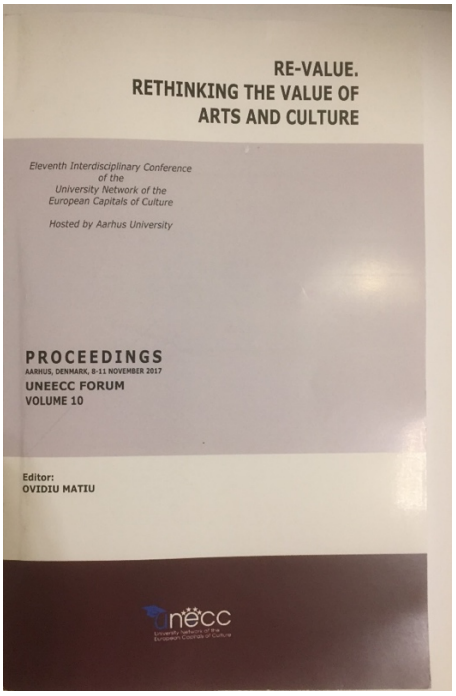

UNEECC Forum, Volume 10.

The history of the University Network of the European Capitals of Culture /UNeECC/ with the conference venues indicated

/2006 Patras/

2007 Sibiu - Luxembourg
2008 Liverpool – Stavanger
2009 Vilnius – Linz
2010 Pécs – Essen – Istanbul
2011 Turku – Tallinn (Antwerpen)
2012 Maribor - Guimarães
2013 Marseille - Košice
2014 Umeå - Riga
2015 Plzeň – Mons
2016 Wroclaw – San Sebastian
2017 Aarhus – Paphos
2018 Valletta – Leeuwarden
2019 Matera – Plovdiv
2020 Rijeka – Galway
2021 Timişoara – Elefsina – Novi Sad
2022 Kaunas – Esch-sur-Alzette
2023 Veszprém (Hungary)

Valletta, Malta

Matera

A Critical Look at the Results (UNEECC 2006 – 2019)

UNEECC has made conscious efforts to improve communication between university research and municipal administrators, politicians and ECoC agencies involved who are directly responsible for the realization of an ECoC phenomenon: responsible not only for the year of designation but also for a sustainable, long-term cultural change in their city environment.

We have found a critical difference between analyses of the initial phases of planning and managing the ECoC-to-be and the retrospective and follow-up phases. Researchers have limited access to the unfolding process of an ECoC

In the first case there is a lack of information as many things are in a fluid state and realization plans are often non-transparent. In the second case there is a lack of relevant information as the publicity-type of sharing information and the official reports often show disharmony, they are in fact incongruent most of the times.

We have witnessed a crucial difference between universities in as much they are prepared to deal with the analyses of their own ECoC events. Relevant and enlightening research ought to be trans-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary in order to deal with the complex nature of culture management and cultural change in the context of an ECoC.

We do hope, however, that the diverse research topics that are represented in the volumes of the UNEECC Forum have functioned as trend-seeking and trend-setting initiatives and have served as ample motivation for comparative research of the ECoC phenomenon.

A performance of the bidding team of Győr presented to the members of the ECoC Selection Committee visiting the City of Győr before arriving at the final decision in December 2018

E. Future challenges: understanding cultural trends in digital culture

One of the central concerns of UNEECC is to maintain interests in university environments for the scientific analysis and evaluation of the cultural movements and cultural changes emanating from the ECoC phenomenon.

Interests can be enhanced by recruiting new members for the organization by offering new approaches and methods to researchers at universities in candidate cities.

Besides a well-aimed recruitment, it is also important to realize the changing communication channels through which networking can be established. The cultural agencies involved in the realization of the ECoC events need to adopt these new techniques to which our research efforts could be a relevant contribution.

Networking via social media and cultural creativity in Virtual Reality are the new buzzwords. In other terms, cultural and social cognition takes place in in the digital world making use of fragmented cultural narratives and novel textual and visual interpretation practices and skills, different from the traditional ones.

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Europe as a Participatory Art Project

Margerita Pulè
Independent practitioner

Abstract
An examination of contemporary participatory art projects within the contexts of the ECoC project, defining participatory art practice as a form of art that directly engages the audience in the creative process so that they become participants in the event. I would also like to expound the importance of participatory art practice within the context of a European Capital of Culture, but also outside that structure, and how this can contribute – or not – to a more common European value and to a prevailing over current populist trends. I would like also, on a practical level, like to address the challenges of a successful participatory art practice project within a European Capital of Culture project, particularly when that ECoC itself does not necessarily share these same European values. This paper describes three participatory projects, each of which allows participants to comment on or experience contemporary contexts in modern Europe.

Key words: Participatory Art, Contemporary Art, Democracy, Installation, European Union

In this paper I would like to engage in an examination of contemporary participatory art practices as a metaphor for a belief in, and identification with, the values of what we can call the 'European Project'.

I would define participatory art practice as a form of art that "directly engages the audience in the creative process so that they become participants in the event", or "an approach to making art which engages the audience in the creative process, letting them become co-authors, editors, and observers of the work".[1] By this, I mean specifically participatory art practice, as opposed to community arts practice, which is, in my understanding, more concerned with art as a tool for integration, therapy or other social positives.

By the term 'European Project', I mean the European Union and a feeling of 'Europeanness' in its journey from post-World War II Europe, to its peak, possibly in the early part of this century.

I would also like to expound the importance of participatory art practice within the context of a European Capital of Culture, but also outside that structure, and how this can contribute – or not – to a more common European value and to a prevailing over current populist trends. I would like also, on a practical level, like to address the challenges of a successful participatory art practice project within a

[1] https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/participatory-art

European Capital of Culture project, particularly when that ECoC itself does not necessarily share these same European values.

From the Treaty of Rome in 1957, and the creation of the European Economic Community, to the formation of the current European Union with the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, the EU has grown to a population of over 510 million in an area of 4,423,147 square kilometres with 65,993 kilometres of coastline and over 24 languages. Interestingly, the EU claims no formal connection with any religion, although individual countries do so, and until now, the prevailing culture has been and has remained a Christian culture.

On a political and practical level, the EU operates through a combination of supra-national or 'umbrella-like' and with inter-governmental decision- and policy-making. It does this through necessarily large decision-making bodies; these are the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank and the European Court of Auditors, the titles of many of which we have become quite familiar with in Malta in recent months and years. In terms of culture, the EU recognises the importance, not only of the arts, but also the importance of culture and the arts as a tool for cohesion and a sense of common good.

The EU and a belief in 'Europeanness' are generally seen to be increasingly under threat from various historical, contemporary, external and embedded factors. These include Brexit, the instigators of which are struggling to find a solution, currently faltering on the backstop agreement regarding the Irish border, right-wing tendencies in Hungary seeing the country being admonished by the EU itself for 'breaches' of core European values, and Italy currently bristling with populist rhetoric and an increasingly anti-immigrant stance. External stresses to the EU include, very obviously, an unpredictable and inconsistent US leadership, episodic unease and conflicts in the Middle East, as well as the election of a president widely understood to be conservative and right-wing in the largest country in South America, Brazil.

And this is where my comparison can take off from; the participatory aspect of the EU, compared with participatory art practice, and how the latter can perhaps, or not, have a positive influence on the former.

I'd like to refer here to a project which took place in Malta in March 2018, curated by curator and researcher Maren Richter, who was also involved in Linz 2009 ECoC, and was one of the curators of the Maldives Pavilion in Venice in 2013. This project is *Times of Dilemma*, by Transparadiso. Transparadiso was created by Barbara Holub and Paul Rajakovics as a transdisciplinary practice between architecture, art, urban design, urbanism and urban-artistic intervention – between practice and

theory.[2] *Times of Dilemma* was described by the artists as 'a participatory urban intervention'.

[1]Times of Dilemma, Transparadiso, March 2018, Gzira & Valletta, Malta. Photo Margerita Pulè

The project's call to arms stated: "The dream of utopia seems to be over, in spite of the many times we proclaim a desire for "change".[3] This general call for "change", which aims at counteracting the growing inequality in our global system, addresses a wide range of contradictory interests. We do not want to defer utopias to some distant time or planet. Instead, we want to address them here and now by furthering the engagement with people to create visions and take action in their specific situations.

Through a series of workshops with local academics, artists, writers, għana singers, and, let's say, 'normal people', the participants were asked to talk about:
What I miss
What I am afraid of losing
What I find problematic
What I treasure
What I am proud of
What I want to change

The contributions to these workshops served as the basis for texts by Malta-based writers, and were then transformed into contemporary Għana dialogues young għanneja. According to the artists:

[2] http://www.transparadiso.com

[3] A booklet, available for download here: http://www.barbaraholub.com/times-of-dilemma.html was given to audience members.

> *These contemporary Għana dialogues reposition the (today under-recognized) tradition of folk singing in "high culture", and explore Għana as artistic method for addressing conflicts in an open process, which highlights the potential of poetics as subtle means for activism. This is a big challenge for the authors as well as for the għannejja, since għana today still performed is usually "spirtu pront", which means spontaneous improvisation. To perform a scripted text asks the għanneijja to commit to a new format - and it equally required the confidence of the renowned Maltese authors to offer their texts to be transformed into a Għana dialogue. In this way "Times of Dilemma" does not only address burning questions of the Maltese society, but also transgresses the borders of "high culture" and "folk culture" in a unique format.*[4]

For the performances by the *għannejja*, Transparadiso built two large megaphone-sculptures, offering a dialogical sound transfer of 320 meters between St Michael's Counterguard, next to St. Roche Chapel in Valletta, and the only public land on the mostly privatized Manoel Island, which will be transformed into an exclusive new urban development for the rich. The locations relate to times of leprosy where the patients where quarantined in a hospital on Manoel Island. A priest would hold his prayers for the hospital from across the channel at St.Roche's Chapel. The dialogue from the two locations now addresses a contemporary plague, namely uncontrolled urban development in Malta.

The themes addressed by the *għannejja* which, remember, were brought up by the participants of the workshops ranged from The Political System, Development in Urban Areas, Life in the Community, Education and Culture.

At this point, I'd like to go back to the European Project. The next European Parliament elections are to be held in May 2019; already a certain amount of positioning is taking place in the run-up to the campaign season proper; over 700 MEPs will be chosen to represent 500 million-strong European Union. The issues that surfaced during the *Times of Dilemma* project were not, we imagine, dissimilar to concerns of many of the voters in the next European elections. However, *Times of Dilemma* served to acknowledge these concerns in a framework that did not seek election, but rather gave voice to them, literally 'broadcasting' them across a harbour. The deliberate placing of these concerns, first within the context of *għana*, that is, a 'common' culture, but then elevating both to the context of a 'high' culture, give a significance and a dignity to citizens' concerns outside of a political or propogandist context.

[4] From the booklet given to audience members.

It could be suggested also, that the placing of these concerns within a contemporary art project, somehow allows an immunity and a freedom of speech that may not be allowed in other contexts; because it is 'art', it is allowed to criticise in ways that normal society may not. This freedom is important, obviously, to a free society; this is something that a participatory artistic practice can foster. The participatory art project allows a certain safe space for the any existing tension or dissent without, possibly, deteriorating into physical tension or violence.

The irony of course here is when the content of the practice project is diametrically in contrast with the body that commissions it, and with the rhetoric of the communication around it.[5] And if we understand the European Capital of Culture project as a tool of the European Union to promote European cohesion, and promote values of freedom of speech, equality and openness, then there is a risk in allowing individual Capitals of Culture a free hand over their programmes and their communications policy.

Another participatory art practice perhaps also at odds with a populist and placatory outlook was Uprooted by Syrian-German artist Manaf Halbouni. Halbouni placed what can best be described as 'car-homes' around Valletta and Malta, in the context of the same exhibition curated by Maren Richter. While the cars, which were modified to allow someone to sleep, eat and store their possessions were in place, visitors – or participants - could book the vehicles to spend the night in the installation. *Uprooted* was a participatory element in a different form; the participant did not dictate the form or content of the work, but rather was invited to experience it after it was created, and to interpret it through this experience. It can be defined as a participatory project because of the form of that interaction; the participant had to do more than simply approach and observe the work; the interaction was over a relatively long period – around twelve hours – and had to be booked with the purpose of spending the night there.

The work invited participants to confront experiences of forced, restricted and chosen mobility. It referred to displacement caused by war and natural disaster. But it also confronted difficulties caused by social changes caused by gentrification and social inequalities. The work referred to all these difficulties, but also offered a space – a personal utopia – that could be created within the space of the car itself.

[5] See, for example, https://theshiftnews.com/2018/07/12/owen-bonnici-defends-v18-chairman-in-grilling-at-twin-capital-of-culture/

Uprooted, Manaf Halbouni, March 2018, Malta. Photo Margerita Pulè

The success or otherwise of projects like this cannot necessarily be measured in figures. The experience of the individual spending time within this restricted space is cannot necessarily be quantified. On the opposite scale of this experience, however, is a small anecdote related to the setting up of this project; originally permits were issued by the Local Council, in collaboration with the organisers. However, when the town managers realised that the installation was, effectively, what looked like an abandoned car that someone could live in, a request was quickly made to shift the car to a less visible area.

This anecdote betrays the intentions of town planners; public and participatory art is acceptable and accepted, but only to a certain point, and in a certain context. If it does not fulfil its expected role of beautification, or town enhancement, then it is quickly shifted and hidden. This act of hiding something that is not 'acceptable' in the eyes of some is, unfortunately, reminiscent of the removal of refugees sleeping rough in the capitals of some European cities. In July 2017, over 2,000 refugees were moved from the centre of Paris, for example. The police removal of migrants saw people being loaded onto buses and shipped to temporary centres outside the centre of Paris; the act was alternately interpreted as a humanitarian move, and as a cynical move to 'cleanse' the city's centre.[6]

I would like to mention one other participatory art practice temporary located in Malta over the last year or so; that is *Cabinet of Futures* by the artist collective

[6] https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2017/jul/07/refugees-paris-evicted-police-porte-de-la-chapelle-video

Time's Up. According to the artists, the project is "an attempt to collect an intertwined mesh of interdependent future visions".[7]

The project engaged the public in playful experiences designed to explore alternative, possible, plausible and most importantly, preferable futures. Similar to *Times of Dilemma*, it placed the artist in the role of broker, mediator, interpreter, and almost therapist, working with participants to allow an opportunity for structured dialogue on contemporary concerns. Again, the project allowed participants a certain amount of freedom; to speak within an art project is to speak within a less constrained environment. During the creative meetings, participants shared imaginative scenarios, dreams and concerns that explored diverse visions of local, regional and global futures.

The resulting site-specific exhibition created a scenario of a future port-town, complete with bar, visitor-centre, information on local 'future' wildlife and food and a printed gazette. While the project can be described as 'playful', there is an utmost serious in the environmental and social realities that it confronts, and in the possible futures and physical realisations that it creates. Its scenarios are imagined, while also being imaginable, and, crucially, experienceable. This immersive, walk-through exhibition creates a 'proto-scientific' real life laboratory atmosphere, lending it a believability that affects its audiences as well as its participants, and opening the possibility of what is currently only imagined, becoming real at some time in the future.

Similar to a European Parliament election – or any election really – which sees candidates offering alternate (and improved) realities to their constituents, this project allowed participants to discuss and demand another version of their future. The essential difference, however, is in the intent; while a political candidate seeks to become elected, at least as a means to an end to carry out a common good, the artist seeks to engage the participant in an equal and hopefully meaningful future-imagining.

So, in conclusion, I would like to put forward participatory art practice as providing an alternative democratic context for citizen participation, common discussion and free and creative thought.

However, I would like to issue a plea to the European Commission. As long as the European Capital of Culture programme is left in the hands of local politicians, the prevailing and popular outlook of the day will be allowed to prevail. The ECoC programme can only reflect those who create it. If the local politicians who control it are inclined towards right-wing ideas disguised as left-win laissez-faire economics, then that is what the ECoC programme will reflect. The European Commission must

[7] http://timesup.org/CoF-exhibition

somehow design a structure that protects against this right-wing ego-style politics. Otherwise it will descend into being something that is no more than a tool in the hands of those who are the very antithetical to its ideals.

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Matera, an Urban Project Open to the Manifold

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Matera, made famous by the publication of the book *"Christ stopped at Eboli"* in 1949 was, from the 1950s onwards, the main topic of a cultural debate that had placed the town at the heart of the Great Reconstruction discussion, in a country such as Italy that was heading towards modernity, and that in Matera required a critical angle on the issue Southern Italy versus the Modern. This was a place where experimentation was at home, a town under the spotlight of urbanistic potential; it was just beginning to deal with a law that was to accompany the process of realigning the relations among space, economics and society, and, thanks to the intervention of Adriano Olivetti, became the scene of a large-scale political reformist project that placed this small, unforgotten town of Southern Italy into the heart of an national and international discussion. After the Second World War, the town of Matera – previously described as a *national disgrace* – became an interesting case study, an arena where the most innovative urbanistic theories were discussed, such as the concept of *regional planning* that had been experimented and had given some interesting results in some areas of North America; a place where politicians sat conferred with town planners, architects, anthropologists, economists, agronomists, arousing reflection among writers and photographers throughout the world in order to create the meeting point between reality and utopia. A reality that slowly materialised and was only apparently stopped over time. A reality that caused a change in sensitiveness that was essential in gathering in that archaism evidence of a *prophetic place*, as Walter Benjamin would say, a space that seemed abandoned and where *«it is as if everything that should really happen there, has already passed by»*, and that unexpectedly reserves *«the power to let the future be investigated»*[1]. By distorting a destiny where future existence seems to have been brought to a halt, the history of Matera, without wanting to compensate or redeem it, became the best example to open discussions on modernity.

Matera then became a profoundly symbolic place that would go on to hold a fundamental value for other cultures that would reflect and work together on the material that this town offered: town planning and architecture, anthropology and territorial and agrarian sciences would all be mixed together. It would become a town where new ideas would be experimented for a nation that was quickly moving towards modernisation, albeit unwittingly, and for a Southern Italian town in terms of hope and resignation.

The problems that Matera put forwarded were transformed from a cultural dimension to a political issue. Matera would therefore become the experimental laboratory of the plan, enacted only a short time beforehand, thanks to the urbanistic laws that were to accompany

[1] Cf a quote by W. Benjamin (2007, reprint of the 1942 edition) Infanzia berlinese intorno al millenovecento, Torino Einaudi, as it was written by Padiglione V. (2013-2014), Luogo profetico, Antropologia Museale, n. 34-36.

the construction process of a country that was extremely scarce in housing and infrastructures, above all in the Southern regions. The development plan of the town, entrusted to Luigi Piccinato (1953-56) was aimed at rebuilding a debate that was offered by the cultural climate, by experimenting new ideas deriving from this Southern Italian town that were capable of launching an Italian version on the theme of urban growth for nuclear and discontinuous models: the opening of new centralities to be situated outside the consolidated town, the development of new urban areas that were able to express a high level of architecture, an innovative town model, that would be built up within the regulations of the new urbanistic pattern. The plan would highlight the vigorous morphology of Matera and the surrounding hills, enhancing the green areas with a structural and conforming value, entrusting the town parks with the role of marking out, and at the same time conserving, the hilly slopes and giving civil magnificence to the new built-up areas by intersecting them with large tree-lined avenues. In other words, build within the new town a dialogue between the environmental system and the housing system, that was able to experiment *green belts* with *green fingers*, the metaphors that were being carried out in other European towns. Matera earned its rightful place in the most prestigious architectural journals of the time. The plan could also benefit from urban studies carried out by groups from other fields who made the most of the rich debate that was being constructed in the town, a widespread awareness and not just a fact that related exclusively to experts and professionals. The analyses carried out on the living conditions, inspired by *Geddes's social survey* and by observing the various types of house in the Sassi, proposed in great detail the possibility of evacuation, recovery and re-allocation of the dwellings of the Sassi in the hope, albeit naive, of being able to transfer, together with the inhabitants, also the social and symbolic bonds of the *Vicinato* (the old living quarters of the Sassi), by studying the spaces available and turning them into *new contact areas* in the new built-up areas, opposing the impersonalisation of space that was beginning to take place in other urban areas.

The new areas were therefore conceived using poetic proposals put forward by the young and upcoming architects such as Ludovico Quaroni, Carlo Aymonino, Giancarlo De Carlo, Federico Gorio and Mario Fiorentino, as well as plans developed by local competent professionals; all these ideas were evaluated during the contest and compared against the most advanced stances of the architectural debate. In a very short space of time numerous houses were built, testing the validity of various new urban ideas such as the rural housing schemes and villages, creating new infrastructures within the town and in the countryside, sending out a strong and ambitious cultural message to explore the South of Italy: the idea of a new town that took a civil living model to the surrounding countryside.

Therefore, in Matera, culture seeped into the town and social life. Discussions were held on the knowledge of space as a project for social emancipation, creating interest and thought in the town and the surrounding territory, integrating what was a local, cultural and refined debate with new ideas that came from further afield; this was a contextual knowledge, deriving from a strong awareness of the area, that reacted against modernity, neither to hinder or approve it, but to be able to devise a project that could resound as a widespread culture, inviting professional practitioners to be contemplative, and to be able to accompany ideas and

economies within the emancipation process of the town that would have been created in the new urban space.

Matera, an investigation of the conditions in the Modern age between space and the town population[2].

«Technical success based on solid planning» Aymonino said without delay, that will however not have any bearing on the population's income levels or the quality of their life[3]. But this will not prevent an expression of deep trust in *«the teaching virtue of good architecture»* remembering the words of Riccardo Musatti as he commemorated the premature death of Ettore Stella, a competent and promising local architect.

Putting aside the detailed analyses and all the papers that had proposed a diversified use of the Sassi, the quick option was chosen; commence the building of new housing areas that would be finished within the space of just a few years.

Already at the beginning of the 1970s, the relentless degradation of the Sassi, a consequence of the evacuation of the same, and the collapse of the Agrarian Reform (due to the weakening of the country movements, to the incompletion of the infrastructural process of the countryside and to the failure of the allocation of the agricultural quotas to the assignees of the village houses that resulted in the downsizing of the peasant population that became an isolated entity with limited bargaining power) overlooked the fact that the town was heading in a different direction, towards the process of industrialisation.

Matera, the peasant capital would slowly be isolated, just like the whole peasant world, and would experience the traumatic change to modernity, transforming it from a prophetic to an unfashionable place, into a world where the race towards contemporaneity would suddenly cause great problems.

As a result, the spotlights go down on Matera as the urban laboratory and the town recedes once again into the anonymity of a small, provincial, inland town of Southern Italy, renowned more for its services than for its manufacturing industries.

The Sassi, having undergone this slow process of degradation and abandon, overcame a local policy of apathy and indifference and once again hit the headlines thanks to an international contest (held in 1974) the results of which would be cited as among the most significant examples of historical town centre re-development among Italian cities. A cultural, not only architectural, awareness was to spread throughout the town; both foreign and Italian architects and artists studied Matera and the emblematic case of its historic centre, encouraging critical discussions of the highest level. The nomination of the Sassi as a UNESCO world heritage site in 1993 finally brought international fame. Matera was set to become an open-air museum, an athenaeum on a town scale, a destination for national and international tourism.

This is a story known to all, as are the results and the consequent reshaping of this experience that followed in the years, proving that the idea of community acted as a regressive

[2] Mazza L. (2015) *Spazio e cittadinanza*, Donzelli Roma.

[3] Without the presumption of being too thorough, here is a small bibliography on local events in Matera: Restucci A.,(1991), *Matera,I Sassi*, Einaudi; Fonseca C.D., Demetrio R., Guadagno G.,(1998), *Matera*, Editori Laterza; Restucci A., (1977), Città e Mezzogiorno: Matera dagli anni '50 al concorso sui "Sassi" Centri urbani: conservazione e innovazione, *Casabella n.428*, Piccinato L., (1955), Matera: i Sassi i nuovi borghi e il Piano regolatore, *Urbanistica n.15-16*, Fabbri M., (1993) Il piano regolatore di Matera di Luigi Piccinato, edited by Malusardi F., *Luigi Piccinato e l'urbanistica moderna*, Officina, Rome; Rota L., (2011), *Matera. Storia di una città*, Giannatelli, Matera.

utopia that was in contrast to the anonymity of the metropolis, issues that were already beginning to be addressed elsewhere. The refusal to incorporate the disintegrated farming culture at a town level(4) and the excessive populism covered up the great contradictions that emerged from the political project, the urban plan and the farming disputes curtailed by the agrarian reform, where investment was being made in agriculture while the town was heading in another direction.

Coming back as urbanists and reflecting on Matera does not mean eliminating the complexities and contradictions of this experience but neither does it imply putting the town on a pedestal or looking at it with great nostalgia, playing down the negative judgements that had however been prevalent in previous years, simply due to the fact that what came later was decidedly worse, because the town that we built after this season, not only in Matera but also elsewhere in Italy, proved incapable of re-elaborating an innovative Italian route starting from the opportunities that came about with the reconstruction of the town during the post-war period[5].

The recent history of the reconstruction in Matera is no different from that of many other Italian towns: an expansive form of logic, implemented both inside and outside the projects, that were subjected to a high number of variations, would result in reduced legibility of the original urban project. Matera became a town full of houses. Despite the high quality of the plans that were drawn up for the town, despite the attempts to preserve the surrounding areas in order to protect the relationship between the town limits and the countryside and a plan to safeguard the territorial and cultural heritage, despite the building of schools, hospitals and churches, Matera has, over the last 30 years, built up a large suburban basin that includes the Modern areas but has weakened the impact of the Piccinato project, reshaping the structural values of the natural features that the project had attributed to the three hilly areas of the town. The result is there for all to see: suburban areas that lack quality, forever being built up for a town that has become too big for its inhabitants[6].

The image that is conveyed by Matera nowadays is that of a town of deep contrast, turning upside down and deforming the temporal and spatial dimensions of this contrast: the Sassi, perceived in the recent past as an inadequate kind of town – to be hidden by the operative and functional centre of the Piano that had itself become a picturesque backdrop – have become the object of over-exposure by the media, a compendium of notions of heritage, a place where everything that happens is exalted by the breath-taking scenery, a permanent nativity scene, the most dynamic, yet most rigid and less changeable, part of the town. On the other hand, the town can be seen as an extensive suburban area, made up of various suburban levels, mostly a public town – in the sense that the vast peripheral areas were built up thanks to public investment programmes – that was built to solve the problem of the evacuation of the Sassi from which these suburbs are so distant.

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[4] Restucci A.,(1991), *op.cit.*

[5] Secchi B.(2001), I quartieri INA Casa e la costruzione della città contemporanea, edited by Di Biagi P., (2001) *La grande ricostruzione, Il Piano INA casa e l'Italia degli anni '50*, Donzelli Rome.

[6] A close examination of these events can be found by reading the dissertation of Dicillo C. La vicenda materana dei quartieri e di borghi come dispositivi storico geografici per una politica agrourbana. Dottorato Internazionale di Ricerca ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PHENOMENOLOGY, ciclo XXIV (2012-13), UNIBAS.

This is a suburban area that is also a storage area of materials belonging to an important period of urban history: housing schemes that have encircled the evacuated areas in fragmented quarters, becoming a suburb within another suburb, where the only reason you would go there was if you lived there. A suburban area that is continually under construction, where the new houses – built for a population that does not grow in numbers – fill the voids and occupy all remaining spaces, covering slopes and hills and obscuring the features of the territory that the Piccinato project had tried to exploit in order to build a town that belonged to that same territory.

These housing schemes, blocks of buildings that obeyed the abstract rules of modern zoning, *disorientated* the signs of a thousand-year-old rupestrian history that was, on the other hand, an integral part of the rugged landscape, as can be seen from the beautiful photos that are attached. The suburbs were no longer the inspiring group of houses that emerged from the countryside as depicted in the old, black and white photos of Matera, heralding progress and aimed at living in a civil manner, standing arrogantly on the hilly slopes and taking in the horizon from the windows of the new houses. We would never have described those houses as just "taking up space".

«A place exists only if people speak about it» meaning that space is above all used by those who live there, a place of practice, accepted and shaped by those who use it. A place begins to exist in the imagination of those who live there, and they give the place a name when he feels it represents him. Or, in other words, places do not exist if they do not represent those who live there.

These suburbs are the new Sassi. They also want to be part of the of the narrative scenery of the town and of its relationship with the postmodern; they are crying out for a facelift, a new poetic image that could grasp an order that perhaps we cannot decipher, a new awareness in the construction of a space which of gives a prominent role to green areas, the town and the territory in order to, once again, send out a message that has a universal value.

Nowadays, Matera is once again vibrant after having been named as the European City of Culture in 2019 having to face the challenge that this accolade represents for a medium-sized town in the South of Italy, starting from the re-launching of a cultural policy where the existence of a regional university can successfully play its part.

Today the town has the possibility of carrying out in a much better way the objectives of the "Matera-Basilicata 2019" Foundation whose aim is to implement the candidacy programme in order to consolidate the position gained by Matera and the region of Basilicata at a European level in the creativity sector, thus building a cultural platform for Southern Europe[7]. The Foundation could become a workshop for politics and policies in the entire Southern area, in order to help understand what role a medium-sized town could have in Europe today, a town whose urban values are under scrutiny against the devastating powers of the metropolis and post-metropolis, if the town's material and intangible patrimony still has the ability to organise vaster territories. If the Deep South can be distinguished itself from the Abysmal South.

[7] Mininni M, Favia M.F., Dicillo C.,Biscaglia S., *Matera. Una nuova frontiera? Prime riflessioni.* Urban@it Background Papers. RAPPORTO SULLE CITTÀ 2015 METROPOLI ATTRAVERSO LA CRISI Octobre 2015.

Through the Foundation, the University can guarantee research and training to make our consciousness reflexive, to produce a consciousness that is both useful and useable, thanks also to the regional university's commitment to tackle important social problems, the only institution capable of facing up to the complexity and the rapidity of the processes that the town of Matera and its inhabitants had to deal with in order to rightfully take its place in contemporary life. This is a university that will have the ability to take on the four major challenges it faces as an anchor institution, or rather as an institution that is geographically integrated and commissioned by the Matera 2019 process due its very mission and competence: research, training, relations with the territory and its institutions and social responsibility. For the region of Basilicata, this last challenge means promoting its human capital to create new professional figures for the 21st century: giving the youth of this region not just an appealing university, but also the chance to be drawn in by this project not so much with the aim of keeping them here – quite the contrary it wants to send them out into the world – but by giving them, and many others, a real opportunity.