

# Urban Cultural Landscapes

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Brisbane, October 2008

## Abstract

*Traditionally, a landscape is considered as an expanse of natural scenery that people come to see and enjoy. But this romantic perspective should be widened to include urban landscapes. In a city, the landscape changes with the position of the viewer, or even better, the “flaneur” – a person leisurely strolling through its streets. We are no longer in the closed cities of the medieval age or the architectural wonders of the Renaissance, but in a postmodern city where we are looking for feelings and emotions. The landscape then becomes an experience. It has a more subjective content and it may be better in such a case to use the terms “atmosphere” or “environment” instead of landscape. Changing the traditional view implies new quality assessment criteria and instruments.*

*Once the conservation of cultural landscapes is recognized as an important element for reinforcing the economic base of a territory rather than as a simple expression of an aesthetic need, the issues change. It is no longer a question of compromising the growth of employment and income to protect a few old stones but to take action for the area’s sustainable economic development by avoiding useless or irreversible damage to the natural, cultural and, therefore, human environment. The long-term economic health of a community may demand that the urban cultural landscape not be sacrificed by blindly pursuing unregulated development. These motivations - ecological, tourist or cultural – will determine the type of actors who will play a role in the formulation of such policies. Some will intervene in the name of safeguarding the quality of the living conditions of the local inhabitants. Others will intervene in the name of preserving culture as an intangible element, while still others may invoke the beauty and integrity of a landscape. In this context, new cultural assets such as retrofits, cultural districts and quarters deserve attention.*

## Introduction

A landscape comprises the visible features of an area including its physical elements, living elements and human elements such as human activity and the built-up environment. Since a landscape is shaped by human activity, we may use the expression “cultural landscape”. A priori this does not say anything about the quality/state of preservation or the level of preservation it demands.

Traditionally, a landscape is considered as an expanse of natural scenery that people come to see and enjoy. Defining and protecting a landscape is not a new issue. As for Western Europe, there is a fresco in the *Baths of Trajan* in Rome dating back to the first century A.D. depicting a bird's eye view of an ancient city. In the Middle Ages, cityscapes appeared in paintings as a background for portraits and biblical themes. A large number of copperplate prints and etchings were made from the 16th to the 18th century showing cities in a bird's eye view. The 18th century was a flourishing period for cityscape painting in Venice (*Canaletto*). At the end of the 19th century, the Impressionists focused on the atmosphere and the dynamics of everyday life in the countryside and the city. Suburban and industrial areas, building sites and railway-yards also became subjects of cityscapes. Later, the protection of landscapes, both urban and rural, became an important stake in all countries. Conflicts regarding the production and management of cultural landscapes grew and usually led to requests for reinforcing their protection. In metropolitan, urban and rural areas, choices have to be made every day regarding their need for conservation. On the one hand, urbanization is seen as the exploitation of natural resources and the destruction of cultural landscapes. On the other hand, cultural landscapes create jobs and bring in income. Also, some social actors – developers in particular - do not hesitate to stir up conflicts in an effort to remove such urban or natural landscapes from the control of the defenders of cultural environment. They persuade local governments to release these spaces for development and offer to compensate them handsomely for relaxing the limits on economic development. Inversely, several organizations are doing their utmost to preserve them

But this romantic perspective should be widened to include urban landscapes. In a city, the urban landscape (or townscape as some prefer to call it) changes with the position of the viewer, or even better, the “*flaneur*” – a person leisurely strolling through its streets. We are no longer in the closed cities of the medieval age or the architectural wonders of the Renaissance, but in a postmodern city where we are looking for feelings and emotions. The landscape then becomes an experience. It has a more subjective content and it may be better in such a case to use the terms “atmosphere” or “environment” instead of landscape. From this viewpoint, the existence of public arts, cultural districts and monuments can influence the quality of an urban cultural landscape.

The study of the landscape as a form of visualization has begun to shed light on the processes through which a landscape can be used as a cultural and political instrument. This approach has been criticized for placing too strong an emphasis on representation at the expense of considering our material interactions with the world (Rose 2002). Taken to a postmodern extreme, such theorizing has, in some cases, led to a totally immaterial conceptualization of the landscape denying the ‘*connectivity*’ of representations with the ‘*world outside*’ and downplaying the importance of the relationship between the material world and its representations. The challenge at the heart of Western scientific thought is that it is generally based on the separation of man from nature: a position that may eventually undermine our concerns about ecology and sustainability. Contesting the understanding of the world that divides it into subjects (minds) and objects, Ingold advocates ‘*an alternative mode of understanding based on the premise of our*

*engagement with the world, rather than our detachment from it'* In a similar vein, the geographer Mitch Rose argues that *'the engine for the landscape's being is practice: everyday agents calling the landscape into being as they make it relevant for their own lives, strategies and projects.'* (Rose 2002)

But this problem has become important today for three reasons:

- The ecological movement has convinced city-dwellers and communities of the need to look after the environment and prevent its deterioration that may not always be immediately visible. Paradoxically, it is often the invisible attacks that are noticed first, undoubtedly because they call for scientific knowledge and the principle of precaution, and are better understood than the often confused debates on the definition of the cultural landscape.

- Cultural tourism: the landscape becomes a lever of economic development through tourism. This was already true of mountainous and coastal areas, but it is now also applicable to urban and rural areas where the landscape is a priori less spectacular. It is thus advisable to manage and reproduce such landscapes as a source of employment and income.

- The role of cultural atmosphere for creating a creative city. This last point is more controversial since it focuses attention on the intangible components of the landscape. During the last decade, many people have felt that the Florida approach has underlined the importance of a creating a new cultural atmosphere to attract the creative class. Florida's new cultural atmosphere is very different from the earlier one as it focuses on cafés with live music, street arts and so on. This approach has been much debated, but it is possible to open a wider debate on the role of seminal grass-roots cultural enterprises for disseminating new values and new forms of creativity as long as the milieu is organized so as to both recognize and catalyze these purposes.

Indeed, once the conservation of cultural landscapes is recognized as an important element for reinforcing the economic base of a territory rather than as a simple expression of an aesthetic need, the nature of the debate changes. It is no longer a question of compromising the growth of employment and income to protect a few old stones, fish or obscure plants, but to take action for the area's sustainable economic development by avoiding useless or irreversible damage to the natural, cultural and, therefore, human environment. The long-term economic health of a community may demand that the cultural landscape not be sacrificed by blindly pursuing unregulated development. Promoting it to attract visitors to the area can largely compensate for the earnings expected as a result of the destruction of the cultural landscape. These motivations - ecological, tourist or cultural - will determine the type of actors who will play a role in the formulation of such policies. Some will intervene in the name of safeguarding the quality of the biosphere and the living conditions of the local inhabitants. Others will intervene in the name of preserving culture as an intangible element, while still others may invoke the beauty and integrity of a landscape. The latter will intervene in the name of tourism to facilitate access to landscapes regarded as capable of attracting visitors.

In order to understand this challenge, we shall consider:

-The evolution of the notion of landscapes and the recognition of the role of cultural components for development;

-The consequences of considering landscapes as a form of visualisation, in terms of criteria for assessing the quality of an urban cultural landscape and instruments for implementing and managing these urban cultural landscapes;

-The consequences of considering landscapes as a form of experiences, in terms of comprehensive criteria and components, focusing on cultural assets.

# 1. The evolution of the notion of landscapes and the recognition of the role of its cultural components

## 1.1. Enriching the definition of landscapes: All landscapes have a cultural dimension

Whatever the approach, it is necessary to first define a cultural landscape. According to article 1 of the World Heritage Convention, a cultural landscape is defined as a combined work of man and nature. It may either be a garden or a park, a relict landscape or a continuing landscape marked by history or an “associative cultural landscape”, i.e. a landscape in which natural elements are associated with religious, artistic or cultural factors<sup>i</sup>. Between 1993 and 2001, twenty-three cultural landscapes were thus included in the World Heritage List. It is necessary to note one change: it is the site that is taken into consideration and not the monument and there is no longer a clear separation between nature and culture. Further, the local population is associated with the listing process (UNESCO, 1977 & 1985).

The various approaches to cultural landscapes are defined in paragraph 39 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* regarding landscapes (Berleant, 1997).

(i) The most easily identifiable is the *clearly defined landscape* designed and created intentionally by man. This embraces gardens and parklands planned for aesthetic reasons, which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.

(ii) The second category is the *organically evolved landscape*, resulting from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative that has reached its present form in association with and in response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect this process of evolution in their form and component features. They fall into two sub-categories:

– A relict (or fossil) landscape is one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period of time. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form.

– a continuing landscape is one which still plays an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life and in which the evolutionary process is still going on. At the same time, it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.

(iii) The final category is the *associative cultural landscape*. The inclusion of such landscapes on the World Heritage List is justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent.

This is the official approach and it indicates the importance of cultural landscapes. But is it really effective? It is not so obvious for two reasons:

- The concept of cultural landscapes is obviously inspired by the concept of monuments and its definition has been extended precisely with the idea of going beyond this starting point. However there is a major difference between a monument and a landscape, even though they may be associated. A monument is a tangible element to which intangible values are attached to justify its preservation. But a landscape by itself has less objective value than when it is selected because of its association with subjective elements.

- This definition is more of an enumeration of the features found in the list of landscapes drawn up by the World Heritage Convention than a presentation of the criteria that should be used to define landscapes that deserve to be preserved.

In fact we may wonder if there are really any landscapes that are not cultural. The answer to this question will define the relationship between nature, external surroundings, environment and landscape. Environment connotes more than our external surroundings. Human life is intimately bound to external environmental conditions and no clear lines divide us from the environment we inhabit. Landscapes too bear the mark of their inhabitants, for the things we make “make” us. Physical environments such as landscapes have been marked by human activity for a very long time. Hence, a “cultural landscape” should not be considered as an antithesis of a “natural landscape” but a landscape, which needs to be protected because of the values it embodies. An environment contains some of the characteristics of the territory where it is located, but a landscape is identified as being something more precise that incorporates all the features that are considered interesting.

### **1.2. The role of culture in the urban context**

Clark and alii disrupt the established urban growth literature by arguing that because the effects of globalization amenities based growth has become the driving force behind urban renewal and expansion. Clark advocates for a new theory of urban growth, one that responds to a demand for a shift from separable growth categorized by their reliance on clientelism to public goods, as well as a shift from pure economic growth to a more controlled manageable growth strategy. (Clark, 24:5) A city must reallocate its assets to make public good resources available to all residents. One way to achieve this is to distribute investments, including cultural investments, throughout a city, leaving the urban centre and moving in the periphery of ethnic neighbourhoods, often low income and suffering from the effects of suburban flight. In recent times, an increasing attention has been paid to artistic and cultural legacy on the neighbourhood level, and new advocates of the arts focus on the self-generating economic potential of indigenous cultural resources.

Florida in *The Rise of Creative Class* takes Clark's criticism of urban growth a step further by concentrating his argument on neighbourhood based amenities strategies (Florida, 2002). Florida argues that the transformation of the workforce - from industrial to service and knowledge based workers - has made creativity the driving force behind the new global economy and created a group of simultaneous producers and consumers that he refers to as the creative class. This creative class places high priority on the authenticity of place, specifically in terms of cultural and artistic assets. These workers desire to be active participants in the arts by consuming them at local level, thus generating new sources of income for the communities. In the same time the creative class is made up to a large extent of cultural producers, who in turn adapt creative process borrowed from the arts in their own production. It is this synergy that cities must recognize and exploit in order to thrive. Then, the best way for cities to draw these workers and the businesses that follow is to encourage authentic community based street-level culture. When community development efforts are linked with creative city and amenities-based development, the complex synergy that is created has the potential to change the way urban growth and urban renewal and understood the attention or city developers and policy makers. But it has to be recognized that Florida's creative class has little in common with the day to day process of low income neighbourhood revitalization and the most common strategies employed by development actors

Very often, the defence of cultural investment in landscape is based on cultural tourism expectation? Tourism is supposed to contribute to a city's economy by injecting spending on local products and services, absorbing its assets without proving a real drain on its resources, and creating spill over effects leading to higher employment and greater tax revenues. However, this aspect of economic development is less relevant for economically depressed communities in need of revitalization than for city wide attempts to draw outsiders to the city-centre via conference centre and large-scale consumer attractions. Low income neighbourhoods are unlikely to succeed in attracting developers to invest in large-scale facilities of this type in the first place.

Then there exists here another approach. Developing the atmosphere of the city involves encouraging and supporting the indigenous arts of its residents, not only through local artists, but also by encouraging participation through increased access to the arts. While cultural development was initially conceived of in order to make the arts more accessible to a wider range of individuals, new definitions of culture in the service of development have primarily socio-economic aims: that is to bring about change or reform through the mobilization of culture. The European model is an example of cultural development that stresses the accessibility of the arts to all members of the community. Here, culture is incorporated by policy makers into the physical development of the city as both a community resource to be part of the city's public image and to be integrated into each individual citizen's self perception; For the European task on culture and development, cultural activities contribute to overall human knowledge, to define and describe social and economic norms; and to create social capital through self-empowerment. The European task Force recommend using the arts as an amenity to improve overall quality of life.

There exist many reasons for linking city and culture. But very often this connection is focused on the city core. For example Landry focus mainly on the city's inner ring: By drawing creative people to work and live in the city centre, these individuals will in turn offer fresh perspectives and ideas to perpetuate the renewal process (Landry, 2000). Richard Florida similarly provides a context for the intersection between culture and economic development that occurs in the cities where cultural production and consumption occurs every day on the street level.

But what matter here are not only the city core but the neighbourhood, the exit and entrance and the general design of the cities. In a recent inquiry of the UNESCO and the French Heritage Non Profit Organization (*Vieilles Maisons Françaises*), it has been shown that the main demand for heritage conservation was to care more about the urban entries and exists, THE sprawl of the cities, the savage advertisement, etc., much before conservation of cathedrals and castles (Grefe, 2008). It is recognized too that organizing urban development only but on cultural tourism can have negative effects. Cultural tourism strategies can destabilize a city's economy by creating an over-dependence on revenue generated from outside the city. When tourism slows, so too does the trickle down effects of tourism, and the economy as a whole is negatively affected by trends beyond their control. The vulnerability of economic development strategies that rely too heavily on exogenous revenue generated through investment in large-scale cultural facility development can create tensions in integrated development strategies.

It has to be recognized that the consideration of this cultural dimension can distillate new conflicts. Not only because there can exist a contradiction between the logic of artistic development and the logic of the developers, but because the gentrification is a permanent consequence of this connection. More and more the new urban projects are designed and implemented by private-public partnerships, which creates very often roots for gentrification due to the need to make investment more profitable. Because of the large price tags associated with building citywide cultural centre or restoration investment, this form of development is marked by these public-private partnerships. These partnerships draw outsiders into a community and may lead to the same process of gentrification, which undermine cultural development goals by displacing artists and local residents.

## 2. Urban Cultural Landscapes as a form of visualisation

### 2.1. Which criteria to assess the quality of an urban cultural landscape?

How traditionally do we appreciate and assess landscapes? The criteria used may be both economic and aesthetic and they are probably related since the economic value of a place is enhanced by its aesthetic value. But the aesthetic value is elusive and ambiguous. Moreover these criteria are mainly “negative” (Berleant, 1997)

- Ugliness: it is the easiest criterion to define since it is the antithesis of beauty. But it seems to be an extreme criterion because things that are not beautiful are not necessarily ugly. Moreover, some things may be both ugly and aesthetical like the gargoyles in the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

- Offensiveness: this criterion is less exceptional. Although the ugly may not necessarily be unbeautiful, it may still offend us. The offence occurs in this case because it is believed that a rule pertaining to good taste or proportion has been transgressed. So when a commercial interrupts an interesting programme on radio or television, we can say that there is an offence due to the insensitivity of the interruption.

- Banality: it may also be considered as offensive, but only by default. A landscape is banal because its possibilities have not been fully exploited.

- Dullness: it is generally a consequence of banality, but is not confined to it. The landscape may be dull due to the absence of inventiveness. In fact, this criterion is easier to apply to the arts and to monuments than to environment. When a landscape looks dull, it is because of human intervention, e.g. when houses or gardens are planned unimaginatively so that they give an impression of dullness.

- Lack of fulfilment: an object is not appreciated because it does not live up to our expectations. This criterion seems difficult to apply to landscapes too. In fact, lack of fulfilment is frequently associated with another criterion.

- Inappropriateness: ethnic designs used without regard to local building traditions can have a disastrous effect.

- Trivialization: it is a form of inappropriateness. Things that are serious, like housing for instance, are treated in a very casual manner. Trivializing the past is often a cause of such inappropriateness.

- Deceptiveness: it intensifies the negativity of the trivial by making evident a voluntary dimension. Much of the vernacular heritage has been created on such a basis, which simultaneously induces inappropriateness, trivialization and deceptiveness. But the insensitivity of this criterion is linked to its moral roots.

- Destructiveness: This is the most extreme criterion, much more than ugliness.

### 2.2. Which instruments?

Let us start by stressing two points:

- As far as cultural landscapes are concerned, there is both a positive and a negative demand for their protection: some actors such as ecological movements demand more conservation; others such as urban developers or promoters are less concerned about in conservation.

- There are many stakeholders. But who are they? (White, 1968): They are those who have a direct interest in the ownership or utilisation of environmental resources; those who are passionately committed to nature, especially nature that is unimproved, undefiled, inviolate; gentlemen farmers and owners of estates lying beyond the fringe of suburbia; farmers who are more or less prompted by aesthetic concerns; citizens who are differently concerned according to their preference for specific ownership or localization; tour operators who want minimal protection to create a demand for their services, but not too much to oblige them have to manage their flow of tourists; environmental NGOs; etc. Similarly, there are many instruments: education for environmental protection is probably one of the most important and it should be announced at the very beginning. But here we shall focus on the more traditional economic instruments. Anyway, it is necessary to increase incentives for people to participate with the landscape through active perception, and this signifies creativity for cultural landscapes as well as physical investment. By understanding the interplay of so many elements in a landscape, it is possible to enhance its 'beauty' and emphasize its cultural dimension (Whyte, 1968).

#### - *The police*

The police force is employed to prevent people from using their land or property in a way that is harmful to public welfare or, to be more exact, in a way that alters the cultural landscape in a negative manner. Usually this type of policing consists of zoning an area to indicate the type of estate or resources that can be developed and the principles governing this development. As far as cultural landscapes are concerned, the police define zoning laws for restricting the built-up area on an acre of land. This policy is not always effective since developers tend to violate laws related to the built-up area. Thus extending the areas for construction compensates what is lost in intensiveness. Another issue is the parochial nature of local zoning, which requires extensive monitoring by governments and law courts. Finally, another difficulty is that owners of properties have to be paid compensation if the new zoning laws affect their properties. When regulated by the police, there is a possibility of their wealth being undervalued and it is therefore legitimate to compensate them for the loss. But the cost can increase dramatically in such cases.

#### - *"Fee simple"*

The best way to prevent any harmful use of real estate or land is to acquire absolute ownership with unrestricted rights of disposal (fee simple). The possibility of the government exercising this power is bound to influence owners and make them use their properties more prudently. But the problem is that when a local government wants to buy land, it has to indicate its objective clearly and the court that assesses the property and decides the price must accept this objective. "Public purpose" is one condition that permits alteration of private property, but the point is whether the court will recognize conservation of a cultural landscape as a "public purpose". At times, the time needed for these legal proceedings may have negative effects on the final agreement by raising the expectations of the seller forced to part with his property. Further, the cost of an outright purchase is very high, and many local governments do not have the necessary resources. Naturally, this does not apply to governments who have ample resources at their disposal and are in a position to offer a part of these resources in exchange for the property in question.

Another solution is to create a system of revolving resources where the purchase of a new piece of land or an urban estate is ensured through the sale of other resources. Another system is the lease-back system. The local government buys the land but allows the previous owner to use it only for specific purposes in accordance with the demands of landscape preservation. Another system is preventive buying. But whatever the choice of system, the cost of the fee simple policy is bound to be high, much higher than the use of policing powers.

It has to be said that in many European countries, the use of this instrument is not dramatic since local governments traditionally own important amounts of land. Naturally the problem is to know

how they use these resources. During the last decades local governments have been more sensitive to the employment issue than to the landscape one, by offering significant amounts of land to new builders, giant stores, more or less interesting entertainment parks, and so on.

#### *- Easement*

Instead of buying a property, it may be much more economical to resort to the easement law that gives a person certain rights or privileges in another's land. When a property is bought, the buyer acquires a whole bunch of rights tied to the property, but the buyer is basically interested only in one type of right. To achieve this purpose, the buyer needs to acquire just one or a few rights in the property. In such a case, it is better to resort to an easement and leave the remaining rights with the owner. Some easements are positive while others are negative. In the first case, it is possible to buy the right to do something with a part of the property. For example, it is possible to create a public footpath or a bicycle trail. In the second situation, the owner is told not to use his property rights fully, e.g. desist from adding extensions to the main building.

One advantage of easement is that it can be used no matter who owns the land. Moreover, if it is necessary to pay compensation to the owner who suffers as a result of the easement, his successors are not entitled to any payment since the price of the property includes the losses caused by the easement.

One difficulty with easement is the assessment of the compensation amount to be paid to the owner. The rule of the thumb for assessing the easement is to figure out the 'before and after' value the property. This depends not only on the nature of the easement but also on the future prospects of the property, which are always debatable. If the easement deals with the essential property rights, then the property would lose its value and the easement would be as costly as the fee simple.

Another issue concerns employment. If the easement leads to the destruction of jobs, its social cost may be much higher than its financial cost, and this should be taken into account when dealing with welfare.

#### *- Development Rights*

In an urban environment restrictions can take a different form. When a limit is imposed on the height of the buildings to safeguard an urban landscape, it is possible to limit the constructible height in one area while allowing its increase in another area. The advantage for the authorities is that they do not have to spend anything since the loss of a right in one area is compensated by its availability in another area where it can be sold to owners and developers. This attractive solution was developed in the United States. But though it holds the possibility of earning profits from the new rights, this is far from obvious, except for promoters.

Moreover, such cases are often referred to the court to ensure that the new rights have the same value as those that have been suppressed. So it is necessary to wait for the court's verdict and there is a good chance that the local government may be obliged to pay additional financial compensation.

#### *- Taxation*

Another means of controlling the use of various natural spaces that form a cultural landscape is to treat them differently through taxation. Thus uses needing preferential treatment because they contribute to the conservation of the cultural landscape could be taxed lower or even exempted from tax, whereas uses considered to be harmful for the conservation of the cultural landscape are very heavily taxed. This can be done by defining the basis for taxation as also through the differentiation of tax rates. There should be prompt approval of such fiscal expenditure since it is

directly intended to protect the general interest. Thus if farmers are asked to become gardeners by preserving certain species of trees or crops that convey a positive image of the landscape, but which make them incur losses as compared to other uses, this solution appears normal.

Another advantage of this instrument is that its cost for the government is relatively low. For example, if the owners participating in the protection of the cultural landscape are granted significant advantages. Those whose activities are detrimental to the preservation of the cultural landscape could finance this measure.

The main disadvantage of this instrument is that its long-term consequences could be very unfavourable. For example, if the use of land for constructing dwellings is highly taxed, these dwellings will be built in some other place where they will contribute to the over-use of land and raise the corresponding costs of congestion for the local government. The tax instrument must therefore be a part of long-term planning and associated with other instruments

### **3. Urban Cultural Landscapes as a form of experience**

#### ***3.1. A new view: Starting from the aesthetics of engagement***

Human intervention does not always harm nature. In fact, to understand what type of criteria should be applied, it is necessary ask oneself how aesthetics operate in a landscape. The underlying idea is that adopting a purely contemplative approach cannot enhance the aesthetics of a landscape, as it tends to exacerbate subjectivism and conflicts between various actors. It should be based on the aesthetics of engagement, which calls for an active involvement in the aesthetic field (Chang Chun Yuan, 1963).

Positive aesthetic values functions in four ways: mechanically, organically, practically and humanly.

- The mechanical function: The most efficient function is that of an object adapted to a specific task that it performs with the greatest economy of movement and a minimum of wasted effort. Here, the paradigm is the machine that produces results with maximum efficiency. Normally we cannot deduce any aesthetic value from it, but some machines have managed to penetrate the field of arts and demand aesthetic attention. From Russian constructivists to Italian Futurists via Leger's industrialized human forms, the machine has found its place in the world of artistic aesthetics. The mechanical function has two positive characteristics: it is highly practical and it is eminently pleasing. An aesthetic function emerges and overlaps our perception of the landscape, mainly through design, architecture and urban planning.

- The organic function: a machine calls for the arrangement of various parts in a specific order to fulfil a predetermined task. The organic function goes beyond this simple interrelatedness by demanding cohesion and mutual responsiveness so that the function of the whole is more than the action of the individual parts. The organic function generates its own purpose whereas a mechanical function receives its purpose from its external environment. The paradigm here is the human body or, if we consider the arts, then it would be dance. There is another difference here between the mechanic and the organic functions. In the case of dance, the external audience tends to participate somatically, joining the dancer in a common activity. Then the person appreciating the dance is involved in a synthesis. There should be unity between the perceiver and the object in order to have a full organic function. Finally, the organic function adds elements of vital harmony and self-generation to the austere efficiency of the mechanical function. When considering a cultural landscape, this organic function stresses the coherence of the landscape so that each of its elements is fully merged with the others.

- The practical function: it refers to a context of use in which an object is associated with a person in a relationship involving a means to an end. It is this practical function that differentiates fine arts from applied arts: Does beauty depend on need? In fact, this distinction between fine and applied arts is more philosophical than artistic in nature. The activity of the artist has always been a synthesis of the practical and the aesthetic, an activity where practical skills are used to create objects of art with the continuous involvement of both in a mutually responsive manner. Both practical and aesthetic aspects are usually present in a work of art. In the case of a landscape, it is difficult to deny the relevance of architecture from this practical perspective. The interest of the object of art fuses with the interest of the user or perceiver. A building that is considered successful achieves both aesthetic and practical success. Architecture joins hands with the landscape and urban planning to perform these functions coherently. The practical function thus embraces both mechanical and organic functions in a fuller context of interrelation and dependence where an object of art and the aesthetic subject engage in a creative exchange.

- The humanistic function: the cultural landscape becomes a kind of conjunction between the landscape content and its perception bringing them together in a mutually fulfilling transactional relationship. A landscape does not fit in with the traditional models of disinterestedness, isolation and permanence. It fits in much more with the machine, dance and architecture linking functional, organic and practical dimensions considered from the perceiver's point of view. It incorporates the practical, but goes even further by making the receiver experience a relationship with the landscape. The landscape brings together its previous creators, its actual content and its receivers to form a whole. A cultural landscape creates (and has to create) a synthesis between aesthetic perception, social relevance and human fulfilment in which these three elements become inseparable from one another. The landscape becomes "*an instrument for embodied experience*" (Adrienne Rich), or "*a body that is my flesh*" (Merleau-Ponty).

### **3. 2. Urban cultural landscapes as an ecosystem**

- *A simple economic approach*

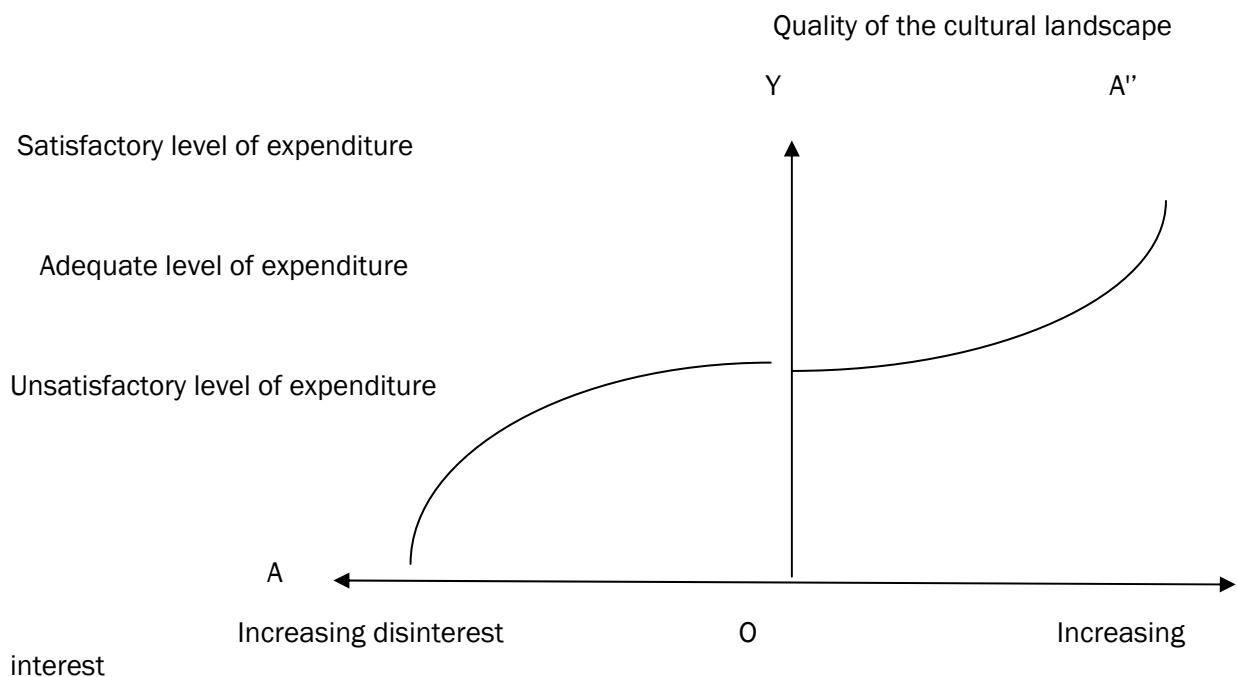
Whether the stakeholders want to invest in the conservation of a cultural landscape will depend on its initial quality. If this cultural landscape is in a poor condition, these actors are more than likely to neglect it, which will only accelerate its further deterioration. Conversely, if a cultural landscape is in a good condition, it will be appreciated and attract more attention and, consequently, increased resources for its conservation. In figure 1 (Grefe, 2004a), the X-coordinates measure the attention paid to the cultural landscape by stakeholders (positive on the right of the origin and negative on the left). The Y-ordinates measure the quality of the cultural landscape (which is supposed to be directly related to the amount of resources devoted to the maintenance of the landscape). Curve AA' A" thus represents the attention paid to the cultural landscape according to its quality or, conversely, the improvement of the quality of the landscape due to the attention paid by the stakeholders. There is a limiting threshold (A'), which determines a break-even point in terms of the behaviour of the stakeholders, and then in terms of resources allocated for conservation. Below this threshold, the attention paid to the cultural landscape is too feeble to guarantee the support of the users and the corresponding effort for its maintenance. Above this threshold, the attention is sufficiently strong to develop greater attention and the corresponding effort for maintenance.

An amount of resources (OB on the axis OY) is allocated by the actors for the conservation of the cultural landscape in the form of both public and private expenditures. This amount depends on the spontaneous efforts made by various agents to protect the cultural landscape minus the efforts of others contributing to its deterioration because the latter want to put the land resources to a different economic use. The issue then is to know whether the amount of resources (OB) guarantees the minimal threshold of the quality of conservation (OA'), which will create a positive interest among the stakeholders in favour of the cultural landscape.

- If this condition is fulfilled, local actors will consider their cultural landscape positively ( $OB > OA'$ ). They will then make the necessary efforts for its conservation. This tends to raise  $Ob$  and generate an enhanced quality,  $D''$ , followed by increased attention and so on.

- If this condition is not fulfilled ( $OB < OA'$ ), local actors will consider their cultural landscape in a negative manner ( $OB > OA'$ ). They will then reduce their efforts. This tends to decrease  $Ob$  and to generate a lower quality,  $D''$ , followed by reduced attention and so on.

FIGURE 1. *THE DYNAMICS OF A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE*



There are two ways of enhancing the process of protection:

- The first is to reinforce the public or private instruments for raising funds for conservation by introducing tax incentives or by increasing the effectiveness of these expenditures by improving their productivity;

- The second is to raise interest in the landscape, even if the initial protection level is very low, by disseminating information and training or by organizing events. Consequently, the sustainability threshold will be lower.

The development of a cultural landscape thus goes beyond the traditional economic framework of the production and consumption of a given good. The plurality of values and the interdependence of different types of behaviour encourage us to consider the cultural landscape as an ecosystem, i.e. a system likely to generate positive or negative dynamics depending on whether certain types of behaviour or budgets are satisfactory.

- *What type of local community will protect the urban cultural landscape?*

Which are the social factors that could support and enrich this approach. To be more precise, it is important to identify the type of social organization that will endorse the protection of cultural landscapes (Berleant, 1997), (Grefte, 2007). This issue concerns the community in charge of a cultural landscape.

We have to begin in the most realistic manner from a *utilitarian perspective*. Utilitarianism believes in the ultimacy of the individual, a being located in a rational universe, separated from other beings and whose intelligence is largely calculative. In order to win support for the preservation of cultural landscapes, it is possible to raise issues such as the ethics of prudence or the morality of conscience, but these are articles of faith when we take into account the utilitarian interests of individuals. But we cannot consider individuals as totally autonomous since they are interdependent as long as they face collective constraints such as the scarcity of resources or the external effects of technological development. Persons do not exist singly and it is necessary to consider conflicts between egoism and altruism, between the self and the other. It is also necessary to consider the possible relationship between alternative social complexes and the quality of cultural landscapes. Three views are thus possible.

- The *rational community*: it is a community of individuals who view society as an artificial construct and the government as a dark mechanism to be tolerated at best as an unwelcome necessity. Central to this approach is the individual motivated by self-interest, guided by reason and protected by rights. In this community individuals are guided by prudential motives and they agree to collective actions when they can identify their common interests. This rational community is more of a social order than a community. This model can be seen in the political process: it is always seen as satisfying special interests through a process of political competition. Some alterations may interfere with this model: self-sufficiency is frequently recognized as a utopian ideal in a way that the self is more a folk category than an entity; mutuality is recognized, but it does not mean dependence and it is for the individual to make the choice.

This is where landscapes come into the picture: in the face of pollution and negative external effects, collective action may be undertaken to protect and maintain cultural landscapes. But this is a very minimalist view inspired by the principle of prevention when the problem is clearly identified, analysed and recognised as legitimate. In such a community cultural landscapes will be marginally protected in the face of severe or even irreversible challenges.

- The *moral community*: Multiple bonds hold the members of a community together. Their interdependence stems from the morality of conscience: a moral obligation is a binding force that goes beyond desire or usefulness. Sometimes the moral community is so powerful that it becomes an organic community: an authoritarian centre of power regulates relations between its members who are subsumed in the whole. These communities may foster some common values, but the brittleness of the links between individuals can make these objectives very superficial.

In the case of cultural landscapes, there is a fear that opposing forces that can determine the quality of the landscapes may destabilize such a community. If on the one hand a certain amount of solidarity within the community can be expected, on the other hand there is always the fear that some private real estate company with sufficient clout may undermine the basis for their collective and coordinated maintenance.

- The *aesthetic community*: this community does not signify just an external relationship between different things. The community is also prepared to take on external challenges. The relationship between individuals is not based on autonomy or internal control but with reference to an external dimension. Individuals may differ from one another and have contrasting attitudes but this is of secondary importance when dealing with the environment where the community is located. Fusion takes place at a more fundamental level. The link with nature and external environment is probably the most important factor of internal connectedness. An aesthetic community is thus a community where the difference between the exterior and the interior is

blurred, a community where the observer is also a participant. Opposition in rational and moral communities preserves the difference between the observer and the participant in such a way that judgements are made independently of actions and can lead to personal strategies. In the aesthetic community, the participant is primarily a committed person and this encourages others. Self-awareness of observation is secondary and dependent.

Once a cultural landscape is identified, there is a relationship of undivided reciprocity with natural elements. A person identifies and experiences a personal relationship, a personal connection that unites individuals with one another. They do not objectify and control but enter into an intimate association. There is more than a simple connection; there is continuity and finally a community. By recognizing the multidimensional reciprocity of a cultural landscape, we recognize its social dimension and the aesthetic conditions of human fulfilment. We protect cultural landscapes not as an external treasure to be transmitted to posterity but as a part of our revolving identity and life?

### **3.2. Cultural assets for stuffing Urban Cultural Landscapes**

#### **- Reconverting Brownfields**

The conversion of former industrial sites into art facilities can contribute to local development in various ways. It can rehabilitate old buildings, improve the quality of life by offering new facilities in often underserved areas, and can offer local groups and communities the chance to rebuild their identities, to become part of creative culture, and to undertake projects that will have positive fallout for the entire city (Grefe, 2004b).

A “retrofit” of this kind typically occupies a former industrial, commercial or military site that has deteriorated through its former use to the point where it can no longer be used without a thorough overhaul and cleanup. The proliferation of abandoned industrial, commercial and military facilities has created gaping voids in the larger cities, particularly, witnesses to a bygone era. Activists promoting the revival of cultural and associative life set out to meet the challenge posed by these derelict urban spaces and to invest in them. The movement was born in the late 1970s, with the emergence of the counterculture, squatter invasions, and the growing awareness that new generations of artists and audiences had entirely new aspirations. Little by little, the sponsors of these conversions attempted to transform the surrounding districts and to make them a force for integration and education, where artistic activities represented a means as well as an end. The “retrofit” thus produced a new urban territory.

These converted facilities contribute to both better urban cultural landscapes and increase local social development in four ways:

- By re-invoking the emotional and symbolic significance of a place that was once used for industrial production, the retrofit suggests that creation is inherent to the territory and it invites us to explore those aspects: “Derelict urban sites show how ephemeral any social organisation is, and at the same time they contain the seeds of a possible future. These wastelands, where ordinary life is suspended, speak to us of the unspeakable, the unnameable, the dark aspects of society. Because they suspend the unconstrained process of production and consumption, of use and wear, they blur the frontier between what is thinkable and what is not. For people who have spent all or part of their working life in these old warehouses, forts and factories, to return to them now is quite a surprise, because they can see there traces of new hopes and uses rather than ruins. The members of cultural associations that choose to set up shop there see these places as covering all possibilities, from rebirth to ultimate physical destruction. An abandoned building thus highlights two related concepts, the ephemeral and the creative. By testifying to successive modes of production in the past, the derelict suggests that development can continue, but in different forms.

- Moreover, when factory sites are used for amateur performances, such as practical theatre, rap or hip-hop workshops, they allow individuals and groups to become actors in their own development. Other cultural institutions have been doing this for a long time, but one of the key features of the retrofits is to push these practices further by enlisting amateurs from outside their walls, in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods. By reaching out to a new potential audience and bringing it into a practical theatre workshop, and showing that theatre is not the preserve of the rich and privileged, these recycled facilities are fulfilling one of their key social callings.

- Retrofits help to popularise a forward-looking “project” culture by instilling the principle of creativity in an environment that is often degraded and disadvantaged, and from which that principle has long since disappeared. This creative activity brings a new life to the territory, one that goes far beyond evening concerts or theatre productions. The Friche Belle de Mai in Marseilles is not limited to helping artists with their tangible work, for example by providing them with studio space: it takes account of all the conditions and skills needed to bring a work to life. Experts in the new technologies provide coaching and artistic support for radio or newspaper ventures, for example. The combination it offers of housing for artists, visual art workshops, training in the practical arts, recording studios, discussion forums, sporting activities and restoration makes it a place of creativity not only for artists but for the entire district. Spectators and fans are in close contact with the artists, and so they can better understand the creative impulse in which they are now involved. What is special about these retrofits is that “they are built at the meeting point between professional and less professional artists, young and not so young, they attract different audiences, and they keep cultural, social and symbolic resources circulating in a flexible space where many artistic disciplines interact ». Artists can act at all levels; they can join forces with others to create a new artistic and social endeavour according to redefined standards. In assessing the Belle de Mai, F. Raffin resorts to the image of DNA (Raffin, 1999): “in the DNA chain, some elements appear more relevant than others (...). As with DNA, the Belle de Mai brings together at one place and at one time a host of players involved in the creative process, in this case artistic. Artistic collaborations appear, disappear, and interact continuously with each other on site, whenever there is a presentation or an event. Internal solidarity is constantly being reshaped as a function of cultural endeavours”.

- Converted brownfields have sparked new activities that can contribute to social integration. Take the case of the Belle de Mai. It began initially with the “Système Friche Théâtre” or “factory theatre” association that moved into part of the premises made available by the closure of the old tobacco factory located in the Belle de Mai neighbourhood of Marseilles in 1992. Its basic principle was to give artists a centre where they could produce works aimed at a wide range of audiences. Little by little, the Belle de Mai has extended its activities by reaching out to the surrounding city and using its networks of associations and activists to establish many cultural and social interaction points such as information centres for marginalised groups, boxing clubs for young people, and artistic or musical workshops (Greffé, 2003). Artistic activities are not the only means of promoting social integration, but they can be powerful tools because they disseminate symbols and communication techniques that are used in all fields of activity. In the urban areas enlivened by Belle de Mai, there are now small businesses producing for market or offering personal services, properties are being maintained, and restaurants have appeared. These efforts to reach out to people in their daily lives are gradually giving them the skills and experience that open up jobs and access to the mainstream. By participating in these activities, individuals contribute to the emergence of an evolving, multifaceted culture that disseminates creative skills. Outcomes are varied, as some participants go on from these small urban productions to mainstream venues, while others will remain in these local enclaves that use only a portion of their skills (Rouilleau Berger, 1993). These retrofits thus perform a particularly effective socialisation function: they achieve artistic socialisation by bringing artists and their works together, and they achieve cultural socialisation through the dissemination of standards and values. Some of the people active in these centres may however be suspicious of the term “social”, as smacking of utilitarianism.

What it takes to convert a brownfield site for cultural uses? Whether these effects are being achieved is far from clear. The establishment of such facilities did not initially stem from any ethical choices, nor was it even voluntary. Artists and other people engaged in cultural pursuits were looking for urban spaces that were wide, unencumbered and as inexpensive as possible, and this led them to set up in peripheral areas devastated by industrial collapse and poverty associated with social exclusion. Aware of these inequalities and feeling a common cause with the excluded, the groups that took over these derelict buildings tried to develop an entirely separate system, based on a new approach to cultural activism and creativity, and in the end helping to inspire local development. Then too, they are quickly faced with a number of constraints (Grefe, 2003 & 2004a).

- The first are physical. Moving into an industrial derelict generally provides significant and cheap space that can be used very flexibly, with its high ceilings, big windows, and solid structure. While these elements favour reuse, they also imply various costs of refurbishing the building, cleaning up any pollution, and bringing it up to municipal standards.

- The second constraints are of a territorial kind. The districts in which these buildings are found are generally disadvantaged. The buildings often lack utility services, the potential users often have no money, and they may be indifferent to what they see as elitist cultural pursuits. The environment, then, is not very attractive. In the midst of such isolation, it is not always easy to strike up local partnerships, including with the authorities, who will not always be convinced that a retrofit can help upgrade the neighbourhood. Even if these facilities are generally well received by the local populace, they are often the targets of vandalism that can threaten their survival. The public does not always respond as hoped, and people in the poorer neighbourhoods may stubbornly refuse to frequent these places despite the efforts to entice them and make them feel welcome. People who feel themselves excluded from cultural activities may put initiatives of this kind down to the whim of trendy folk who think it is fun to go slumming. To overcome the effects of such isolation, they have to offer low or even symbolic ticket prices or user fees. But this can pose a risk for their management.

The third constraints have to do with management. These converted art centres often have trouble covering their capital and operating expenses from their own resources. These include box office receipts (which will be low, given ticket prices), revenues from the bar or restaurant, or proceeds from activities conducted at the centre (workshops, housing, training programmes). But these revenues will at most cover artists' fees and overhead. There will be little left to pursue an outreach policy or to buy expensive equipment. Artists, coordinators and administrators are rarely paid a salary, and most of them will be unable to rely exclusively on their artistic activities for their livelihood. Most often, any employees will have been hired under some kind of government works programme.

To make up for these shortcomings, the retrofits have several resources.

- They may pursue external growth strategies.

- They may provide training for young people who can then become independent or even "go commercial to support themselves, and perhaps to turn a profit, while continuing to collaborate with the "parent association".

- They may provide and bill for services to other businesses and thereby put to profitable use their specific skills in such areas as electronic music, new technologies, or the organisation of events or performances. Revenues from activities of this type can finance new projects in the centres themselves.

- In the end, they can also ask for public subsidies, which will immerse them in another set of constraints, this time political. In fact, the retrofits that have been created have often sprung from alternative cultures, and they will be disinclined to cooperate with the world of politics and business. Their participants feel that they embody certain attributes that those worlds do not, and they devote themselves to undertakings in which both their political outlook and their local roots are evident. But they will soon be forced to apply for financial or technical assistance from the local municipal authorities. Quite apart from the technical problems in obtaining such funding, subsidies are likely to be seen as opening the way to the kind of manipulation against which participants had revolted in the first place. In France, the *friches culturelles*, as they are called, have survived in large part thanks to the subsidies that cover 50% of their financing.

- A last resort, then, is to organise themselves in a network. Does this networking, or even internationalisation, of retrofits mean that their contribution to landscapes and local development will be compromised? The risk of manipulation of these centres will be all the greater if the authorities can exert subtle pressure through the network leader or via subsidies. The best way for these centres to remain faithful to themselves is still to work at transforming the local setting, by reinforcing identities and publicising their projects and skills. The retrofit constitutes a subtle and important link between arts, landscapes and creative cities, for the arts will be more creative if they rely on local development, and at the same time the territory's development will be more sustainable if it can benefit from the constant creative renewal that artists bring.

### **-Cultural districts**

For a long time, the insufficiency or volatility of the demand for cultural goods was used to explain the difficulties faced by new cultural companies. Initially described as superior goods by Veblen, cultural goods were thought of as being supported by very small markets. Furthermore, the difficulty of recognizing the quality of cultural goods with oftentimes intangible attributes was emphasised by economists (from Marshall to Stigler) and sociologists (Bourdieu) as an excuse for expressing doubts about the sustainability of their markets. Nowadays these difficulties are more readily associated with supply than with demand. Baumol and Bowen stress the negative consequences of absence in productivity gains. In a recently updated article, Schumpeter claims that cultural goods change the traditional risk paradigm. Indeed, using Mantegna's paintings to illustrate his argument, Schumpeter shows how artistic creativity passes from one standard to another, such that "*this transition can be brought back from nothing to successive movements towards the margin*" (Schumpeter, 1933). This idea of uncertainty, which goes beyond the simple probability distribution perspective, is dealt with at length by Richard Caves (2000) in his work on creative industries, which dwells on the leitmotiv: "*Nobody knows*". De Vany (2004) develops this idea by underlining how in an economy of culture which is an economy of extremes, there is a possibility for success as well as failure, so that a result cannot be anticipated when a new venture is conceived and planned (Greffe & Simonnet, 2008).

Certain other elements support these interpretations on the specificity of cultural goods in comparison to other goods. There is greater emphasis nowadays on the intangible dimension of cultural goods, undoubtedly due to the way in which the advent of digitalisation, along with increased copying capabilities, has upset the cultural sector's functioning. Given this intangible dimension, increasing numbers of cultural assets are characterized by high fixed production costs along with very low duplication and distribution costs, thereby conferring to cultural goods the attributes of semi-collective goods. Producers must thus adjust by studying markets according to their ability to pay (*windowing* audio-visual programs or *versioning* between *hardback* and paperback books); by reducing the lifespan of their products; by resorting to a frequent renewal of their components (adapting or editing news); by linking the use of their products to dedicated support mechanisms and then raising the cost of duplication to prevent copying (videogames);

and by incorporating technical devices in order to further block copying (*Digital Rights Management*).

These two characteristics - uncertainty and intangibility - oblige cultural companies to frequently change their products and their corresponding production functions. Cultural companies are consequently forced to change the specific skills they need.

The first consequence affects the lifespan of companies. Since these companies are often created for a specific project and must mobilize specific skills required for that purpose, once the project is over they quickly need to consider other projects and mobilize any required skills if they want to survive. This represents a strong challenge, and many observers have commented on the fragility of such companies. One difficulty is to define a new project which can satisfy the new demand (artisan risk), while another challenge is to handle the constant reorganization required in moving from one project to another (industrial risk), albeit the boundaries between these two difficulties are sometimes blurred.

Another consequence ensues from exposure to more or less favourable environments through which one might overcome the constraints of variety. These past few years a number of studies have argued in favour of the assumption that cultural companies can benefit from being close to one another. To justify this claim one must consider not only the industrial district approach, but also the idiosyncratic nature of cultural goods.

The chapter from Marshall's *Principles of Economy* on the geographical concentration of specific companies has shown that such cultural companies could profit from both external and internal economies (Marshall, 1890). Indeed these companies benefit from external economies thanks to the general development of their industrial sector, while also benefitting from internal economies due to the way in which they are organized. This being said external economies particularly benefit companies which are clustered together within a same area. Their local contiguity allows for free exchange of ideas and information, a rapid recognition of the need to innovate their equipment and structure, the development of ancillary and intermediate services, and the creation of a local market of relevant skills. Although these arguments are mainly focused on the production side, Marshall does not forget the consumption side: he admits that such concentrations attract consumers, since high travelling costs are compensated by the variety of goods offered.

For a long time this theory remained ignored or underestimated. Powerful factors had undoubtedly come into play at the time Marshall wrote, reducing transportation costs and widening labour markets. Over the last quarter of the twentieth century however, doubts expressed by "fordist organizations" focused more on the district, which was considered to be a more flexible industrial organization, as well as on the concept of industrial atmosphere which allows those who belong to it to understand and assimilate others' experiences much faster. Arguments like abstract knowledge, mutual confidence or social capital were invoked to justify their interest in the district (Piore & Sabel, 1984; Becattini, 1987; Storper, 1989; Bagnasco & Sabel, 1995).

At the same time, this underscores the idiosyncratic nature of cultural goods. Several cultural production companies often exist side by side under local and historical conditions (Santagata, 2007). This is usually justified by claiming that intangible components, such as a specific know-how or organization, can play an important role along with tangible components (Limoges, Murano or Hollywood). However this does not imply any absence of creativity or innovation, and such areas have witnessed successive waves of creativity, as in the Parisian fashion industry for instance, which embodies this idiosyncratic characteristic (OECD, 2005).

The rather logical conjunction of these two approaches, namely those of idiosyncratic nature and industrial district, has led present-day observers to bring forth the concept of cultural districts

(Scott, 2000; Greffe, 2003; Santagata, 2006). The cultural district brings together companies producing cultural goods and services, as well as companies which manufacture required equipment and deal with the distribution of cultural goods. Moreover, these districts highlight the specificity of a labour market named *ad hoc labour market*, where very specific skills are exchanged, and in a flexible way which makes artists as well as producers see an advantage in becoming part of it (Greffe, 1999). Artists must constantly remain present in this market since they must frequently move from one project or employer to another. The producer too must be present since he must continuously redefine the nature of the skills he needs to mobilize and employ.

While it is one thing to stress the advantages of such clustering and synergies, it is another to scientifically demonstrate them. These new companies are also in competition with one another. In order to influence the net final effect, it is thus advisable to assess the signs as well as the extent of the synergy effect - which should act in a positive way - along with the signs and the extent of the competition effect - which should act in a negative way -. The statistical analysis of new cultural companies is thus useful for understanding such important stakes in the development of contemporary economies. In particular, it should enable us to clarify at least two questions: Are cultural companies born and developed like other companies? Is their geographical clustering a lever of sustainability?

Based on data that were collected by the French SINE national survey (*Système d'Information sur les Nouvelles Entreprises*), which was conducted by the INSEE (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques) and covers a representative sample of companies created in 1998 over a five year period, we have drawn two central conclusions:

- The rate of disappearance of cultural companies (which is comparable to that of other companies) is not stable, and it differs according to the sub-sector which is taken into consideration. One can indeed observe that traditional artistic companies exhibited a very high rate of disappearance during the first three years, while this rate fell substantially during the last two years of the survey. On the other hand, audio-visual companies reflected a constant rate of disappearance in comparison to cultural-product companies which registered growth after two years of existence. These results indicate that within the cultural field the "artisan risk" remains very strong throughout the first three years, while the industrial risk becomes relatively significant only after two years.

- The rate of survival of cultural companies is to a large extent dependent on their geographical clustering. On one hand a new cultural company can suffer from the proximity of companies pursuing an identical activity (the "competition effect"), yet on another hand it can benefit considerably from the presence of a large number of new cultural companies with diverse cultural activities (the "synergy effect"). In absolute value, we have shown that the second effect tends to exceed the first (the net effect on the life expectancy was +70%), thus testifying to the productivity of cultural clusters or districts. This result explains both the tendency towards geographical concentration of many cultural activities which has been observed during the past few years; and the need for local governments to support such clustering that may be useful as well for economic activity than for bettering landscapes.

### *Cultural Quarters*

Cultural quarters offer a new approach to urban planning. In the place of cumbersome, top-down programming, they introduce a more flexible and independent perspective, one that can directly engage the energies of consumers and producers. In any urban redevelopment program, there are two possible sets of linkages: there is the vertical chain, that of the official public sector, and there is the horizontal chain, made up of small, interdependent units generating, and benefiting from, external economies. When flagship cultural projects are undertaken, the vertical chain wins out over the horizontal. When strategies for rehabilitating or creating cultural quarters are

implemented, the two chains intersect, and the project's success will depend on their ability to create proper synergy.

Cultural districts are seen as serving many purposes:

- Reinforcing a city's identity, attractiveness and competitiveness. But in this field no success is permanent, and it must constantly be renewed, for example by seeking to attract cultural tourists in the wake of more traditional tourists. Moreover, as the authorities seek to extract themselves from cultural or intangible investments, this capacity will come to rely increasingly on private sector players, commercial or not.
- Stimulating an entrepreneurial approach to the arts and culture. Culture is the basis of the new economy, and is giving rise to many creative activities that produce high value-added. The city becomes creative by using culture as one of its possible levers. We may introduce here the "bohemian" model, as reflected in the neighborhoods of Montmartre, Montparnasse, or SoHo, but giving it today at business-oriented side.
- Fostering cultural democracy and cultural diversity. This is the urban doctrine developed by Bianchini, where culture becomes a political rather than an economic instrument (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993). With it, new channels and new means of expression can be created that will allow traditionally marginalized or even excluded groups or communities to express themselves and enrich public spaces.

Today we are witness to an impressive number of local development initiatives seeking to institute cultural quarters. To clarify the various forms and the effects they may produce, several classification criteria are available.

- The first distinguishes cultural quarters by the range of activities they embrace: some are horizontal (where different cultural sectors coexist), and others are vertical (where cultural activities in the strict sense are accompanied by consumer or entertainment activities).
- The second distinguishes cultural quarters by the way they are financed. Government funding is usually more important than private, but the two forms often succeed each other in cycles.
- The third distinguishes cultural quarters by their accessibility. If the quarter is physically shut off, and squeezed into a single site, it will be a ghetto that will be hard to change. If the quarter is more open and spread across the urban space, its atmosphere and its identity will be altered, and opportunists will move in to capture economic rents, ultimately denaturing its contents.
- The fourth distinguishes cultural quarters by their organizational approach: some are top-down, while others are grassroots-inspired. Generally speaking, consumer-oriented quarters are often organized by government fiat, while those organized around production represent slower and more decentralized approaches.
- The last criterion distinguishes cultural quarters by their location within the city. Heritage or museum quarters are usually found in the city centre, redeploing a classic urban hierarchy, while others will be located on the margins of traditional spaces, thereby altering those urban hierarchies. Inter-quarter linkages will then appear, and they will reduce transaction costs, speed up the circulation of capital and information, and reinforce social intercourse and solidarity (Landry, 2000).

Things do not always take their expected course. Public programs can often spark a host of private initiatives that will take a completely different tack from that planned. Culture in this case can turn city centers back into pure consumption centers. It is quickly relayed by the marketing of values, spaces and relationships. Culture will be condemned, then, to walk a tightrope. In her work on [New York City's - as confirmed from Internet sources] SoHo district, Sharon Zukin

showed how the district progressed from a depressed rag-trade area into a zone for the expression of ethnic cultures, which was indeed its desired state, and then on to a zone for the consumption of works of art, an activity that led to “ghettoisation” and gentrification of the quarter (Zukin, 1992). Many such experiments show that anything that can be reopened or renovated – warehouses, convents, quays, monasteries, gas plants, or military barracks – can also become a source of exclusion. Art becomes a pretext, a kind of lure to which commercial and political interests flock. Experience shows that when a cultural quarter is created and promoted, this can spark a jump in property prices and the rejection of young artists. Where some had hoped to see new movements emerge that would clearly track progress, ruptures, and occupational refinements, they find instead that entertainment, fun and commerce have been telescoped together (Hannigan, 1998). The people managing these quarters have trouble themselves in arbitrating between public and private, entertainment and creativity, respect for traditional cultures and immersion in a global culture. These balances become ends in themselves, where they should be only the means. These situations are not always happy, because many “post-modern” consumers will only accept economic values if the underlying cultural value is respected.

The cultural quarter can thus lead to antagonism instead of the desired synthesis. Some cultural quarters that have welcomed big retail chains selling products that are “cultural” to some degree have been promptly transformed into commercial districts. This outcome was not bad from the viewpoint of renovation and enlivening the urban landscape, but it came at the price of banishing the cultural quarter’s role as a lever of creativity and sustainable development. This trend also raises questions about the governance of cultural quarters. They are often based on a few projects that are considered worthy, but the sum of these projects does not guarantee the hoped-for result, because other interests - real estate, politics or business - may be pushing in other directions. The situation is made worse by the

fact that the national authorities do not recognise the originality of such quarters and continue to hand out subsidies without looking at the specific projects (Bilton, 1999). While past cultural policies were often compromised by an approach that was too vertical, a purely horizontal approach based on lining up projects does not always produce the desired result.

### ***-Some Public Policies Issues: A French Illustration***

- From the monument to its environment, from centralization to community development

The protection of cultural assets is affected by the pressures exerted by the environment on the quality of a monument. Hence it is not surprising that the first initiatives in this field were taken in the name of improving the “visibility” of the monument (Greffé, 2007). The law of 1913 stipulated a protective perimeter of a radius of 500 meters around the listed monument, in order to prevent the reduction or the alteration of its visibility from different approaches. Within this zone, it was impossible to carry out any changes or new construction without prior permission from the government. The law of 1943 reinforced this system by defining the protective perimeter in stricter terms and by extending this protection to all monuments situated in the area. These measures were not enough because the development of this protective zone was not carried out in an organized manner. In 1962, the notion of a “safeguarded sector” came into existence. Unlike the previous systems, it involved the definition and implementation of a plan to safeguard the architectural unit in question. Finally in the 1980s, the concept of *Zone for the Protection of Architectural, Urban and Landscape Heritage* (ZPPAUP) was defined. In fact, the Ministry of Environment introduced this new regulation for the protection and conservation of exceptional elements in urban areas. The constraints resulting from this system have to be included in the urban planning charter. The permission for building is not given unless the building plans are in conformity with the urban planning charter. An important difference between this instrument and

the previous one is that the local government can take decisions, whereas in the previous case it was necessary to obtain permission from the national government.

Though this system was successful, it faced some problems in the initial stages.

-It was necessary to find a new balance between the central and local governments, given the trend towards devolution. The ZPPAUP made it possible to define the perimeter as well as the corresponding clauses regarding incentives and fiscal expenditures in more flexible terms. The request for permission has to come from local communities, but in the absence of such initiatives, the old legislation remains effective.

-Are there not more regulations related to the protection of monuments than to the protection of cultural landscapes? There are many landscapes affecting our day-to-day life as well as a vernacular heritage existing alongside protected monuments. Instead of formulating an approach that would benefit from the synergy between these two types of assets, there is a tendency to consider vernacular heritage as being subsidiary to protected monuments. This aberration reaches absurd heights in areas developed to promote cultural tourism: local residents start leaving the area gradually so that it is soon devoid of its daily activities and deprived of the day-to-day conservation efforts carried out by them.

-This shortcoming of the conservation policies was pointed out by a powerful NGO: the League for Protecting Cultural Assets and Landscapes. This League was set up with the idea of mobilizing all the assets instead of focusing on the aesthetic aspects of listed cultural assets. It claimed to be “an innovator who respects rather than a conservative who destroys”. It tried to approach town planning on a human scale by integrating the respect for traditions and classified cultural assets without endangering their overall economic viability.

The landscapes policy is no longer the exclusive preserve of experts; it has become an important political issue. A landscape is not just the indifferent scenery of a place and the life of its community. As pointed out in the European Landscape Convention, the “*landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognized as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas* (UNESCO, 1977 & 1985).

- *The labelization: “City and Country of Art and History”*

In 1985, the National Network of Historic Buildings and Sites created this label and a new network of *Cities and Countries of Art and History*, which currently includes more than 60 towns and cities and more than 20 countries. It has been remarkably successful. In the early 1960s, many of the old cultural urban areas were dilapidated and on the verge of ruin. Confronted with this situation, André Malraux, then Minister of Cultural Affairs, put to vote in 1962 the law on *safeguarded sectors*. However, the major issue regarding these cultural assets not just conservation but creating interest in the public. The first new policy included guided tours conducted by free-lance guides during the summer months. These visits were primarily meant for tourists. But tourists are not really the best persons to defend cultural assets that they do not see every day. This gave rise to the idea that the safeguard and protection of these cultural assets should be entrusted to the inhabitants of the area instead of tourists.

In accordance with this principle, the label of *Towns of Art and History* was devised. To obtain the label, a town or city must *have an important cultural landscape and wish to emphasize it by animation* and it must sign a convention with the Ministry of Culture. *Cultural assets as economic clusters* are areas that possess cultural and natural, tangible and intangible assets. The idea underlying this new policy was that a good collective management of such assets could generate and fuel local development. In this case, a cultural asset clearly goes beyond the concept of a monument to include natural landscapes, vernacular heritage, intangible know-how, crafts, etc.

This perception is generally strengthened by the proper projection of cultural assets. This projection gives coherence to the territory through the choice of proper actions and since the points to be developed are directly related to the specific features of a particular territory, they vary from one cluster to another.

This policy was defined and managed by an organism directly under the Prime Minister's Office. The two ministries involved, Culture and Ecology, have been working in exactly the same direction.

There are approximately 60 clusters of this type and there is a variation in the themes. Some have been organized taking the cultural landscape as their starting point, while others take monument as their starting point. Finally, some revolve around a traditional craft or other local resources. But whatever the focal point, the three dimensions must be present. Moreover, the combination of these three dimensions must be shown as having a potential for future development (Grefe, 2004 & 2007).

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