CREATIVE ADAPTIVE REUSE
IN URBAN REGENERATION STRATEGIES
THE CASE OF HET SCHIEBLOCK IN ROTTERDAM

MASTER THESIS

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1) INTRODUCTION

Coming from Italy, a country that is a living block of built heritage in desperate need for regeneration and a gust of new energy, and having the chance to study in the vibrant city of Rotterdam, a former port-city which mastered in the reuse of existing infrastructures, the interest for the subject of creative adaptive reuse came about just looking around and juxtaposing the different environments. Moreover, in the light of the important socio-economical changes that are taking place nowadays on a global scale, like the new possibilities made available by the digital revolution; the speed of communication and easiness of networking; the value of accumulated and always growing cultural capital; the crisis of the current financial system and the symmetrical birth of a new creative entrepreneurialism; the rediscovered concern for sustainability and the environment; the unexpressed potential of the built cultural heritage stocks and so forth, it seems that now more than ever the potential of creative adaptive reuse should be seriously taken into account.

To clarify, in this thesis I will consider the notion of creative adaptive reuse as the preservation-inspired style of urban development, which focuses on the re-adaptation of old spaces and existing structures in order to host new creative activities. Through this conceptual frame, my aim is to investigate if the impact of these initiatives is actually positive, as it has been described by numerous academics. Furthermore, I will try to assess if this impact involves the social, the economic or both the spheres. In other words, my research question is twofold: do creative adaptive reuse initiatives have a positive impact on urban regeneration strategies and local communities? And, if so, is their impact actually social, economic or both?

In order to answer these questions, I will start analyzing the academic research on urban regeneration strategies and, more specifically, on creative adaptive reuse. At a later stage, I will examine an interesting case study that perfectly fits the topic of my research. The evidence obtained from the comparison between the two, will hopefully allow me to answer the research question and draw my own considerations.

More precisely, in Chapter 2 I will provide a general overview of the new trends in urban regeneration strategies from the realm of culture economics, highlighting their peculiarities as well as their peculiar features and characteristics, but also reflecting on their shortcomings and the issues related to them. In Chapter 3 I will narrow down the topic of my research, focusing specifically on the creative process of adaptive reuse. By doing so, the goal is to obtain a well-defined theoretical framework, that could enable me to properly analyze the specific case study of my research, the Schieblock of Rotterdam. After describing my methodology and the way I approached and conducted my research in Chapter 5, in Chapter 6 I will proceed with the analysis and cross-comparison between my literature review and the specific case study. Finally, in Chapter 7 I will present the findings as well as the limits and shortcomings of my research, illustrating at last my final considerations.

2) NEW TRENDS IN URBAN REGENERATION

2.1 - INTRODUCTION

Decades ago, following the post-war restructuring and the subsequent economic boom, most regions of Western EU found themselves at the forefront of a massive industrial and technological progress. But at a later stage those same regions were outpaced by the oversea providers, able to produce and supply the same goods at a lower cost.
This sudden shift in the market dynamics had heavy repercussions, and was the cause of an overthrow of the world's top-producers and exporters of consumer goods. What consequently followed was a dramatic economic decline, a drop of international competitiveness, and serious losses of job positions in the European industrial regions. Let alone all the repercussions on the social and the cultural spheres. It was clear that a market recomposition was absolutely necessary in order to overcome that specific moment of economic and socio-cultural stagnation, and help the transition toward a new economy and a urban spatial redevelopment.

Notably though, Developing a strategy for market recomposition is an extremely complex and delicate process, where a multitude of interests are at stake and many different aspects must be taken into account. In particular, when focusing on the design of a resilient urban regeneration strategy, a strategy that enables decaying areas to recover and return once again to prosperity (Mommaas, 2013), the professionals involved are plenty. They come from disparate domains and areas of expertise, ranging from policy makers and economists, to sociologists and urban planners, and each one of them has its own distinctive opinion on the specific issue. It goes therefore without saying that the set of strategies that could be possibly undertaken for this process is extremely wide, and providing a complete list would be almost impossible. Nevertheless, in order to get a general understanding of the topic, hereby I will present an overview of the recent trends in urban regeneration strategies from the perspective of cultural economics. Again, this list does not intend to be a thorough taxonomy, but just a brief overview that enables the reader to plunge himself into the subject.

2.2 - STRATEGIES

This chapter will therefore analyze some strategies of urban regeneration, which try to foster metropolitan resilience leveraging on a variety of elements. Some of them leverage specifically on culture and heritage, some others on sustainability and adaptive reuse, while others on creativity, knowledge or network clusters. Although a strategy usually focuses particularly on

one or few of those elements, cross-combinations of elements as well as strategies are actually possible.

2.2.1 - CULTURE-LED

Developing a urban regeneration strategy leveraging on culture requires fundamentally wide provision of cultural services and open public access to them. But precisely this wide supply of cultural services has often represented a challenge for policy makers to combine social welfare and the scarce financial resources at hand. Nevertheless, due to their overall socio-economical impact, in the last decades culture-led strategies have gained a prominent status among urban regeneration strategies.
In this extent, Saris (2013) points out how nowadays "culture came to be a new source of city amelioration and an important leverage for urban regeneration" (Saris, 2013). Since culture started being perceived as an overall gain and a source of cosmopolitan attraction, it consequently came to occupy a pivotal position in new strategies of urban regeneration (Miles & Paddison, 2005). Plenty are in fact the cases of cities that leverage on culture in order to boost tourism as well as educate and retain their citizens or even attract new ones.

Interestingly, the culture-led initiatives undertaken can be temporary as well as permanent. Temporary initiatives stretch their duration from a couple of days up to over a week, and often take place yearly in the form of festivals or fairs. Examples of this can be film festivals, like in Venice, Cannes or Berlin, as well as music festivals, like the American Coachella or the Austrian Donauinselfest. On the other hand, cultural initiatives can be also permanent, like for instance the edification of art museums, just as the Brooklyn Museum of Contemporary Art in NYC or the Guggenheim in Bilbao; of concert halls, like the Sydney opera house or the Walt Disney concert hall in LA; and so forth. Notably though, even if the rationale behind the two types of strategies is different, both the temporary and the permanent initiatives have the ability to become a driver of change and meet both the social, economic and artistic objectives of the city. A culture-led strategy in-between permanent and temporary is the designation of the European Capital of Culture. Even though this title lasts only for one year, it is still perceived as a "long-term, self-sustaining undertaking" (Thowse, 2010: 523) as its aura can last over time.

Nevertheless, it must be said that this type of strategy is not all plaudits. Skepticism and debates often arise on how urban cultural inputs translate into social and economic outputs (Hagoort, 2013). Even if the positive impact of those culture-led strategies is often quite immediately evident, the assumption that they will automatically revitalize the public as well as the economic sphere can be questioned. The rhetorical promotion of culture as an economic and social panacea is in fact misleading. As Reicher (2013) points out, it is true that culture is an important catalyzer for creativity, and creativity is an important catalyzer for development, but development must be based on the actual demands of the city and its inhabitants. The key focus should not be therefore on whether the culture-led strategy works or not, but rather on the degree to which it is functional to the society (Reicher, 2013).

<u>2.2.2 - HERITAGE-LED</u>

Following on Reicher's argument, it is important to realize that the city's background must be seriously taken into account when planning urban regeneration strategies. Expert consultants should not be self-absorbed with a specific cultural entrepreneurial idea, because the original strength of the project can easily get lost and the overall effort becomes just a urban planning strategy agenda (Mommaas, 2013).

Heritage could therefore play a crucial role in those plans, but before going into a detailed description of the concept of heritage, an introductory remark should be made. The premise is that heritage is a very broad and debated topic, so debated that a univocal definition of it has not been agreed upon yet. It is in fact quite hard to establish what is heritage and what is not, namely: what defines a community, a city or a nation? And which are the criteria for its selection and preservation? As Vecco (2010) points out, the concept of heritage has been sensibly extended from its original narrow Eurocentric meaning: thematically, the focus is not just on a specific monument itself, but also on its wider context. Furthermore, the selection process of what represents heritage and what does not, goes now beyond historic and artistic values, and takes into account also the capacity to arouse feelings of identity and belonging. Finally, as the approach is much less restrictive and "heritage is no longer defined on the basis of its material aspect", it is now possible to take into account intangible heritage as well. It was precisely in the 2003 UNESCO Convention that intangible cultural heritage was included in the realm of heritage, being actually recognized as the foundation of cultural diversity and the cornerstone of creativity (George, 2009). This process of constant development and enrichment ultimately led to greater cultural diversity and an overall international enrichment (Vecco, 2010). However, it is also the proof of how changeable and unstable the meaning itself of heritage can be.

Being aware of the width and complexity of this concept, and keeping in mind the specific topic of the thesis, this investigation will concern mainly a small part of heritage, namely built heritage[1]. In order to better understand what built heritage can mean to a community and how hard it is to properly leverage on it to revitalize urban areas, it might be interesting to consider the example proposed by Hogberg (n.d.) of the Lomma's Eternit industrial area in Sweden.

This area is unhappily remembered due to the health-related tragedy that took place in the 50's, when over 250 factory workers died from lung cancer caused by the environment they worked in. Lomma's industrial facilities were renown for the production of Eternit, a building-construction material soon found to be highly toxic and cancerogenic. Moved by sense of duty towards its community, the local municipality decided therefore to mend this fatality undertaking a project of heritage-led regeneration. The original idea was to transform the old factory associated to an unwanted memory into a seaside luxury residential estate, a "symbol of the prosperous future that was meant to be" (Hogberg, n.d.). But, even if the view of renewed built heritage was appreciated by many as both a new touristic attraction and a harmless reminder of the past, many others despised it because the true history of that area was soon forgotten. The original drive of the project was sensibly overlooked, and at the end

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[1] Those buildings, structures, sites and monuments that have historical, aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value

it resulted in a mere further enhancement of the intergenerational conflict between social classes. What can be deduced from this specific case is the importance of properly matching the vision of the planner with the actual needs of the community. In this extent, it is fundamental to be very cautious when planning and implementing heritage-led initiatives.

Just as the case mentioned above, there is a plentitude of programs that focus on the regeneration of urban built heritage. To give a few examples it is possible to consider for instance the Quartier Bricolè in Bruges, where empty shops in the city-center have been reused as creative boutiques for local craftsmen; or the First Site in Colchester, an old police station turned into an alternative open space for artists; but also the Plaine Images in Lille, an old unused school transformed into offices for programmers and visual artists (CURE Conference, 2013). Interestingly, they are all driven by a twofold momentum: pursue a development led by high esteem and pride of place, as well as feelings of responsibility on one hand, but also by dissociation and dissatisfaction with the present condition of the specific area on the other. Considering that local people have a personal connection with the former function -even if merely symbolic- of specific buildings or areas, and at the same time they are aware of the need to undertake targeted initiatives for redevelopment, it is crucial to properly ponder heritage-led strategies. Plan developers have to make sure that their projects are actually consistent with both the historical and geographical background of the area, and with the way citizens understand today's society and intend to shape the future one.

It takes therefore a very strong vision and a good deal of imagination to conceive how run-down heritage sites can be brought back to splendor, recreating lively public spaces, encouraging and facilitating idea-flows between individual citizens, markets, and institutions (Hospers, 2002). In this extent, Kooyman (2013) proposes a synthetic step-by-step structure to effectively manage heritage-led strategies: re-interpret the area understanding its past, present and future; re-define its identity and profile; spread the word and build supportive networks; create a solid and well funded business plan; and finally truly believe in it, "focusing more on dash than cash" (Kooyman, 2013). So the optimum is achieved when development is aware of past traditions, and at the same time is able to suit present needs of modern society, without compromising the likelihood of future generations to fulfill their own eventual needs. Landorf (2009) suggests that development "is founded on a state of equilibrium across three interdependent dimensions: economic, environmental and social" (Landorf, 2009). The vision behind this idea is engaging a multitude of different stakeholders, in order to achieve "a collective sense of responsibility for the sustainable development of a resource" (Landorf, 2009). This consideration leads to the analysis of the next trend in redevelopment strategies: sustainability-led strategies.

2.2.3 - SUSTAINABILITY-LED

Although it was originally conceived mostly as a concern towards environmental needs, the concept of urban sustainability evolved and includes now also economic and other social aspects. It is a comprehensive and multi-scalar concept, with different dimensions linked to each others. It involves a proper balance between the economic and the social qualities of a city, but also cultural and institutional ambits are taken into account (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). More specifically, when reviewing sustainability-led urban regeneration strategies, a multitude of notions are at stake. The first one is of course sustainability, which

has to do with meeting the needs of the planet as well as the needs of the people, both the current and the future generations. It therefore has to do with living within the boundaries forced upon us by the laws of nature and by the way our societies are organized (Atkisson, 2010). Then there is the regeneration concept. It pertains to change, to the ways we are transforming and the direction we are taking as a society (Atkisson, 2010). All of this takes place in the urban environment, in the multifaceted and erratic context of the city.

Interestingly, just as for heritage, also the concept of sustainability touches upon a wide variety of different themes and issues. But as we are referring to sustainability in the context of urban regeneration, the investigation will be mainly centered on resource management. More precisely on the relevant role played by the stock of existing buildings in sustainable urban development. Being standing testimonies of the past, existing buildings are the strongholds of local identity and, if properly converted through adaptive reuse, they can renovate and even enhance their function as nodes in the network of urban dynamics. All of this in a way that does not harm or have any negative impact on the environment, and at the same time can still meet the needs of the present and the future generations. This is why more and more urban regeneration agendas take into account the relevance of sustainability-led strategies.

It has to be noted that as the concept of built heritage is closely related to the one of sustainability, the same holds for sustainability and adaptive reuse. And this consideration leads to the analysis of the next trend in regeneration strategy: adaptive reuse.

2.2.4 - ADAPTIVE REUSE

Nowadays, economic and urbanist conditions such as financial paucity and sole overconsumption, as well as socio-cultural needs such as greenfield preservation or local sense of belonging, impose low-impact interventions on the city and the territory. Namely, interventions that privilege low site consumption, reuse of built forms and materials, regeneration of infrastructures as well as services and functions that can be adaptable and ingeniously exploited. By all means, the theme of reuse finds significant reason and justification in today's society: it becomes a new necessity.

But then, what is exactly adaptive reuse? Adaptive reuse is the re-adaptation of old spaces and existing structures, in order to host new activities that can ultimately boost urban regeneration processes. Beside the obvious environmental and economical benefits, the value added of adaptive reuse strategies is the preservation of collective memories and identity of a place. Protecting local knowledge and individuality, the reuse of an existing building can set into motion regeneration dynamics, and finally lead to sustainable urban transformations with economic and financial, as well as social and cultural improvements (De Albertis, 2012). The adaptive reuse of existing built structures can simultaneously combine and embody different kinds of pivotal values: most of those structures have real estate worth, and thereupon represent a substantial economic asset. Furthermore, they function as relational poles, representing therefore a social aggregation resource. They can also be accredited for their ecologic impact, due to the fact that they restrain sole overconsumption and minimize the waste and disposal of materials. Generally speaking, being operating components of everyday urban life, they can make an important contribution to open up new possibilities of new developments and lifestyles, as well as entrepreneurial ventures (Baum &

Christiaanse, 2012). Henceforth, urban planners should keep in mind the potential value of this urban-stratification, of this double renewal and overlay concerning both the infrastructures, and the activities that take place in them.

The idea of a new activity taking place inside of an old structure may suggest an uneven symbiotic relationship, where the new activity is the only beneficiary, and this at the expenses of the existing structure's role and image. In a more careful analysis though, it is exactly the new activity that can breathe new life and foster the identity of a derelict structure, just like in a graft (De Albertis, 2012). Considering that most modern cities have at their disposal an extremely valuable -and indeed exploitable- built patrimony, a multiplicity of vacant empty spaces which previously hosted both industrial and service activities, plenty are the new activity-grafts and adaptive reuse initiatives that could be undertaken (De Albertis, 2012).

A striking example of an adaptive reuse strategy that has been widely used globally and proved itself to be very successful, is the cultural brownfield. Unlike the greenfield, which is basically a never developed vacant piece of property, a brownfield is a site marked by the former industrial activity that was taking place in it. Rotting buildings, frozen machinery, and train warehouses overgrown with grass, which could be potential treasures to anybody interested in the area's history and cultural heritage (Brown&Quivik, 2001). As we read in Gorman (2003), brownfields are urban development projects that focus on the preservation and re-use of old industrial structures. Rehabilitating old industrial locations in order to serve new functions turned out to be a great success and, starting from the 70's, this praxis gained a lot of attention and became widely used in many cities worldwide (Gorman, 2003). Examples of this range from the European port-areas of Rotterdam and Hamburg, to the Soho district in NYC, and even to the Guangzhou factory complex in Shenzen, China.

Despite the success of cultural brownfields, nowadays the focus of interest of adaptive reuse initiatives is not on abandoned industrial sites anymore. As the recent economic crisis caused many big businesses to go bankrupt, shut down their activities and close their offices, new and more convenient possibilities for adaptive reuse initiatives came to surface. However, these dynamics will be better analyzed later on. As for now, it suffices to say that generally speaking projects involving adaptive reuse can help tremendously the process of urban regeneration. When properly managed and closely followed, they have the potential to boost a region's economy, as well as its social cohesion, its cultural level and its image too (Andres & Grèsillon, 2011). But, even if the positive outputs of those initiatives seems obvious, it must be taken into account that actually achieving them is not simple, specially considering that finding a new fitting solution for an old unused building is not an immediate process. Adaptive reuse strategies require a thorough critical analysis of the place itself and its surroundings, as well as a clear understanding of the community needs, but also flexibility, open-mindedness, and divergent thinking. In one word, it requires creativity. Growing interest has been given to the role and the impact of creativity in urban regeneration strategies, and hereby a brief description of creativity-led strategies is provided.

2.2.5 - CREATIVITY-LED

Following the prominent success of the so-called creative economy[2] in the western economic development, another interesting new trend in urban regeneration strategies is represented by creativity-led strategies. The discussion over what creativity is and what is not, or over the way creativity comes into being and what can facilitate this process is extremely complex. The debate concerning this issue is still very heated, and no simple solution appears to be easy to find.

Trying to define the concept of creativity itself, Amabile (1983) for instance lists three different possible approaches: creativity as a personal characteristic, so a specific feature and ability of a person; creativity as a product, so the novelty and appropriateness of a good; and finally creativity as a process, so how the new comes into being (Amabile, 1983). In the realm of creativity-led urban regeneration strategies, the attention is mostly centered on creativity as a process and as a personal characteristic. Moving from Amabile's (1983) research, the concept of creativity as a personal characteristic is captured in Florida's idea of the creative class, "that segment of the population engaged in works requiring the creation of meaningful new forms and validating their identities as creative people, living in integrated ecosystems or habitats where all types of creativity -artistic and cultural, technological and economic- can take root and flourish" (Florida, 2005 in Zuidhof, 2008). So, if development thrives on the creative economy, and in turn the driving force of the creative economy is the creative class, how is it possible to attract and retain the creative class itself? How to capitalize it to the outmost? Academic research shows that apparently both economic and lifestyle considerations matter in this choice, and that the attraction to places that are inclusive and diverse from the general widespread taste, plays also an important role (Florida, 2005, in Zuidhof, 2008). It is possible to leverage on a multiplicity of both soft and hard factors in order to attract and retain this creative class (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). Examples of soft factors could be the social climate of the city, like the tolerance and openness to diversity; its vitality and variety, like the vibe and liveliness; the labour market and employment condition; the natural assets and amenities; and so forth. The hard factors are more concerned with the building appropriateness, like the geographical location, space, condition and cost; the percentage of green and public spaces in the area; the efficiency of transportation, and in general both the quality of the built environment and the quality of labor (Ng, Cook & Chui, 2001).

Interestingly though, Cszikszenmihalyi (1996) rejects the hypothesis of creativity as behavioral trait of a person, and says that creativity does not happen in people's heads, but in the interaction between a person's ideas and his social context (Cszikszenmihalyi 1996). Creativity is therefore a systemic rather than an individualistic process. Cszikszenmihalyi sees creativity as a flow that comes into being when a person, using the symbols of a given domain, is able to see new patterns in it, and when those patterns are finally included into the specific domain itself the creative process took place (Cszikszenmihalyi 1996). Following Cszikszenmihalyi (1996), creative urban regeneration strategies can be conceived as a cycle, a continuous flow of attempts in order to find a balance between innovative experimentation and the current market orientation (Saris, 2013).

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[2] An economy that bases its growth and development on creative assets and their potential.

But relevant dilemmas often arise concerning the rationale behind creative projects and the way to approach them. For instance: Is creativity an organized sequential process or a disruptive chaotic one? Does it follow a precise vision or is it subject to autonomous development? Is it better to make decisions on it or just to undertake factive actions? Can it even be planned in a top-down fashion, or is it strictly a bottom-up process? Questions not easy to answer indeed. However, beside those controversies, there is a general agreement upon the fact that creative strategies are the new driving force behind development, and that they should be able to provide a perky alternative for urban regeneration. This is the basic guideline that policy makers should take into account when planning urban regeneration strategies. Yet, each strategy and action should be context-specific and aware of the features and needs of the targeted social groups. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that step-by-step instructions for a machinelike implementation process do not exist, specially considering that the success of those initiatives can never be taken for granted.

As a final remark, creativity-led regeneration strategies require an environment where innovation is encouraged, and where there is room for cross pollination between different fields and domains. In brief, they require sufficiently educated knowledge workers and creative entrepreneurs (Zuidhof, 2009). This leads to the analysis of the next urban regeneration strategy, the knowledge-led strategy.

2.2.6 - KNOWLEDGE-LED

The considerations made in the last part of the previous section concerning the retainment of the creative class and its impact on the city are extendable also to this other trend in regeneration strategies. In fact, knowledge-led urban regeneration strategies and the creativity-led ones are very similar. Actually, the two are so closely related that the creative city and the knowledge city concepts are often combined because of "the fruitful synergy that is created between the two" (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). More specifically, they are both affected by the changes taking place in the current economic system, and the new role played by the human capital. Considering the fact that the economy is shifting more and more towards an intangible service economy and what has been called a knowledge economy[3], it goes without saying that many urban regeneration agendas are leveraging on knowledge and human capital in order to create socio-economic virtuous circles, investing in education and in human capital development. As human capital and knowledge are looked upon as key catalyzers for urban economic and social restructuring, they consequently become crucial assets for high-skilled specialization in many different sectors (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). Furthermore, just like it has been previously mentioned for creativity, shaping, attracting and retaining highly educated and knowledgeable individuals seems to be a great strategy to stimulate sustainable urban regeneration and growth.

Thereof, it could be warily said that the educated and knowledgeable individuals just mentioned are that segment of the population which could be able to generate new clever ideas for the renewal of antiquated urban infrastructures, and consequently create an attractive and lively climate, which can produce the right circumstances for regeneration

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[3] An economy whose growth depends upon the quantity, quality, and accessibility of information and knowledge, rather than the means of production.

processes and for the overall expansion of the city's economy. Chiefly, the driving force of these individuals is the so called human capital. So then, what is human capital (hc)? Nijkamp (2012) proposes 3 different definitions of human capital: hc as formal education, is the schooling and training aimed at enhancing people's productivity; hc as sector-composition, is the concentration of labor force in skill-intensive sectors of the market; and hc as creativity and tolerance, is the attitude and open mentality towards delicate issues concerning racial, sexual and cultural diversity (VanGeenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). Henceforth, generally speaking human capital could be cautiously described as that vital intangible asset, which comprises the pool of knowledge, capabilities, skills and experiences that allow individuals to be proactive members of society and the economy. In a word: knowledge.

As a final consideration to bind the concept of knowledge together with the context of urban regeneration, Zuidhof (2012) points out that cities are uniquely positioned to attract creative and well-educated people, and their clustering turns out being a critical factor for regional economic growth (Zuidhof, 2012). This statement picks up on a very famous argument by Jacob (2000), re-elaborated by many other academics, which is: knowledge-intensive and innovation-oriented urban localities are a catalyzer of outmost importance for progress (Jacobs, 2000). Cities in fact can be seen as "the drivers of new initiatives through which existing patterns of business become outdated and are replaced by modern ones that are more fit for purpose" (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). And again, the urban environment is a perfect incubator for potential businesses and foster development due to its unique characteristics and its ability to tangle and connect a plentitude of different individuals (Ellerman, 2007).

In short, the unique productivity effect of cities is a result of human capital clustering, facilitated and enhanced by the urban-networks context. Let us therefore explore the role of networks and clusters in urban regeneration strategies.

2.2.7 - NETWORKS AND CREATIVE CLUSTERS- LED

As it has been observed by De Jong (2012), in this knowledge-economy spatial proximity is extremely beneficial and convenient, due to its ability to stimulate firsthand and immediate access to the needed knowledge-flows and face-to-face based buzz on new industry trends (De Jong, 2012). Consequently, economists as well as sociologists, urban planners and policy makers are exploring with growing fascination the dynamics and effects of networks and clusters.

In the past decades lots of research has been carried out on this topic. Just to give a brief overview: starting from Marshall's revolutionary work on conceptualizing the industrial agglomeration carried out in the 20's; to Jacobs' urban tangled bank theory in the 60's; as well as Porter's studies in the 90's concerning the relevance and the competitive advantages brought by firms physical proximity and agglomeration; and also Becattini's investigation on the positive presence of supportive relationships in the specific local environment (De Jong, 2012). As shown in these studies, the positive effects of human capital concentration in cities are numerous, and are likely to have a profound impact on the future development of those cities (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). In particular, since the networking and physical

clustering of human capital can boost regional productivity and economic growth, clusters-led strategies have recently gained a prominent status among urban regeneration strategies.

Moreover, it has been found that one particular type of clusters can have a very positive effect on urban regeneration strategies: the creative clusters. Interestingly, "the creation and nourishment of creative clusters is seen as an effective way to generate a critical economic and social infrastructure, as the presence of a creative cluster in an urban district is considered to be beneficial for their regeneration effects, their direct economic outputs and the stimulation of a wider innovative, creative ecosystem" (O'Connor & Gu, 2011; Santagata, 2002 in De Jong, 2012 p.7).

The types of creative clusters are many. Only to name a few, they range from museums and galleries, to fashion and design, as well as IT and communication, or even food and handcrafts. Due to this quite wide variety, there is no commonly accepted definition of creative cluster. Scott (2000) defines them as "dense networks of specialized but complementary producers clustered together in industrial districts whose roots extend deeply into the fabric of some of the world's major cities" (Scott, 2000 in Risselada, 2008 p.205). Nevertheless, this definition is quite narrow and not completely satisfactory. More generally, it could be said that a creative cluster is a confined urban area, even one specific building, where firms that produce creative products and services are adjacently located (De Jong, 2012). Within this spatial contiguity, both vertical and horizontal linkages take place, tacit and formal knowledge is exchanged, and both cooperative and competitive dynamics occur. Clusters therefore represent a catalyzer for face-to-face relations and allow more information availability and more connections within the city-network (Risselada, 2008).

Van Geenhuizen and Nijkamp carried out an investigation on the benefits produced by clusters and networks. And they point out that the success of creative clusters is mainly based on the transfer of complex and tacit knowledge, which in turn depends on 4 parameters, 4 characteristics of the network itself, namely: the tightness, strength, heterogeneity and physical proximity of the network (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). But what are the actual possible benefits? Those can be of various types and forms. In the first place they can be technical and economical, as clusters can enhance the innovation process, allowing entrepreneurs to fruitfully cooperate and be ahead of the curve of their specific field. The gains can also be socio-civic, as clusters allow locals to assimilate -both consciously and unconsciously- what has been created, improving their quality of life (Eisinger, 2012). In fact, clusters are not intended to be just working spaces or attractions for tourists, but to create a worm feeling of home. This allows people to connect with the area and feel comfortable in the long term (Schutze, 2012). So clusters should not be conceived merely in terms of their possible economic benefits, but also as key nodes of interaction for local communities. Moommaas (2004) in particular broadens the spectrum of their possible benefits and points out that those types of networks, beside stimulating innovation and creativity and encouraging a more entrepreneurial approach to the arts and culture in general,have the ability to strengthen the identity of a place, find new possible functions for old buildings and derelict sites, and attract and enhance the position of places, revitalizing the urban space (Mommaas, 2004).

2.3 - COMMON FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

The strategies analyzed in the last paragraph can be quite diverse one from the other. They are substantially heterogeneous and each one of them has its own distinctive hallmarks and peculiar features. Nevertheless, some of them might overlap as they share few common key-characteristics. All those strategies depend on the specific context, its background, and a multiplicity of intricate factors, making it quite hard to generalize on the topic. Consequently, their success is extremely aleatory and it's hard to map a definite efficacious process. Likewise, the same holds for the variety of issues and boundaries afflicting them.
This is why hereby a more detailed analysis is provided, in order to better understand what are the common features and characteristics of the urban regeneration strategies previously described.

2.3.1 - CASE HETEROGENEITY

Sure is that the urban context can facilitate the flourishing and thrive of new alternative entrepreneurial initiatives. The city environment is in fact the most appropriate and favorable for the creation, implementation and fostering of creative regeneration strategies. Nevertheless, Andres and Grèsillon (2011) critically remark that each nation, region, city and even each single neighborhood has its own profile and unique identity. No matter how similar the cities and no matter how analogous the regeneration strategies, notably the specific local culture, conditions and dynamics make it impossible for the same plan to be just transferred as it is and successfully work (Andres & Grèsillon, 2011).

The academic research on this topic is quite copious, and plenty of cases have been analyzed and described in detail. Just to name a few, consider for instance the analysis of the differences in industrial areas regeneration agendas between France and Switzerland carried out by Andres (2012); or the one between England and Germany by Schultze Baing (2010); or even Mommaas' (2005) detailed investigation of the differences and similarities between Dutch cultural clusters; but also Musterd, Kovàcks and Murie's (2011) debate on the essential conditions to create an european pathway for creative knowledge development. Interestingly, they all came to similar conclusions, that is: generalizing and extending the existing literature and the strategies already implemented elsewhere to fit all circumstances would be inappropriate and inconsistent.

2.3.2 - SUCCESS FACTORS

Equally, due exactly to case heterogeneity, also the success factors of possible initiatives are aleatory. Even if their research is mainly based on cultural brownfield initiatives, Andres and Gresillon (2011) point out that the success of urban regeneration initiatives depends on a multiplicity of factors. They developed an analytical framework to assess the internal and external dynamics that lead to eventual success, and the building blocks of this framework are five, namely:

a) Time: intended as the duration of the transformation trajectory. The urban transformation takes place by different stages, but in order to have a general overview of it, a time span of

at least 15 years is needed. Furthermore, I believe that the factor of time could be expanded, and include not only the duration of the project itself, but also a wider contextualization of the precise moment in history when the initiative is taking place. Some historical periods can in fact facilitate the successful development of an initiative, while some others might have the opposite effect.

b) The urban context: as we have seen, the infrastructures and dynamics that take place within the city are generally able to aid regeneration initiatives, but in a careful analysis the urban context can actually be a heavy restrain. Due to the specificity of the background and local heritage, as well as of the physical and urban features, the initiative can be mismatched with a city and will therefore not be able to take roots. In other words, the set up plays a crucial role for the actual settlement of those projects.

c) The governance agreements: how the projects came to be. Was it a spontaneous grass root initiative, born from a need of the community and implemented, or was it more of an organized and planned strategy carried out with the help and supervision of the municipality? The two approaches are radically different, and the consequences are quite relevant. Overall it could be said that bottom-up projects can be better embedded and more easily accepted by the community, but when they are not followed up by support and agreements with the government, they tend to be marginalized and slowly perish in the long term.

d) The role of regulation: how regulation and the laws in force affected the outcomes of the project. Oppositely to the previous argument, it should be considered that Municipalities' intervention on the development of specific projects is not always fruitful. When regeneration strategies that originate as bottom-up processes progressively become a normalized tool in the hands of city municipalities, their initial strength can easily get lost leaving space to impersonality and sterility. Once the role of the municipality takes over, and the main focus of the project shifts towards the market logic of real estate (or other kinds of value creation beside the social one), the consequences on the outcome can be substantial. Thus a proper balance has to be found.
Furthermore, as Dos Santos (2013) points out, another big limitation of policies is the time perspective they adopt. Policy makers and their team of experts and consultants often focus just on their term (generally four years) which, as we mentioned in point a, most of the times is not enough for a strategy to be successfully rooted and have an impact (DosSantos 2013).

e) The medium/long term impact: as there are no solid parameters that can accurately describe the actual impact of urban regeneration strategies, it is extremely hard to properly measure their outcome. And it would be also quite hard to say if the positive impact originates from the initiative itself, of from other collateral activities. Nevertheless, when the initiative turns out to be successful, the socio-economic positive effect is evident both on the neighborhood for the positive social impact and growth of real estate market, on the city for the image and vibe, and on the cultural urban policies as well (Andres & Grèsillon, 2011).

Considering how aleatory the success factors just mentioned are, it would be imprudent to compare urban regeneration strategies hands down, and even more imprudent to generalize and make assumptions based on the academic literature on it. Andres and Gresillion's (2011) paper stresses the diversity of these projects and of their transformation paths, suggesting that they should be treated individually, without lumping them all together. In like manner, also Musterd, Kovàacks and Murie (2011) suggest caution in implying that urban

regeneration strategies follow a single archetype or a linear and universal model. In fact, there is a wide variety of urban regeneration strategies based on the specific local features and characteristics (Musterd, Kovàacks and Murie, 2011).

In the end, the main common features they have is their extreme heterogeneousness, and the fact that their success depends on a wide variety of intricate factors. The question that spontaneously arises is then how to analyze them, especially considering the effects of the diffusion of innovation on their efficacy.

2.3.3 - DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION

Another characteristic shared by some of the strategies mentioned above, is the fact that their efficacy and their initial strength might get lost over time, as their uniqueness fades away in the long term when the approach is continuously repeated and readapted, and when the initiative becomes too popular and over-rated. This phenomenon is described in the so-called diffusion of innovation postulated by Rogers (2003). Although his research is mainly concerned with the diffusion and purchase of consumer goods, a broad interpretation of it can be applied also to strategies of urban regeneration and their impact over time. More specifically, this diffusion of innovation follows a specific bell-shaped curve, which coincides with how attractive and interesting regeneration initiatives are valued by the community and the initiators, and consequently with how effective the initiative itself is over time.

Diffusion of innovation is the process by which novelty and new trends are passed down to the members of a community through the use of specific media in a given lapse of time (Rogers, 2003). Notably, the most effective medium to spread the adoption is human capital, intended as creative class people, disseminating it through word of mouth and personal exposure or interaction with other individuals. This process follows a precise path, a curve, and involves four specific categories of people: it starts with an extremely small group of creatives and innovators, which actually generate the new trend itself. Those trend setters are soon followed by another small category of people, the early adopters. They are the ones who immediately follow the trend, making it more generally known, but allowing it to remain a niche. After the early adopters, two big groups of people follow up and embrace the innovation, namely the early majority and the late majority. When the new trend is followed also by these last two categories, it is definitely marked as popular and generally accepted. Finally, the latest adopters are another small group of people, the so-called laggards, and they are the last ones to be aware of the new trend. By the time the laggards follow the trend, this is most definitely out of fashion and, therefore, ineffective (Rogers, 2003).

2.4 CONCLUSION:

In this chapter a general overview of the most effective trends in urban regeneration strategies has been provided. Although it is not a complete and detailed taxonomy, it can still give a quite accurate idea of how the most used praxis are structured, and of the general direction that has been taken in the last decades concerning city redevelopment. After this brief review, few considerations have been presented regarding the common features and similarities between initiatives of socio-economical as well as spatial reconversion of urban areas.

The outcome of this analysis has been twofold: on one hand the fairly robust literature review helped gaining a better understanding of the dynamics involved and the array of possible solutions that can be undertaken. On the other hand, a major awareness of the complexity and the intricacy of those strategies has been achieved. As the stakeholders are multiple and multiple are the possible solutions that can be unfolded, this complexity regards mainly the possible issues related to the convolution of interests at stake. But it regards also the high case heterogeneity, which makes it hazardous to rely completely on the existing literature and taking specific cases as archetypes or universal models. In the final analysis, initiators and developers should be deeply aware of the difficulties and the issues that they can come across with. Nevertheless, it should also be kept in mind that the stratification of built forms in the city and of the activities taking place in them is not a new phenomenon. Since time immemorial cities have always built upon themselves: they constantly changed in order to deal with the needs of a society that was changing simultaneously, creating a virtuous circle of progress and growth, in both built heritage and human industriousness. After all, the essence of any age is built upon the awareness of the past and its own history. Problematizing and being critical is a necessary step, as long as it does not paralyze the pro-activeness of the process itself.

But then, what is the best approach possible? As previously pointed out, there is not a such a thing as a right or a wrong approach, and therefore there is most definitely not a best approach possible. At the same time though it is true that some practices can help the successful implementation of the project. In this extent, Dos Santos[4] (2013) points out that being all proactive and creating a participatory society with more social cohesion and social justice, it is possible to balance the quality of life, support diversity, distress the human condition, keep alive culture and city heritage, and finally support a vibrant and dynamic city, fond of its history, culture and heritage (DosSantos, 2013). All things considered, it seems that shaping a different and better city regards social inclusion and integration in a harmonious community. It is therefore necessary to think wisely, to properly plan how the new creative city could and should be built, and individually act upon it.

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[4] Chief of the UN Creative Economy Program.

3) CREATIVE ADAPTIVE REUSE

3.1 - INTRODUCTION

After listing and briefly analyzing in Chapter 2 the newest and most effective trends in urban regeneration, the focus of this research will be now centered more specifically on two of them, namely: adaptive reuse and creativity-led strategies. The reasons for this are multiple, ranging from personal interests and curiosity, to general considerations over their wide and fruitful applicability in contemporary society. Additionally, adaptive reuse and creative knowledge are the most consistent and the most substantial strategies with respect to the ones analyzed in the previous chapter, as they also overlap and touch upon some of them. Finally, due exactly to their consistency and wide applicability, adaptive reuse and creativity-led initiatives lied at the base of many remarkable examples of urban regeneration strategies, one of which will be analyzed in the following chapter.

3.2 - ADAPTIVE REUSE

Following the previous considerations over development as a stratification process, few more words should be spent on the concept of adaptive reuse. This preservation-inspired style of urban development, born as a necessary response to the 1973's crisis[5], resulted in the refurbishment and partial restoration of few old industrial-related sites in order to serve new functions (Gorman, 2003). Few examples of this are the conversion of lobbies of old railroad stations into upscale restaurants, or the transformation of abandoned textile mills into office parks and malls, or even the adaptation of textile fabrics into lofts and studios for artists (Fitch, 1982; Murtagh, 1988, in Gorman, 2003). Interestingly though, in its broadest interpretation possible, adaptive reuse is and perhaps has always been a permanent feature of human societies. But now that change and leapfrogs are taking place at an increasingly faster pace, it is assuming a quite relevant role, becoming almost a necessity.

Additionally, just like for the original impulse of the '1970s, the present economic difficulties and socio-cultural wilt invite to look at the reuse of old infrastructures in a different way, as it can allow avoiding superfluous expenses and rediscovering the value of what already exists. This is also why adaptive reuse strategies are becoming more and more relevant in recent times (DeAlbertis, 2012). Let's consider for instance the cultural and artistic productions of our age, as well as the entrepreneurial models and ideas, or even the ordinary consumer

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[5] The 1973 "oil price shock", along with the 1973–1974 stock market crash, caused dramatic price inflation and is regarded as the first event since the Great Depression to have a persistent economic effect.

goods produced: it is clear that "everything is a remix" (Ferguson, 2012), that the distinctive characteristic of our age is a creative re-interpretation of what already exists. The new ways to conceive and design neighborhoods are evolving: they are transforming in a way that does not displace the old, but actually layers it in forms that allow all the parties involved to mutually benefit from it (Baum & Christiaanse,2012). Thus, it is precisely re-use that provides an opportunity for a new impetus and a rebirth in numerous fields. Notwithstanding, although adaptive reuse as a concept is nothing new, what is actually new is the way adaptive reuse has been integrated into creative strategies of urban regeneration.

3.2.1 - ADAPTIVE REUSE AND URBAN REGENERATION

For what concerns the role of adaptive reuse in urban development, Reicher (2013) pointed out that urban development is not urban growth. On the contrary, the trend of urban growth is actually taking the opposite direction nowadays, as it involves shrinkage and smart rearrangement of existing infrastructures (Reicher, 2013). In other words, a cardinal approach to urban regeneration strategies for growth and development consists of focusing on the re-adaptation of old structures to host new functions. Why so? Thornton, Franz, Edwards, Pahlen & Nathanail (2006) point out that adaptive reuse in urban regeneration strategies can have three major positive effects, namely: supporting development in less prosperous regions; revitalizing areas facing structural difficulties in the evolution of industrial or service sectors; and promoting measures which enable social and economic changes (Thornton, Franz, Edwards, Pahlen & Nathanail, 2006). Generally speaking, these initiatives offer vast social and economic development potential, and can produce win–win scenarios for both the economy, the community and the environment. The main reason for this is that, although buildings become unsuitable for their original activities over time, adaptive reuse allows those same derelict and unoccupied infrastructures to become suitable locations for many different types of new ventures. The outcomes of this are multiple and touch upon a multiplicity of aspects:

- Urbanism: adaptive reuse helps both avoiding urban sprawl allowing therefore better community cohesion (Schulze Baing, 2010), and preserving greenfield-land having consequently a relevant environmental impact (Thornton, Franz, Edwards, Pahlen, & Nathanail, 2006).
- Environment: reusing a building instead of demolishing it, encourages at the same time less waste and disposal of old materials, as well as a lower usage of new ones. (Wernstedt & Hersh, 2006). The implications of this are also economic.
- Economy: unless the investments needed for the re-adaptation of the building exceed the value of the building itself, adaptive reuse helps bearing superfluous expenses and saving those energies related to major architectural plans and construction works (Baum & Christiaanse, 2012). Additionally, economic reasoning in adaptive reuse concerns also the planning and rearrangement of urban districts in order to host specific activities and label areas accordingly, obtaining therefore the wanted city or area image and boosting the local economy (Thowse, 2010).
- Finance: undertaking new major building constructions in times of economic crisis and urban soil over-consumption is not just unfeasible, but also financially unsustainable and unethical. Real estate speculative aims involve the purchase, demolition, re-edification and re-sale at a higher price of the same land (zus.com). And, even if governments and citizens

are conscious of the dangers related to the real estate speculation market and its inflation mechanisms, they are still widely used all over the world and represent a risk for the city and its inhabitants (ft.com). Adaptive reuse represents therefore an attractive alternative solution to this unhealthy custom.
- Society: considering the historical and symbolical value of some sites, the knowledge they contain and their role as a reminder of the past, adaptive reuse represents a way to preserve collective memories and identity of a place and its community (DeAlbertis, 2012).

The most relevant impact of adaptive reuse involves two other aspects connected to the last point: heritage and sustainability. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the concept of heritage originally dealt with the preservation and valorization of classic historic monuments, mostly of secular private and religious architectural stocks. This because of their historic value and the memories embedded in them, as the events that took place inside and around them ended up strengthening their symbolic value (Leung & Soyez, 2009). But if on one hand these dynamics play an important role in social constructions of civic education and local identification with a specific cultural scenery, it is also true that they are often turned into consumption-related strategies of city branding and tourism attraction (Leung & Soyez, 2009). In the light of this, and due to the growing recognition that we cannot assign museum status to every historic building, Baum & Christiaanse suggest that in the future heritage will increasingly become a matter of conversion, of changed usage, of broadening what already exists and give it a secondary use (Baum & Christiaanse,2012). Re-utilizing an existing structure can add value not just to the structure itself, but to its near context also. Built heritage preservation and re-adaptation has in fact the potential to set in motion dynamics of general development, leading to sustainable urban transformations characterized not only by economic and financial improvements, but social ones as well (DeAlbertis, 2012). To clarify, when talking about the impact of heritage in adaptive reuse strategies, the stress goes automatically on the anthropological and social dynamics involved. For instance the shared stories and values, or the memories attached to a specific area or building, as well as the sense of belonging, and identity. But heritage preservation is also connected to another very important issue, the issue of sustainability.

As mentioned above, adaptive reuse of built heritage can be looked at as an instrument for the sustainable development of specific urban areas. The same concept of sustainable development is quite complex, as it is inscribed in a set of four highly interconnected and interdependent key dimensions, namely: economic, environmental, political, and social. Each dimension has its own peculiar features, its own drives and restraints, its own advantages and disadvantages. And interestingly, these dimensions can often be in conflict one with the other. Being grounded in a multi-stakeholder environment, urban development strategies require a deep understanding of various points of view, making it quite difficult to find a solution that can satisfy all of the different stakeholders involved (Landorf, 2009). In order to find solutions successful and sustainable in the long term, a possible answer is to employ a holistic approach, able to both account for and empower the multiplicity of parties involved in the process. A broad stakeholders' participation can potentially offer a system to gain a holistic vision of the specific social problem, and build together with the partners and the community a collective strategy to solve it (Landorf, 2009). Consequently, the question that spontaneously arises is how to properly approach and manage creative adaptive reuse initiatives.

3.2.2 - MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The managerial implications pointed out by Landorf (2009) of accounting for a multiplicity of stakeholders in developing urban regeneration strategies, may be pulled alongside to the problems generated by case heterogeneity previously highlighted in Chapter 2 -namely, even if regeneration agendas and policy rhetorics can be transferred and applied internationally, strategies cannot be separated from their original environment, and cannot be properly understood without recognizing the specific creative milieu of the city (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). As a possible response, an adequately competent institutional system could support urban regeneration initiatives and provide solutions to these managerial problems. Girard (2011) suggests that the answer could be a creative governance, able to guide, coordinate, and monitor the initiatives through policies and regulations on one hand, but that also leaves freedom and managerial flexibility to the project initiators and developers on the other (Girard, 2011). Van Geenhuizen and Nijkamp (2012) support this idea as well, and believe that empowering a new type of creative management style could help to ease the rooting of such initiatives (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). The management of adaptive reuse strategies should in fact be flexible and adaptive, in order to deal with today's always changing environment, and to account for a multiplicity of ideas and rationales outside the plastered economical ones (Bilton, n.d.). As a consequence, there can be different nuances of adaptive reuse regeneration strategies.

SHADES OF ADAPTIVE REUSE

Starting precisely from this last consideration, it is important to keep in mind that each situation is different, and therefore an accurate analysis of the local community's needs and wants must be carried out before undertaking any type of intervention. Notably, a proper understanding of the specific environment and its peculiar features is the main driver for success. So, even though the concept of adaptive reuse can find significant reason and justification in almost every case, a deep awareness of the local context and the community's needs is fundamental. It is in fact starting from the actual community needs that urban regeneration strategies should be carried out, notably it is not always the case.

Saris (2013) points out that the way those initiatives are realized varies completely from project to project, and depends on a multiplicity of parameters of which community needs is just one. To name a few: the final goal that is envisaged; what is actually missing in the community; but also the former use of the building and the new activity that will take place inside of it (Saris, 2013). It is exactly on this balance between the former use of the building and the new activity envisioned, that Saris (2013) lists three different shades of adaptive reuse:
- When the original scope and the new activity remain the same, and the adaptation of the existing infrastructure is minimal, like for the Pastoe design fabric in Utrecht.
- When the new activity is different from the original one, but the infrastructure remains basically unchanged, like for the Gasfabriek in Amsterdam.
- When both the former activity and the infrastructure are considerably modified, like the Magna Plaza in Amsterdam.

TMOP-DOWN VS BOTTOM-UP

In Saris' (2013) conclusion, the keystone of the discussion concerns the type of value creation that has been envisioned for the area. And in this extent we can look at such initiatives in two ways: either as Total-Makeovers of an area or as a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) actions from the community (Saris, 2013). Area Total Makeovers take place when social problems or economical stagnation make it necessary for the government to step in and lead the regeneration process. Municipalities direct huge investments toward specific areas, and it is only after a medium/long period of time that revenues start arising and the initial investment is recouped. Long term stability and area autonomy are often achieved, but this type of projects are too costly and too risky to be undertaken nowadays. On the other hand, Community DIY actions -also called slow-capital initiatives- are very long and complex grass root processes, involving intricate rental and ownership issues; soft and hard network relations; guerrilla actions, illegal occupation of private real estate; and social or artistic movements expressions. Here often the strategy is no-strategy, just let the artists run the building and own it (Saris, 2013). The analogy with Andres and Grèsillon's (2011) distinction between organic bottom-up initiatives and imposed top-down plans (Andres and Grèsillon's, 2011) is very strong. Nevertheless, this marked dichotomy regarding the approach to the initiative is quite restrictive. There is in fact an extensive range of possibilities in-between bottom-up and top-down approaches: depending on the degree of openness in the relationship between the participating stakeholders (governments; users; residents; investors; and local residents) wide variations may occur in the way programs are developed (Baum & Christiaanse, 2012).

What matters is not the specific type of adaptive reuse strategy undertaken, and not even the possible shade of transformation, what really matters is designing a strategy that properly fits the needs of the reference community and maintains a wide accessibility to the specific place for it. Thereof the focus should not be on the external shape, on the result of the architectural expression, but on the overall approach: a successful approach is the one consistent with the community's needs, with the urban regulations and development programs, with the new societal trends, and with the current economic situation (DeAlbertis, 2012). In this extent, two managerial methods for creative adaptive reuse strategies should be taken into account: The DNA method and the triple helix.

THE DNA METHOD

The DNA method is a relatively new approach for the regeneration of urban areas. This method, first proposed by Saris and Hoogendoorn (2008), stresses the importance of creating a proper match between the specific urban location and the type of activity that planners want to undertake. By appropriately doing so, decaying inner urban locations can be successfully redefined and regenerated (Saris and Hoogendoorn, 2008 in Zuidhof, 2008). A crucial preliminary step is a thorough environmental research, which should "entail the exploration of trends, economic and social strengths and weaknesses, new lifestyles, youth culture, attraction on talent and professionals" (Saris & Hoogendoorn, 2008:137 in Zuidhof, 2008). By doing so, strategy planners can better understand the specific context they are immersed in, and adjust their perspectives in order to develop new businesses that will properly fit the actual local condition and boost urban regeneration. The results in terms of value development of the DNA approach, weather they are financial, cultural or social, rely to

a great extent on the harmony and cooperation between the different regional actors. As those relational dynamics allow to generate trust between the main stakeholders and go beyond the boarders of individual advantage in favor of a common and reciprocal goal, they have to be seriously taken into account. It is in fact only through a constructive interaction between the most important technological, cultural, social and economic stakeholders that alliances can be formed, and the potential of regeneration strategies can be actually unchained. Next to the DNA method, the other type of approach that could be interesting to illustrate is the triple helix, a system that has established itself as a key factor in urban regeneration strategies.

THE TRIPLE HELIX

As urban regeneration is an economical, political, technological as well as social and cultural process, the interests at stake are various and often conflicting. Henceforth, although merging the claims and needs of multiple stakeholders under the same agenda is extremely complex, once it's accomplished regeneration strategies are highly likely to succeed. Since success depends on a large extent on general consensus, a strategy that aims not only to soften the dissonance of the multiple points of view, but actually to leverage one another has been designed. And this is the so called triple-helix. More ind detail, the triple helix is an interactive process of collaboration between three major stakeholders, namely: the municipality, representative of the local community; the academic knowledge institutions as universities or other training establishments; and the resident firms of creative entrepreneurs. All these subjects are aware of the specific strengths and weaknesses of their area and, moved by regional pride, they actively cooperate in order to shape the desired future for the region (VanGeenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). Certainly it can be noted that emphasis on context specificity and the attempt to find solutions able to satisfy all the stakeholders involved is aligned with what has already been said about the DNA method, but the relevant innovative aspect is the key-role played by the academic knowledge institutions. Having the ability to look at the issue from an academic perspective, therefore considering the historic trends or comparing a specific case to others, their input on the project might be extremely relevant and eventually make the difference. Endorsing a triple helix approach, it is possible to share knowledge and experiences from different domains, create more integrated and properly balanced strategies, and finally achieve better results that have more potential for long term sustainability. As Kern (2013) points out, with the triple helix approach, remarkable results that go beyond the economics restructuring and the attraction of economic investments itself have been achieved (Kern, 2013).

In a more careful analysis, the DNA method and the triple helix cannot be properly defined as actual strategies themselves. They are more similar to managerial evolutions and re-elaborations of previous strategies. Adaptations, refinements, the result of a constant process of learning by doing and improving from previous experiences. And it's precisely this continuous ferment and evolution that proves how up-to-date the subject of this research is. All things considered, the meaningful engagement of multiple stakeholders in a collaborative partnership that lasts throughout the whole adaptive reuse process, can help finding win-win solutions able to satisfy everybody. And this in turn could help achieving a collective sense of responsibility, community involvement, and sense of identification with the place (Landorf, 2009). Consequently, the significance for the project administration can be quite relevant.

3.2.3 - ISSUES & CONCERNS IN ADAPTIVE REUSE

It should be always kept in mind that adaptive reuse strategies are always subject to a multiplicity of issues and concerns. Hereby some of them will be described.

ADAPTIVE REUSE & SITE'S FORMER ACTIVITY

The adaptive reuse of derelict and abandoned structures for urban regeneration strategies is a very complicated process. For instance, the lesson learned from the in the US -the first to undertake major renovation processes of former industrial areas, the so called brownfields[6]- is that the first reasons of their complexity is coping with ordinances regarding the handling and disposals of hazardous materials often found or even produced inside those same infrastructures. Thereof, business and community leaders had to look at the redevelopment of former industrial areas as a major policy issue, due to both the potential of those sites but also the hazard often related to them (Gorman, 2003). Being very costly and very complex processes, the eventual success or failure of these regeneration projects would have left a deep and long-lasting impact on the city. A multitude of financial, fiscal, legal, regulatory and policy incentives and facilitations were undertaken in order to encourage the renewal of these areas. In some cases the contamination of the territory was minimal and handling the remediations was affordable and quite easy. But in other cases the contamination deeply penetrated into the soil, making the whole area toxic and the remediation process quite hard and expensive to be carried out.

Consider for instance the refineries and steel plants just outside Chicago in Indiana analyzed by Hurley (Hurley, 1995 in Gorman, 2003). Due to the economic, environmental and social challenges brought by brownfields, their regeneration should have involved more than just site redevelopment in order to meet state and national regulations. A multitude of aspects had to be taken into account and the regulatory one was just the tip of the iceberg (Thornton, Franz, Edwards, Pahlen & Nathanail, 2007). Another one is the site's location, which is often linked to the site's former activity. Many warehouses or fabrics are for instance in the proximity of ports or train stations, due to the ease in loading and unloading materials. Furthermore, some of the sites were well-connected to city centers, easily accessible and convenient to be renovated and re-grafted into the urban dynamics. Unfortunately though, some other sites were just scars to the landscape in the middle of nowhere, and it was in nobody's interest and convenience to undertake major costs in order to try and bring them back to life. Additionally, depending on their former activity, some of them were designed in a way that could have easily lent itself to renovations and re-adaptations, but some others were planned in a really use-specific way, making it hard to reuse them differently. When starting adaptive reuse projects, it is therefore important to carefully ponder the tradeoff between perceived advantages and disadvantages of reuse.

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[6] Derelict and unused sites, mainly found in urban areas, which are in need of restoration due to the contaminations brought by their former uses (CABERNET, 2005, in Thornton, Franz, Edwards, Pahlen & Nathanail, 2007).

SELECTION PROCESS & OWNERSHIP

Amongst the other aspects that need to be considered besides the statutory requirements related to eventual contamination problems and the considerations over the possible advantages of regeneration, are the selection and the ownership issues (Cameron, 2000). Respectively, the general consensus upon which elements from the past should or should not be eligible for preservation, and the appointment of legal right over the specific stock of buildings. The two issues are tightly related, as they both deal with the narrative behind the building. More precisely, with the representativeness of the building itself, and of who has a say concerning it: is it the investor who puts his capitals in the edification of the site, or is it the architects who designed it? Is it the inventors of the processes and activities that took place in it, or perhaps the actual workers? And how about the residents of the neighborhoods and the communities living around it? Questions not easy to answer, that bring upon two further issues: once a building is preserved and is given heritage status, criticism often arises over its ability to attract a sufficient number of visitors that can appreciate it (Cameron, 2000). The other issue concerns the adequate lapse of time that is needed to assign historical significancy to a building (Cameron, 2000). If those delicate issues are not properly pondered and thoroughly analyzed, the final outcome of the eventual initiative might be undermined. For instance, the community might not feel attached and mirror itself into a specific building, and the same can hold for tourists that do not feel compelled to visit it and are unable to understand its meaning. As Landorf (2009) points out, if the stakeholders' involvement and engagement is lacking, the strategy will not be holistic and sustainable, and in turn the overall social benefit flowing to the reference community will be sensibly diminished (Landorf, 2009). Once again, those are general considerations, and it is not easy to make generalizations on the topic due to their high heterogeneity. In fact, there is no single way to address adaptive reuse initiatives.

HETEROGENEITY & MULTI-DISCIPLINARITY

As previously examined in the DNA and triple helix approach, the complexity, contextual differences, and varying political and legal frameworks have made a uniform approach towards adaptive reuse strategies impossible (Ostertag, n.d. post 2002). However, this incongruity has led to a wide range of different methods and experiences that, when brought together, can be used as a useful reference to be looked at and carefully analyzed in order to avoid mistakes already made in the past (Ostertag, n.d. post 2002). It is in fact essential to acknowledge the positive influence of sharing knowledge and know-how from a variety of different realities (DeAlbertis, 2012). In this wide array of information coming from various fields and domains, Ostertag's research (n.d., post 2002) highlights the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach, showing that chances for redevelopment are higher when administrators coherently include both social, economic, political and environmental implications in their plans. Consequently, his advice is to simultaneously cover policy, regulation, planning procedures, technical questions, economics, urban design, and cultural heritage, as well as social aspects, and ask for further research in many of these areas

(Ostertag, n.d. post 2002). These considerations over the importance of multi-disciplinarity, of the transversal approach to different domains in order to find new creative solutions to old problems, highlights the necessity to find a holistic process able to balance this multiplicity of domains and their actors. This concept therefore recalls what has been said in Chapter 2 by Cszikszenmihalyi (1996) about the creative process, and indirectly introduces the role of creativity in adaptive reuse projects.

3.3 - CREATIVITY AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

Considering the amount of inventiveness and imagination needed to properly manage the graft of a new activity into a derelict structure, it could be interesting to look at adaptive reuse initiatives essentially as creative re-utilizations of existing spaces in disuse. In this extent, the concept of creativity applied to reuse should be further analyzed. More specifically, in the light of what has been said by Cszikszenmihalyi (1996) about creativity as a systemic rather than an individualistic process, it could be important to better examine the role played by interaction in creative adaptive reuse initiatives.

3.3.1 - CREATIVITY: INTERACTION & CO-CREATION

As it has been previously pointed out, although an unambiguous definition of creativity does not exist, there is a general agreement upon the fact that creativity is something that happens more frequently in a group of people (Klamer, 2014; Cszikszenmihalyi, 1996 & Accominotti, 2009). Being in a group, individuals are able to interact and look at a problem from different angles and points of view, gaining a better understanding of the situation and possibly cooperating and co-creating together the best solution possible. Further investigating the concept of creativity as a systemic process of co-creation, Accominotti (2009) stresses the importance of interaction between people's ideas and their context. Moreover, social interaction appears in fact to be crucial within the creative process, and thereupon could be described as a social phenomenon (Accominotti, 2009). This idea is exemplified in Accominotti's (2009) study of the peak of creativity of artists, where he points out how participating and belonging to a group or an artistic movement can make the difference in artistic creativeness, due exactly to the interaction, collaboration and support dynamics that are created (Accominotti, 2009). Interestingly, the key role of interaction in the creative process is quite evident also in adaptive reuse initiatives. Combining a variety ideas and opinions on how to develop a specific project, different fields of expertise can be cross-pollinated, allowing for successful innovative ideas to be bred and generated. Moreover, an important part is played by the reference community, the ultimate beneficiary and often the first promoter of creative adaptive reuse initiatives.

3.3.2 - CO-CREATION & THE REFERENCE COMMUNITY

In this extent, Gordon (2012) points out how the Digital Revolution increased the flexibility and the reach of creative inventions and projects. They are now carried out in a more adaptable way, as they can be co-created and re-adjusted together with the audience, with the proactive contribution of the engaged community (Gordon, 2012). A community that plays now a relevant part in the making, and is able not just to find a meaning, but also to create a meaning for themselves. As Klamer (2012) says, the crowd has never been so active in the creative talk, people are now co-owners and feel a deep sense of belonging to the projects (Klamer, 2012). Thereof, empowering people to be widely involved in regeneration strategies of adaptive reuse, can actually facilitate the creative process. And if people are allowed to participate, expressing their ideas and opinions as well as their needs and their wants, it might be possible to find win-win solutions able to satisfy everybody more easily and give a new impulse to change and progress.

3.3.3 CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION, THE CREATION OF VALUE

In the Capitalistic system we live in, progress and innovation are brought by creativity. More specifically, in Schumpeter's opinion it is exactly novelty -new goods, new processes, new production methods or new markets- that stimulates progress, and this novelty is brought by what he defines creative destruction, a market cannibalization where what is new eats what is old, subverting the market, changing its rules and its roles (Schumpeter, 1975). Evolution is therefore interrupted and punctuated, it is a continuous intermittent dialectic response between the destruction of a previous order and the creation of a new one. But, as Jacobs (2000) points out, the idea that everything new would destroy the old in equal value is quite short-minded and misleading. In fact, no matter what, the overall value is not substituted, but enriched and enlarged (Jacobs, 2000). This concept is exemplified using an analogy with Darwin's tangled bank hypothesis: here, biological species that live in complicated ecosystems are likely to prosper and evolve because of the symbiotic process, where the output of an organism works as an input for another. And Jacobs argues that the same holds for human activities in urban environments, where one thing leads to another and one sort of work leads to another allowing societies to thrive and develop.
It is therefore possible to conceive adaptive reuse initiatives in two diametrically opposed ways: looking at how buildings continuously change and transform their appearance and their function in an organic and developmental way, or looking at their steady essence, at their deeper structure that stays solid and unchanged over time. If we consider a former office building turned into a creative hub of artistic production and creative entrepreneurship, it is clear that its function has been revolutionized and perhaps even its appearance has been modified. Nevertheless, within its walls people are still being a proactive part of society, they are still committed to the creation of value.

After concluding this investigation over creative adaptive reuse initiatives, and making some considerations related to the strengths and weaknesses of this type of urban regeneration strategy, the theoretical framework of this research could be considered completed. It is therefore time now to analyze an actual case study of creative adaptive reuse, in order to see if and how it relates to the theoretical framework.

4) CASE STUDY: THE SCHIEBLOCK

4.1) INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 SCHIE-WHAT?

The Schiekade Block -Schieblock- is a building like many others. It is designed as a regular office building, with a clearly functional structure and a plain grey facade. Originally conceived to house an insurance company, it subsequently hosted a school, company offices and few recreational venues. After this, the building remained unoccupied for a period of almost 15 years, essentially because the Municipality and other parties looked at it merely as a potential speculation and property investment opportunity. As the building was already scheduled for a demolition and reconstruction plan, the option of actually housing tenants that would have been difficult to evict was not that interesting for its owners and shareholders.

Reacting to this cynical approach to urban development, ZoneUrbaineSensible and CODUM -respectively a contemporary architecture and urban planning studio (ZUS), and a creative firm active in property re-invention and area makeover (CODUM)- decided to propose a temporary project aimed at maintaining the existing building and finding a new creative use for it. As the Municipality and the owners of the Schieblock showed interest in this project, ZUS and CODUM approached different groups of subjects that had the potential to play a part in the regeneration of the district, and asked them if they were interested in locating their activities in the Schieblock. Attracted by the alternative project, its potential, the feasibility of the specific business case and the support by the municipality, a number of starts-ups, creative entrepreneurs, institutes, education institutions, workshops, design and architecture studios, and research-in-residence finally decided to move into the Schieblock and be part of this creative initiative of adaptive reuse. However, before this happened, the block was already at the centre of debates concerning redevelopment strategies for the Rotterdam Central District.

4.1.2 THE ROTTERDAM CENTRAL DISTRICT

The Schieblock is physically located in a specific area called the Rotterdam Central District - RCD. Often described as very lively and dynamic, this area is renown both for the modern architectures characterizing it, and for the economic diversity and vivacity taking place inside of them. Its proximity to the new Rotterdam Central Station, a hub of regional and international significance, makes this position extremely accessible, and therefore an attractive location for internationally oriented firms and offices. Many are in fact the multinational companies that have their offices here. Their activities range from commercial activities such as banking, finance and business consultancy, to creative entrepreneurship in the fields of fashion, media

and design. As the Municipality of Rotterdam points out, the overall impression of the RCD is of "a glocal district, the result of a unique process in which the city of Rotterdam together with the market has developed its vision of the area" (rotterdam.nl).

4.2 THE DEBATE

But all that glitters is not gold. Beneath the widespread hype and the prosperous future envisioned for the RCD 24/7 business district, the area has actually been the center of heated debates and controversies. The dissensus concerned different aspects of the Schieblock project, but the main issues were related to the Municipality's mis-investments and deleterious real estate speculative aims, paired up with carelessness and negligence towards public space and local citizens' needs.

Apparently, the Municipality's urban planning agenda for the Schiekade block, also known as VIP project, contemplated the construction of a considerable set of office buildings and huge subterranean parking facilities (schieblock.com). The original rationale behind the project was the tabula rasa approach, which involves closure of the area, demolition of existing structures, edification of new ones and an aggressive marketing of them. This approach is a form of "instant urban development" (zus.com), where the development of a urban location is primarily focused on its real estate speculative opportunities, while rather little consideration is paid to the existing infrastructures and their potential. Consequently, the problems relative to this type of approach are quite numerous, the main one being that it takes time for real life to penetrate inside of a building, and for a building to become part of the organic whole of the city (schieblock.nl).

In the following sections, a retrospective overview of the controversy will be provided, in order to explain and better contextualize the actual origin of the above mentioned debate. Starting from the analysis of the Municipality's managerial and financial shortsighted decisions, the implications on the specific case development will be outlined, concluding at last with the description of ZUS&CODUM's reaction.

4.2.1 REAL ESTATE SPECULATION -WRONG INVESTMENTS-

Since the year 2002 the Municipality of Rotterdam engaged in major urban and regional development plans, in order to improve the international competitiveness of the city and the Randstad. Moreover, as in the last decade the Rotterdam real estate speculation market was booming, many investors decided to venture in the renewal of the Central District seeking for profit, and an area of particular interest was the Schiekade Block.

The project of demolition and reconstruction of the so-called Schieblock was undertaken by LSI -a prominent Dutch project investment firm- and it was supposed to be commenced right after the task was commissioned, but the economic difficulties brought by the 2007 financial crisis made it impossible for LSI to actually dismantle and rebuild, so the project soon stopped. In order to proceed with the area makeover and unlock its actual potential, the

Municipality of Rotterdam decided to step in, and in 2009 the city bought the land from LSI for 53mil of Euros and leased it back to them. Praxis that had already been used for the edification of Rem Koolhaas towers in the South of the city and for the Calypso buildings complex in Schouwburgplain. The rationale behind this approach was giving LSI enough liquidities to finalize the project for the demolition and reconstruction of 240.000m2 of highly valuable real estate space. But things did not turn out as they were expected to (bogue.nl).

The huge amount of money spent by the Municipality in order to support real estate developers created heavy critiques on how the money could have been better allocated in order to solve actual social issues. Controversies and public concern arose regarding city expenditures and the long term impact of this project, paralyzing the construction works once again (ZUS.com). Another major concern was the possible failure of the Municipality's speculative strategy for the Schieblock, and the consequent inflation of the real estate bubble in the RCD.

The categorical imperative of re-building and speculating still characterized by the ambition and optimism of the pre-crisis era, proved itself to be nothing but unfeasible and absolutely not sustainable. Examples of this are multiple and can be observed world wide, consider for instance the US housing bubble of 2007 which resulted in the economic crisis still effecting the global markets -and which expert analysts say might come back due to the same persistent misconduct (nytimes.com), but also the dramatic British housing inflation in London (ft.com), or even the real estate market crash that is affecting all the major Chinese metropolis (ft.com). As the relentless edification is paired up with high levels of space vacancy, the risk of an inflation bubble burst is extremely high and the consequences for the whole society would be relevant (cobow.nl). Furthermore, as building vacancy prevents land investments from being recouped, they also involve high maintenance costs that end up amplifying the cost inflation process even more. Notably, space vacancy and building expenses represent a significant cost, a cost that building owners will try to recoup from the rents of their tenants. Consequently, in order to cope with the new increased rental costs, tenants will have to raise the prices of their activities, creating and reproducing a vicious spiral of price inflation. As a result, the area/city/nation will come to be excessively costly, exasperating citizens and local businesses, that will rather locate their initiatives elsewhere. The possible final outcome can be severe, including both a financial and a brain drain, rendered into greater vacancy, less economic activities and an overall decrease in GDP, but also in socio-cultural vacuum. The macroeconomic dynamics of price inflation have been extremely over-simplified here, but they can still depict the magnitude of the potential threat represented by real-estate speculation failures. This precarious process of speculation-driven building construction seems to be talking place nowadays also in Rotterdam, where edification continues at full steam, adding thousands and thousands of m2 to what is already a huge volume of urban empty spaces. Only in Rotterdam 600,000 m2 of built space are unused, for a total of 6million m2 in the whole Netherlands (zus.com). And yet, although according to market principles there is nothing wrong with this speculative praxis, it is obvious that the consequences might be ruinous and local urban planners should seriously take them into account.

Another relevant issue to ponder is that instant urban development projects become outdated really easily, and it is hard for them to properly root in the community. The expectations attached to them are often too high, especially considering the current period of instability and economical wilt. In other words, "there is clearly a rift, a gaping breach between

ambition and reality" (zus.com). Instead of focusing merely on the vision of both easy earnings and the construction of a modern city, urban developers and citizens' representatives should take into account mainly the future development trends and the impact of urban regeneration strategies on the local economy, the local heritage and the local community.

4.2.2 COMMUNITY AND HERITAGE

As ZUS points out, "a city is an organic whole, of which the physical structures are one aspect. A city also consists of social, cultural and economic structures, and these do not appear instantly, but develop gradually over time and closely reflect the location" (zus.com). This statement is an open critique to instant urban development strategies and the functionalistic view of the city. What is implied is that it takes a considerable amount of time before real life enters into new buildings and their neighborhoods, but also that the role of buildings goes way beyond their practical function. In fact, as it has been pointed out in the previous chapter, buildings are little fragments of the city itself, as they have the ability to preserve the collective memories of a place, and safeguard its own specific identity (DeAlbertis, 2012). In the collimation between the Municipality of Rotterdam and the real estate market, what has been overlooked is the role and the importance of a number of key structures in the center of the city. In particular, the large-scale demolition of Rotterdam's post-war reconstruction architecture sweeps away the specific features that define the city, its heritage, one of the few elements that remind citizens of this time.

4.2.3 THE RELOCATION MARKET

Another highly debated phenomenon concerns the so-called relocation market that has been aggressively carried out by the Municipality of Rotterdam in recent years. Different activities were in fact taken away from their original position in the city center, and relocated on a large scale into new yet to be developed areas (zus.com). Consider for instance what is now happening in the Wilhelminaplein area in the South of the city. Cultural centers such as the Academy of Architecture, the Lantaren Venster cinema, but also the photography museums and the art fair have been relocated there, and the rationale behind this relocation is threefold:

- making room for the the speculative re-edification of office buildings in the RCD, a district of great interest for businesses due to its favorable location (rotterdam.nl).
- creating and reinforcing the new district image for the RCD, re-assessing it as the "24/7 business area of Rotterdam" (schieblock.nl).
- allowing the Wilhelminaplein area, often looked at as dangerous and not so attractive due to its industrial past, to flourish and become a center for cultural business activities.

But the efficacy of major top-down state-driven relocation initiatives is not guaranteed, instead the opposite might be true. And if on one hand the South of Rotterdam has perhaps benefitted from this relocation of cultural organizations, unfortunately the same cannot be said for the city Center, as it has found itself deprived of its major cultural institutions. Promoting the development of a new district projected into futuristic commercial dynamics has in fact created a serious cultural and social vacuum in the RCD area (zus.com). As ZUS criticizes "the Municipality's motto of the past twenty years has been build for an imposing skyline, while

the city at street level is allowed to become ever more anonymous" (zus.com). Nevertheless, a strong response driven by sense of community and civic responsibility did not take long to emerge.

4.2.4 THE REACTION

The news that the Schiekade Block was going to be demolished in order to build a new parking lot, arrived after 8 years of anti-squat occupation of the building by ZUS. Moved not only by necessity to preserve the location of their activity, but also by the repulsion for the capitalist ambitions of the Municipality, and the sense of belonging and responsibility for the preservation of the place, the team of architects came up with a quite unique plan. In this context, ZUS involved CODUM and together they decided to step in, proposing a plan for a temporary alternative use of the building in the period previous the new construction. A cooperation was therefore started between the architecture studio ZUS, responsible for tasks such as design, communication and programming on one hand, and the urban renovation firm CODUM, responsible for finance, operations and realization on the other. So, after CODUM designed a feasibility study for the redevelopment of the building, ZUS proposed a multi-tenants creative building as an alternative function for the Schieblock (airfundation.nl). The idea behind this non-permanent filling solution was having a stream of value creation during the transition period, and triggering medium-term regional development "spreading Schieblock's tentacles over the area and into the city like an octopus" (archined.nl).

It has to be said though that the process leading to these successful results has been quite long and complex. In the next paragraph, a more detailed description of the Schieblock BV's development strategy is provided in order to clarify how the regeneration of the area actually came into being.

4.3) HET SCHIEBLOCK

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

ARTICLE / MANIFESTO

The Schieblock project originated from a critical article written in 2007 by the architects of ZUS. The target of their critique was the Municipality's indifference regarding the two decades of policy slack in contrasting the aggressive speculation-led demolition and reconstruction in the Rotterdam Central District. "Existing structures were to be demolished, and then the local economy had to flourish from nothing in the new situation. Even though, according to us, you could easily initiate many of the desired changes using the existing buildings" explains Elma van Boxel -head of ZUS together with Kristian Koreman- in an interview for ArchiNed (archined.nl).

As a following step, this same article was translated into a proper manifesto, and exhibited at the Venice Biennale. Next thing you know, the manifesto was turned into a very concrete legal process, where a multiplicity of strategic partners were involved in the creation of a temporary urban laboratory for an alternative transformation of the area, "spanning the bridge between utopia and urban reality" (ZUS).

SCHIEBLOCK BV

As previously described, the original idea behind the Schieblock was to find a new function for the block, to re-use the existing building in a creative way, that could have involved the local community and made a positive impact on the area together with it. More precisely, ZUS&CODUM wanted to create a lively and vibrant space, a urban laboratory where a multiplicity of subjects from different domains could have gathered and be engaged in finding new interdisciplinary ways to transform the city, having an economic as well as a social impact on the area.

To get things started and breath new life into the old decaying building, few restructuring investments had to be undertaken. The structure needed electricity and elevators, as well as new fixtures and a facade renovation. Unfortunately though, the resources initially available were very little and no party was interested in investing in the project and undertake the full costs of this restoration. And that's when ZUS and the project co-developer CODUM decided to take the risk and invest in the project, acquiring 50% of shares as joint developers, in a partnership that involved three major groups of interest: the owner (LSI), the Municipality (Rotterdam Geemente) and finally the contractor. The Schieblock BV, a limited liability company, was finally born. In order to avoid pure criticism and gain credibility, a proactive approach was needed. It's in this extent that Elma explains how after proposing the plan, taking responsibility was the logical next step "otherwise you never get beyond smooth talk about how different and better things could be" (archined.nl). After receiving funds from private investors, the Shieblock BV was finally on the move.

4.3.2 THE PROJECT

The Schiekade Block building can be conceptually divided in three main parts: the semi-public spaces, gathering spaces open to the public where meetings and performances are held; the studios, office spaces rented out to private professionals and entrepreneurs; and the outreach, the businesses and activities organized by SchieblockBV that take place outside the building in order to connect with the community. Although these parts are divided, their physical adjacency allows maximum interaction between the three, and the result is not only cross-pollination amongst different creative professions, but also adherence between business activities and the actual community's needs. Interestingly, ZUS illustrates the physical and conceptual development of the Schieblock BV in three phases. Hereby, their 3-steps framework will be expanded into a 5-steps one in order to better describe the evolution of the project:

THE DEPENDANCE

The dependance is a center for urban culture, where symposia, workshops, projections and expositions take place regularly. Its fundamental aim is to become a gathering space for the community, "where all invisible cultural potential can become visible", where cultural currents can join forces and demonstrate the drawing power of sub-culture and urban aggregation (zus.com). The Dependance is the first of the semi-public spaces created by ZUS&CONDUM and, located in the basement on the building, functions both as the physical and the conceptual plinth of the Schieblock. Originally created in response to the previously mentioned policy of cultural venues and activities relocation undertaken by the Municipality of Rotterdam, this first initiative proved itself to be very successful, becoming a cultural hot-spot for the city and allowing the potential of the overall project to be finally visible.

DAK AKKER

Following the plinth, the team decided to focus on the top of the building for the second step of their project. And with the support of the Rotterdam Academy of Architecture, another temporary semi-public space was created on the roof of the Schieblock. The challenge was to show the possibility to grow biological food right in the middle of a metropolis' business district, and that's why the initiative was called Dak Akker, in English "the roof field". As provocative as it sounds, the cultivation of 1.000m^2 on top of the roof lured a great number of visitors, from volunteers and educational institutions, to people that were just curious about the initiative. This second step played a very important part for the success of the overall project, as it raised public consciousness about the Schieblock and allowed citizens to see things from a different perspective – both physically and metaphorically. Rotterdammers were invited to re-think the idea of public space and public proactivity in the city, and what really sparked their interest was "a thrilling public domain, the idea of public space high up in the air, the re-use of existing structures and the creation of local ownership" (zus.com).

Once that both the basement ad the roof were taken care of, the third intervention that would have definitively set off the redevelopment process of the building was the office space. The next step involved locating new activities in the floors sitting in between the Dependance and Dak Akker.

THE SCHIEBLOCK

Attracted by the potential of the project and the buzz created around it, most of the studios, professionals and freelancers contacted by ZUS&CODUM finally decided to settle down and locate their activities in the building. Reporting from the thorough analysis by Kouw (2014), the total number of creative firms located in the Schieblock is 89 and, out of those, 40% deal with urbanism and architecture, 27% with culture and the arts, and the rest with media and communication (Khow, 2014). Half of the firms are mainly concerned with their own field, while the other half is actually busy with cross-fields activities (Khow, 2014). Interestingly, this quite even distribution between domains allows to maintain a balanced interdisciplinary profile, where the interactions and exchanges of knowledge are maximized and can actually originate interesting creative productions. Another interesting fact is that 90% of those firms are from

Rotterdam, a proof of the actual involvement and participation of the local community to the project.

In order to additionally promote community involvement, the Schieblock firms organize a plentitude of activities open to the public, as well as projects that take place in the close proximity of the building. Such activities have the ability to create important externalities and have a positive overall impact on the area.

BIERGARTEN AND LUCHTSINGEL

More specifically, ZUS&CODUM started their outreach process and turned the Schieblock into the very center of a radius of alternative initiatives. Examples of this are the Biergarten and the Luchtsingel. The Biergarten is a recreational area, a creative playground that provides food and entertainment, "an oasis of peace amidst the impressive skyline of Weena" (airfundation.nl), built on top of a former abandoned parking lot behind the Schieblock building (airfundation.nl). On the other hand, the Luchtsingel is a temporary wooden bridge financed through crowd funding, and its main function is to connect cyclists and pedestrians from the city center to the North. This project is totally embedded within the context of the Schieblock, and exemplifies the symbolic connection between the city - intended as buildings and infrastructures- and its inhabitants. As the city makes an effort and physically stretches itself to provide the local community an easy access to different urban areas, the local community shows its involvement and commitment towards the regeneration initiative, and makes an effort too crowd-funding the construction of the bridge. "The Schieblock City Laboratory has become a vital urban building block for the entire area development and city transformation" (airfundation.nl). With each initiative, the original ambition becomes closer and closer to its fulfillment. The networks and alliances within and around the block increase, creating a cohesive body of courtyards, malls, squares, roof gardens and bridges. All the elements needed for a micro-urbanism reality, a global district, the prototype of the neo-localism (schieblock.nl).

THREAT AND REACTION

But as things finally started going for the better, the original 5-years temporary agreement between LSI, the Municipality and the contractor was coming to an end. It seemed that the uncertainty regarding the time extendibility of the Schieblock was quite clear now, as the owner of LSI Luc Smiths wanted to leave the project and demolish the building, without even specifying what was coming up next. What followed was impressive: the tenants of the building started a web campaign called "Red het Schieblock" in order to raise awareness about the issue, and it turned out being a success as their video went viral on the web and the Facebook page they created hit over 4.000 likes in two days. In the attempt to raise even more awareness, ZUS&CODUM decided to involve also the media and the press. Despite the initial reluctance, as the media have the ability to distort reality and over-simplify complex issues, the attention created resulted in general consensus and broad public support. So broad that even the owner had to take a step back and re-evaluate the whole situation, renegotiating the life span of the Schieblock. Due to the wide public consensus, the success of the initiative, and the fact that the transformation process still needs some time before it fully

blossoms and comes to fruition of the most, the parties involved reached an agreement and the Schiecade BV urban laboratory received an extension of 5/10 years.
Nevertheless, even though LSI admitted the relevance of the project as a driver of regional development and recognized the growth potential of the companies that moved into the building, no matter the "indisputable added value to the city and the development of the area surrounding the Schiekade Block" (archined.nl), LSI still calls for caution. Their main point being that a temporary solution shall not become the permanent development plan for the area (archined.nl). Also the Municipality, even if positively impressed by the direction taken by Schieblock BV, expressed its concern. Specially considering that as a matter of fact LSI has not initiated any construction work, the capitals are still frozen, and the return on their investment in the long term might diverge quite sensibly from what had initially been assumed.

After all, in less that five years the Schieblock BV has transformed an empty building of a quite anonymous area, into a center of underground culture and a lively cluster of creative businesses, into "a prefect example of creative adaptive reuse, where short term initiatives can contribute to structural urban development" (www.bogue.nl). But after all, the initial rationale behind this project was speculative, the financial one, the logic of the market, where what really counts is the financial return, no matter the enormous social and cultural value created. Shifting the project rationale from the financial to the social one is an extremely arduous challenge, but perhaps it might be possible to find a solution able to balance out and combine the two.

4.4 - FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Generally speaking, it could be said that in the past decades the Dutch government took a step back for what concerns the administration of the "res publica", and passively watched global corporations slowly taking possession of it through privatizations. This until the great wave of neo liberalism crashed into the financial crisis of 2007, creating a whirlpool that sucked-in both corporations, governments and citizens. Interestingly enough though, the ones that stayed afloat more easily are indeed corporations and governments. The answer that has been proposed to this purely economic mentality which put the social interests in the background, is the so called "neo localism". Notably, this socio-political trend encourages the creation of "pressure groups, NGOs and splinter parties, new institutes able to assume the public role of governments and find a covenant where local and global are united: the glocal district" (ZUS). More in detail, the glocal district[7] allows a more sustainable and more effective urban development, aware of both the past and the future of the city, of both its boundaries and its potential. And it is from the concept of the glocal district that a new architectural strategy is born. A strategy that incorporates the factor of time, and that is able to adapt to changing contexts and transforming urban realities through a process of trial and error, of constant modifications and gradual transformations. This is the "temporary city", intended "as a permanent condition in which all interventions are by definition temporary, until they are

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[7] A district shaped following the logic of glocalization, combining therefore the process of globalization together with the specific local features.

proven successful and acquire a more permanent form" (ZUS). Notably, a clear example of this strategy, could be the Schieblock BV itself.

However, it comes natural to question this concept of a temporary city. How could it be described a process of gradual transformation, if often the envisioned plan for many urban districts is demolishment and reconstruction? And still, due exactly to the transient form of the temporary city, how would it be possible to ensure that its positive impact will be permanently retained by the community once the core of the initiative will be removed?

It is impossible to answer these questions, nevertheless there is no doubt that our society is standing at the gates of a new period of urban development. A period where the transformation of existing property is taking over the construction of new buildings, a period in which "the building is a dynamic source that can transform and adapt to its changing environment" (airfundation.nl), and a period where "the city's development politics are gradually changing, and other forms of democracy are safeguard the long-term public interest" (archined.nl). As the the new media give the possibility to globally connect and access the knowledge of new generation thinkers, study the work of worldwide experts from the most disparate domains, and share personal experiences and skills, new creative solutions can be found. New ground-breaking initiatives can be undertaken and change the way we deal with the city, allowing us to experiment with new forms of economic-social-cultural production and consumption. In this extent, the Schieblock is only an example, an embryonic attempt to show that it is possible embrace the future of creative and inclusive urban regeneration strategies.

5) METHODOLOGY

5.1 - INTRODUCTION

My interest for this discipline was sparked by the Cultural Economics Applications course during the second block of this Master program. Coming across interesting topics such as cultural-brownfields, urban network clusters and the creative city, but also discussing in class the complexity and impalpability of the dynamics involved, my attention was really captured and I felt compelled to find out more about the subject. So I moved on, and red a vast amount of literature concerning creative initiatives of urban regeneration, from journal articles to reports and books. I even decided to attend the CURE -creative urban renewal in Europe-conference in Utrecht, where I had the chance to talk to experts in the sector, share ideas and opinions with other like-minded students, and even participate and win their students competition for creative reuse projects.

Living in Rotterdam, a city which mastered the reuse of industrial heritage sites, my focus was initially on creative activities taking place inside of old industrial infrastructures. But after a chat with Professors Mignosa and Lavanga, I realized that this topic was already outdated, as the new trend was finding new creative solutions to reuse vacant office buildings in city centers, rather than derelict fabrics. Furthermore, they invited me to have a look at the Schieblock building in Rotterdam, right next to the Central Station. Although I had dinner a few times in the Biergaten, I went clubbing quite often in the Perron, and I even spent many of my Thursday evenings in the bar Bar, I still had no idea about what the Schieblock project actually was. I was mainly drawn to the area due to its cool vibe, its vibrant atmosphere and the nice people I was meeting while hanging around the weird Luchtsingel yellow bridge. Thereof, driven by the interest for the peculiar social dynamics and captivating nightlife taking place around the block, and actually feeling I was part of that young fervency, I decided to further dig into the Schieblock BV. Once I found out that it actually was a clear example of adaptive reuse of a vacant office building, where now a multitude of creative and artistic initiatives take place, I definitively decided to use the Schieblock BV as my case study.

In order to better understand and have a deeper knowledge about the project, about the initiators, the rationale, the motivation, the coherent plan of action, the outcomes and the future steps, I started collecting and reading data about it. Being apparently a quite popular outspoken initiative, I have been able to find an abundance of information on the internet, but that was not enough. Having a level of awareness mainly based upon personal interests, media information, and the opinion of project initiators and advocates could have been sensibly biased. Consequently, I realized that the best way to properly understand the socio-economic dynamics of urban regeneration brought by the project and its impact on the community was conducting a fieldwork, immersing myself in the life of the area. This time though not from the usual perspective, but from a different one: from the cultural economist's perspective.

As I already knew what I wanted to investigate, I approached visitors, residents and owners of local businesses with semi-structured interviews that could have helped me grasping an idea of the impact of the Schieblock on the area and, more specifically, on the community. The interviewees' responses not only confirmed my impressions and impressively matched the theoretical framework, but also broadened my vision on the specific issue and made me consider few additional aspects which I did not calculate initially.

5.2 - METHOD

My research has been carried out by following three main steps: in the first step, in order to build a thorough understanding of the issue, I collected and examined extensive literature on the research topic and the ones closely related to it, focusing then on few specific aspects of this literature and narrowing-down the focus of my research; in the second step I gathered and analyzed both second and first hand data on a particular case study, to see how the theoretical framework could have been applied to reality; and in the third and final step I finalized my analysis, cross-combining the theoretical framework and the case-study in order to introduce my considerations and draw my own conclusions.

In the first part of my study, I started undertaking a thorough literature review to provide an appropriate theoretical framework on the topic of urban regeneration strategies and, more specifically, on those strategies that leverage on adaptive reuse and creativity. The review, focusing progressively on the positive impact of creative adaptive reuse initiatives, allowed me to outline my preliminary expectations. Expectations that, being adherent and consistent with the findings of the theoretical framework of Chapters two and three, underpinned the research questions stated in the Introduction Chapter. Once again: do creative adaptive reuse initiatives have a positive impact on urban regeneration strategies and local communities? And, if so, is their impact actually social, economic or both?
As an attempt to answer these research questions and try to understand how my theoretical framework could have applied to reality, the second part of my study was concerned with the analysis of an actual case study, the Schieblock BV in Rotterdam. After gathering second-hand data to roughly understand what the Schieblock project mainly encompassed, I decided to empirically gather first hand data in the form of semi-structured interviews, in order to better understand the complex dynamics involved.

Considering that the assessment of an initiative's impact heavily depends on the local community's perception of it, semi-structured interviews appeared to me as the best solution for this study, as they have the ability to both address the specific topic of the research, and at the same time leave the respondent enough space to freely speak and express his opinion. Notably, undertaking semi-structured interviews is a method commonly employed in qualitative research, the typology of research that I decided to opt for. The reasons for this are multiple. First of all because the concept of creative adaptive reuse applied to urban regeneration strategies is relatively new and still quite fuzzy, thereof a quantitative approach would have been inappropriate. As an additional problem, the concept of creative adaptive reuse is not well-suited for quantitative measures, as it encompasses dynamics that are closer to the social sphere rather than the economic one. This brings uncertainty related to

both the way their economic outputs can be measured, and at the same time on how their social ones can be accurately assessed. Finally, being more flexible and adaptable, a qualitative research can leave more room and freedom of expression, giving to the researcher better insights into what the local community actually thinks and sees as relevant. And it is exactly the local community's insight the real focus of my thesis. But the other side of the coin when dealing with a qualitative research, is that its external validity is quite limited. Having to do with an explorative approach, the final results are not easily generalizable to large populations, mainly because of possible biases and shortcomings of the data sample analyzed.

5.3 - DATA SAMPLE DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS

As already mentioned, the main method employed to collect first hand data and information was through semi-structured interviews that followed a specific questions-set. Obviously, these interviews were based upon topics consistent with the thesis' theoretical framework and with the point I was trying to make -finding resemblances between the literature analyzed and the actual case study. The questions-set served as a structure to effectively include the aspects that needed to be covered, namely how the area changed, and what was the impact of the Schieblock on businesses and on the local community. But the interviews have been kept as close as possible to natural conversations, leaving the respondents enough space and freedom to naturally express their own opinions and ideas in very broad terms, from young journalists telling me about the underground stories behind-the-scenes-activities of the past decades in the area, to old ladies being annoyed by the amount of immigrants and "black faces" in Rotterdam, or even people tired of the "dumb-looking hipsters" hanging around. This increased the possibilities to obtain extra information that could have been useful and relevant for my work.

The interrogations were carried out with both local commercial activities, in order to asses if and how their business had changed after the Schieblock project, and with residents and visitors of the area, to see how the project actually impacted their quality of life. For what concerns the first group, the interviews were held inside the location of the commercial activity itself, while for the second one the interviews took place in local cafes and in the streets around the block. The questions-sets were fundamentally identical, only minimal changes were applied to the business' interviews as the information needed was mainly concerned with their businesses rather than the persons. All the interrogations have been done in two sessions across a limited time frame: a week day and a weekend day in the second half of April 2014. Most of the interviews were quite short, as each one of them took approximately 10min, although some of the interviewees felt actually compelled to add some extra comments and share their personal experiences about the area and the project itself, consequently extending the duration of the interview. On the opposite though, not all the people approached were willing to collaborate, as some of them felt uncomfortable answering my questions. Nevertheless, the population sample of this research was made up by a total number of 40 interviewees, 8 of which were commercial activities located in the area. The main criterion for the interviewees' selection was in fact their location, which had to be in the close proximity of the Schieblock.

As I believed that it was of crucial importance investigating both a variety of different activities as well as individuals in order to have a more precise idea of the actual social and economic impact, I tried to keep my sample as heterogeneous as possible. On one hand, for what concerns the commercial activities, I have interviewed two big multinationals; two small creative activities; two restoration businesses; a dry-clean store and a narghile lounge. Only one of them was directly related to the Schieblock BV project, this was done mainly to avoid project advocacy, but still to hear the opinion of a project's affiliate. Interestingly, the responses on how businesses were impacted were quite different, heavily depending on the specific type of business. Nevertheless, they all agreed upon the fact that the vibe of the area and the people around it had improved a lot. On the other hand, the sample of residents and the visitors was also heterogeneous for what concerns sex, age, profession and area attendance patterns. Nevertheless, their responses were extremely homogeneous for what concerns how they feel about the area now, how they felt about it before, and how it impacted them as a person. Interestingly, this confirms our assumptions and proves that creative reuse initiatives can be a valid source of urban regeneration, and can boost social cohesion and quality of life.

To conclude, it should be pointed out that the interviews were interpreted on the basis of the specific context and with reference to the above mentioned theoretical framework. Finally, all the interviews have been cautiously transcribed in the thesis' appendices, and the relevant information obtained from them was incorporated in my analysis in Chapter 6.

6) ANALYSIS

6.1 - INTRODUCTION

Considering the case-study and the literature analyzed up to now, it could be said that the creative reuse of existing structures can have an extremely positive impact on the process of urban regeneration. As previously pointed out, many academics wrote papers in support of this theory. Thornton, Franz, Edwards, Pahlen & Nathanail (2006) carried out a very interesting research on the positive effect of adaptive reuse initiatives. Schulze Baing (2010) focused on the impact of urbanism dynamics, and Towse (2010) on city image and district-branding. Wernstedt & Hersh (2006) stressed the importance of the impact of adaptive reuse projects on the environment, while De Albertis (2012) on society and local community; and finally Baum & Christiaanse (2012) analyzed also the economic aspects of creative initiatives of adaptive reuse. An additional point of view on the issue has been provided by Mommaas (2004). He points out that finding new creative functions for old buildings can stimulate entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity, it can enhance the market position of urban areas and strengthen city identity, but it can also attract and retain people, generating a sense of belonging and social cohesion (Mommaas, 2004 in VanGeenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). The possible benefits are not just economic but also social, due to the fact that creative adaptive reuse both encourages the flow of business opportunities within the urban tissue, and also functions as a node of social interaction, enhancing the sharing of ideas and opinions between individuals and institutions. It has to be said though that planing area makeovers and relocation initiatives is one thing, while actually living in the areas involved is another. Having the ability to preserve urban architectures while at the same time creating a lively and dynamic habitat for the citizens is not easy and embodies a wide variety of values. Interestingly though, accounting for both heritage logics, social strategies, and financial agendas, can facilitate the process of district revitalization and restoration in a creative and sustainable way (VanGeenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012).

The Schieblock is a perfect example of this bundle of values and rationales. In the first place because it allowed the preservation of one of the few post-war reconstruction buildings still standing in the city center. Secondly, because it has been able to attract a wide variety of businesses and trigger plenty of events and interesting initiatives. This consequently transformed the Schiekade area into one of the few center-pieces of creativity in the city of Rotterdam, which in turn became also an important center of gathering and interaction for youngsters, creatives and intellectuals. Nevertheless, it has to be pointed out that the success of the Schieblock has to be attributed to a multiplicity of complex intertwined factors. The community involvement and wide interest in the project is not due merely to the clever consequential step-by-step process that has been undertaken, but it is also due to the specific context and period of time. So, beside the general considerations over the positive impact of creative adaptive reuse strategies, context specificity and case heterogeneity have to be seriously taken into account by initiators of reuse projects and policy makers.

6.2 - HETEROGENEITY & MANAGEMENT

Although flagship cases of creative adaptive reuse may function as guidelines for future projects, Ostertag (n.d. post 2002) points out that due to case heterogeneity it is not possible to stick to a uniform and static approach when managing this kind of initiatives (Ostertag, n.d. post 2002). Likewise, Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp (2012) illustrate how the original environment of a project plays a crucial role in the planning of its strategy, and that a strategy cannot be eradicated from the local context (Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). As previously highlighted, a possible solution to these managerial problems has been proposed by Girard (2011) and Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp (2012). They suggest that a creative governance might be able to overcome this impasse, by combining previous knowledge from flagship cases, together with flexible adaptability to the different specific situations (Girard, 2011; Van Geenhuizen & Nijkamp, 2012). The peculiar feature of this managerial style is therefore a responsive dialectic between the envisaged outcome of the project initiator on one hand, and the actual response of the community on the other. In other words, a merger between Saris' (2013) total area makeover and community DIY of Chapter 3 (Saris, 2013).

Unfortunately though, from the data analyzed it seems that this is exactly the opposite of what the Municipality of Rotterdam has been doing in the past decades. Apparently, instead of leaving space to flexible adaptations, the main focus of the Municipality has been on reorganizing activities and branding urban areas accordingly, using strong top-down centralized strategies. This point has been supported also by different interviewees, which referred to the Schieblock as a part of the 24/7 business district plan envisioned by the municipality. As this thesis is primarily concerned with a small part of the Rotterdam city-center, illustrations of activity-relocation and area-branding affecting this precise neighborhood are the already mentioned 24/7 business district in the RCD and the new alternative hip area in Wilelminaplein -where the RCD cultural activities have been relocated. Nevertheless, the city of Rotterdam is rich in examples of interventions aimed at modifying and readapting the design of specific urban areas, consider for instance the Rotterdam museum district and the artistic area of Witte De Withstraat close by it, or also the modern residential area in Schouwburgplein and the shopping area in Beurs.

6.3 - COMMUNITY EVALUATION OF GOVERNANCE: VALUING VALUES

What is then the key to achieve effective governance? It is undoubtedly important to develop the skills necessary to manage the always growing urban complexity, and finding solutions able to satisfy and support a multiplicity of stakeholders. Another crucial aspect of a successful governance is the careful assessment of strategies' impact in the short, medium and long term. By doing so, initiatives can be adjusted and better-tuned, depending on the comparison between their envisioned outcome and their actual one. Keeping in mind what has been said in Chapter 2, that is successful initiatives of adaptive reuse have a positive impact on a multiplicity of aspects (Andres & Grèsillon, 2011), the criteria for their assessment must encompass all of them. Above all they must be able to account for both social and

economic logics. Since the first logic has the tendency to displace the second one and vice versa, a new approach that can attune and evaluate both rhetorics has to be found, new tools and multi-criteria evaluation processes are thereof required (Girard, 2010). The main reason for this is that while market measurements necessitate numbers and percentages related to prices, spending and consumption, the same does not apply to the social ones (Klamer, 2003). More precisely, creative projects always encompass social, artistic and aesthetic judgments, which are almost impossible to quantify accurately (Chiaravallotti, 2010), and that are generally constrained by conventional economic impact models (Seaman, 2003).

How would it be possible then to assess the impact of the Schieblock? The usual economic rationale would stress the importance of the rents paid for office spaces, the number of projects undertaken by the firms working there and their income, or the impact of externalities on other businesses in its physical proximity. But this assessment is not able to grasp the whole impact of the project, as its effects are mainly social and therefore almost impossible to account for numerically. In order to understand how the local community had actually been impacted by the Schieblock, I decided to undertake a field investigation using qualitative semi-structured interviews as a way to obtain first hand information from the locals themselves. More precisely, I have been interviewing heterogeneous groups of both owners of local activities as well as residents and visitors of the area. A better description of the sample with its strengths and limitations has already been provided in the methodology Chapter. As it has already been pointed out, even if this analysis is not without limits and shortcomings, it can still give a quite interesting picture of the case and its impact on the local community.

Generally speaking, businesses have had an overall increase during the last five years, but this increase was not registered by all kinds of activities. Restaurants, kiosks, bars, and leisure activities stated that they had an increment in sales and income, but at the same time mayor corporations offices closed and their buildings remained vacant, as for them the business actually shrank dramatically. The woman working at the Shell gas station said that five to ten years ago lots of businessmen were working in the area and plenty others were coming from around the world for meetings, while now most of their offices are totally vacant. On the other hand, the young designer in the studio right next to the pump station was actually excited by the Schieblock project, as it boosted his activity and it transformed the area into a lively and creative one. After all, this project had indeed the ability to boost and facilitate businesses, but perhaps mainly small and creative ones, while apparently nothing has changed for big corporations and multinationals, as the fact that their business shrank has to be attributed mainly to other factors such as the global financial crisis of 2008[8]. Interestingly though, something that everybody agreed upon during the interviews is the fact that the people frequenting the area are much better now than they used to be. Lots of young and stylish people now gather here and talk, they mingle and discuss being truly engaged and able to express and confront themselves. The owner of the dry-cleaning store between the Schieblock and the Central Station said "they know what they wear, and they look very happy", while a young visual artist standing in front of the bar Bar said the night-life events taking place in the block gave her the chance to meet and converse with lots of interesting people, going beyond the usual boring bar small talk.

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[8] Sparked by the 2006 US housing bubble, the 2007-8 Global Financial Crisis resulted in the collapse of large financial institutions, the bailout of banks by national governments, and heavy downturns in global stock markets.

So what is more important, what can actually help creating value for the city? Is it allowing big corporations and multinationals to thrive, or is it guaranteeing a vibrant gathering space for citizens to meet and work together? These are two diametrically opposed conceptions of value extremely hard to combine, and it is in this extent that it could be interesting to spend a few more words and reflect upon the meaning of value itself.

Although Klamer (n.d.) talks specifically about the possible interpretations of the value of culture, I believe that his line of reasoning could be broadened and extended also to our considerations of the value of creativity and, more specifically, the value of creative adaptive reuse initiatives such as the Schieblock. Both the terms value and creativity have a multiplicity of meanings: in the first place, the value of creativity could refer to its economic value, in our case the value of the new use of the building itself, or the monetary outcome of its new activities. As a second interpretation, it could imply the social value that creative initiatives have beside their economic one, like the social impact of built heritage preservation on present and future generations, or the effects on the community of recouping an old building and creating a dynamic environment that can regenerate a derelict area. A third way of looking at the issue is from an anthropological point of view, therefore considering aspects such as shared values and sense of local identity, which might be boosted by creative reuse projects. Finally, the most ample interpretation would take into account all the previously mentioned ones plus some more (Klamer, 2003).

From the economic point of view it is actually hard to determine if the Schieblock was a success or not. Apparently, its impact on small firms and local businesses has been positive, but the same cannot be said for big multinational companies. And this has been confirmed by our field exploration of local business activities. But from the short-term real estate speculation point of view, it appears that the Schieblock was most certainly a failure. Nevertheless, due exactly to the new life injected in the building and the buzz created around it, it might be possible that the real estate value of the building will sensibly increase in the future. On the other hand though, all the interviewees agreed upon the fact that the Schieblock was a success from the social and anthropological side, saying that the people and the atmosphere of the area improved a lot.
In other words, the value created by readapting an old building to host new creative activities really depends on the logic that is adopted to look at the initiative, by the set of values that are embraced. Following for instance the economic logic, the logic of the market, the quid pro quo where the private ownership of a good is exchanged for an equivalent in money, value will be perceived merely as economic value, described using indicators such as profit, earnings, interests or income (Klamer, 2012). On the contrary, as the social logic is mainly empowered by reciprocity and sharing, by spontaneous contributions for the pursue of a higher common good, value in this case will be described using a different set of indicators, like for instance the overall quality of life, the social inclusion and participation, but also the liveliness, the vibe and the cultural openness of the area (Klamer, 2012).

6.4 - THE SCHIEBLOCK TODAY AND BACK THEN

ZUS points out that "a city is an organic whole, of which the physical structures are only one aspect" (zus.com). My personal stand on the issue is quite similar, as I believe that a city is much more than the buildings it is made up of, a city consists of all the activities that take place inside of its spaces and all the citizens that live in it. Thereof, urban regeneration strategies should be looked at mainly as social investments, and the biggest final beneficiaries should be the citizens themselves (Ng, Cook & Chui, 2001). How is it possible then to measure the socio-civic impact of the Schieblock and assess its impact on the regeneration of the area?

In order to approximatively understand what the local residents and visitors thought about the impact of the Schieblock on the area, I decided to interview people walking by and sitting at cafes, and ask them to describe in three words how the Schiekade area is now and how it used to be five to ten years ago. The result was impressive: they all agreed that the area definitely changed for the better. All the respondents described it using words such as "creative, dynamic, young, vibrant, interactive, innovative, hip" for how it is now, and "derelict, abandoned, ugly, neglected, rough, junk, dirty, sketchy" for how it was back then. I also came across two journalists, and they gave me a precise idea of how the RCD and the Schiekade block used to be a few years ago. They explained to me that the former function of an adjacent building, the Cultuurpodium Perron, one of the most underground nightclubs of the city, was to accommodate heroine addicts in disgrace. It goes therefore without saying that between the 1980's and the 2000's the area was indeed not one of the most pleasant ones. It is only following a very strident event that it fell under the new urban planning strategy of the Municipality of Rotterdam[9]. This valuable information proves the importance of interviewing the local community face to face, as it allows to better understand the current situation as well as the background history of a place, in a way that often does not properly emerge from the official documents or from the institutions' reports. Even though the sample of residents and visitors interviewed was quite heterogeneous, it might have been biased a-priori due precisely to the fact that they were in the area attracted by its peculiar vibe. But, at the same time, considering also that few of the people I've met were visiting for their first time, it can also be a further proof that the positive influence of the project is already spreading around the city.

6.5 - SOCIAL CAPITAL & NEW IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Baum & Christiaanse (2012) point out that converting antiquated buildings could create a new kind of dynamic and creative environment, which might stimulate local community and consequently set off various kinds of new ideas and cascades of initiatives for urban regeneration. Notably, Putnam (2000) connects this concept of urban regeneration to the one of social and cultural capital creation -an asset which embodies, stores or gives rise to

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[9] Apparently, in the mid-1990's a handful of Rotterdam marine corps stationed in the area, helped by a bunch of taxi drivers based outside the Central Station exasperated by the situation, entered the building and violently evicted the junkies by force with no formal order. Although this sounds like a urban legend and it seems impossible that something so scandalous could have happened, different Rotterdammers confirmed the story.

cultural and social value in addition to whatever economic value it may possess (Throsby, n.d. in Towse, 2003). More precisely, he identifies four characteristics that can contribute to the creation of social capital, namely: social cohesion and inclusion; community networking and interaction; civic engagement and participation; and local image and identity (Putnam, 2000 in Baum & Christiaanse, 2012).

As one of the main aims of ZUS & CODUM was the creation of social capital, they tried to incorporate in the project all the characteristics just mentioned: they engaged the local residents organizing cultural events and symposia open to the public in the Depandance and Dak Akker; they created social inclusion connecting the community of the area through the Luchtsingel crowd-funded bridge; they built both an extensive professional network through the sharing of open working spaces in the building, and also social networks through the opening of gathering spaces such as the Biergarten; finally, they were also able to create a strong local image and identity of hipness and creativity. Thereof, looking at the Schieblock BV from the perspective of social and creative capital creation and development, this initiative could be considered as an accomplishment. More precisely, it has become a platform of social participation and interaction, promoting innovative milieus able to valorize heritage, adding new values to the old ones and combining them into a modern vision of the city (Girard, 2010; Riganti & Nijkamp, 2004).

6.6 - TEMPORALITY

As already specified in Chapter 4, the Schieblock BV is not and most likely will not be the final form of the Schiekade Block. Considering the grand amount of money the Municipality invested in the area, and also the original plan of short-term real estate speculation, it is clear that social impact and the slow-capital investment returns currently produced by the new activities do not match the Municipality's expectations. Therefore, the Schieblock will most likely be subject to major renovation and changes. At the same time though, there is a widespread general agreement upon the fact that its impact on the area has been extremely positive and that the block itself extremely benefitted from it. So a question rises spontaneously: will this vibe and this atmosphere remain once the Schieblock BV is shut down or even demolished?

Although it is extremely hard to make any conjectures in regard as it obviously depends on the future project that will be talking place instead of it, most of the interviewees firmly believe that the area will totally lose its allure. Once the creative entrepreneurs will be evicted, the overall milieu and entourage will never be the same. The creative class which brought the place itself into being and the other people associated with it will be gone, and the area will be deprived of its original drive, changing once again. For the best or for the worse it depends on the logic assumed to look at this change, but the creative vibe will most certainly die.

As a personal judgement I believe that, even if the project will endure over time and the majority of citizens will be satisfied with the way the area has changed, it is possible that the original spirit of the initiative might be actually dying already. It is a strong statement indeed, but

looking at the project as a continuous flow, as a cycle of people, of activities, and of values, the transience of its fate might be already written. This is what has happened in many other creative and original urban areas around the world. Look for instance at the Marais in Paris, the Christiania community in Copenhagen, the Prenzlauer Bergh in Berlin, or the Soho district in NYC: they all started as grass roots bottom up initiatives undertaken by alternative artists, they later became cool and hip areas at the center of the creative conversation, and they finally turned into extremely posh and snobby places, unable to host the creative class and open to embrace the bourgeoisies. Obviously at the moment the Schieblock is maintaining a much lower profile than the other examples, this due to its novelty, its inferior dimensions, notoriousness and impact. Nevertheless, if we look at how the other areas were thirty to sixty years ago, I have the feeling that the overall inclination and the underlying dynamics of area transformation are quite similar. To better explain this process of transformation, it is possible to refer to the diffusion of innovation curve by Rogers (2003), which has been previously pointed out in Chapter 2. In this process of innovation diffusion, new trends and crazes are spread throughout the community by word of mouth and people interaction, following though a precise bell curve. Interestingly, what emerged from few of the interviews is that the Schieblock BV already finds itself in the second half of this curve, in its descending part. My impression has been confirmed by one of my interviewees, a young designer, which told me that in her opinion the Schieblock of today is much different of the Schieblock of 3/5 years ago, as the vibe is different and part of the strength of the original project was already lost.

6.7 - SOMETHING HAS CHANGED, SOMETHING REMAINS

Derelict areas, quite out of the mainstream radars and considered interesting due exactly to their intriguing impersonality, have often been looked at as opportunities by the creative class to locate their activities and their homes. Those areas represent pure potential: they are cheap, isolated, and can be turned into something new, something different an innovative. They can be transformed through a slow bottom-up makeover, allowing maximum freedom of expression far from capitalistic market logics. But once these areas eventually become the fulcrum of a radius of creative ideas and activities, they inevitably attract early adopters and the small majority class. These people are aware of the creative class' potential and of its ability to create the new trends, new exploitable and financially capitalizable trends. When the area is finally well known and regularly attended by the late majority and the laggards also, it loses its original verve, its vibe. It becomes dull and mainstream. Due to the market dynamics of supply and demand, as demand goes up, the price of goods and services goes up as well, and consequently real estate value too. Once the area becomes popular, some people say that the specific area has finally been brought to life. But some others, on the contrary, believe that is actually dying, and this indirectly forces the creative class and the alternative entrepreneurs to move somewhere else.

It seems that the same might hold for the Schieblock, as its original driving force is slowly fading away, making space to new values that are partially external and unrelated to the creative conversation. As a journalist interviewee observed, the youngsters hanging out in the area are more concerned about looking hip, riding cool fixed gear bikes, wearing large v-neck shirts and acting extravagant, rather than being actually involved in meaningful constructive

conversations. Also Melanie, a French film-maker living in Rotterdam, has the same opinion on the issue and told me that when she approached the Schieblock looking for a space where to locate her activity, the answer she received was "well we are not sure we can let you locate your activity here. You know, this is the Schieblock…". Although the percentage of negative considerations and responses to how the area is perceived is very small, those opinions still need to be seriously taken into account, as they show that to a certain extent the overall image of the place might be slowly transforming into exclusive rather than inclusive.

Nevertheless, beside these negative considerations, the Schieblock BV is still an extremely interesting project, as it embodies a perfect example of successful regeneration of a derelict urban area leveraging on creative adaptive reuse. Moving from this statement, as a final step of my analysis I will compare the Schieblock to Andres and Gresillon's framework of success factors previously cited in Chapter 2: For what concerns the duration of the transformation trajectory, considering that the minimum period for a tangible impact is 15 years and that the Schieblock was initiated only 6 years ago, this project clearly finds itself only at the beginning of its transformation path. And this is consequently reflected also in the impossibility to make any strong statement concerning its medium/long term impact. However, the evidence gathered up to now confirms that something is already moving, that something is changing for the best both for the reference community and for the overall area. As for the context of the Schieblock, its role is uncertain. It is indeed located in the lively center of a metropolitan city -condition proved to be beneficial for urban regeneration initiatives- but at the same time there are no other cultural and creative hotspots in the area, making it quite difficult for the Schieblock to establish virtuous circles of growth with other parties and institutions. Finally, governance agreements and regulatory systems are now at the center of heated discussions. Any rectification as well as any decision made pro or cons the continuation of the project, will mark its development -and ergo its possible outputs and externalities- permanently. In conclusion, what remains is a very interesting initiative, which could have an outstanding potential in the regeneration of the RCD.

In the next and final chapter, I will present my final remarks on the project and draw my conclusions.

7) CONCLUSIONS

7.1 - FINDINGS

The Schiekade Block is a neighborhood that has been subject to a formidable process of transformation, changing from an anonymous area, to an infamous one and finally a prosperous district à la page. It is now a lively segment of the city, able to attract, host and retain creative young entrepreneurs, and is therefore embedded in intricate dynamics of creative, social as well as economic capital development. Although recently, as previously pointed out, the values and beliefs associated with the area might be slowly changing and eventually shifting away from the original rationale, the Schieblock is and remains a perfect example of creative adaptive reuse, which can be used to exemplify the complexity of these projects. This is why I decided to leverage on it and compare it to my theoretical framework in order to answer my research questions.

In the investigation carried out in Chapter 6, both the theoretical framework and the empirical evidences show a positive connection between creative adaptive reuse initiatives and urban regeneration agendas. Moreover, what comes across the socio-economic impact analysis is that if on the one hand the economic impact of this initiative has been relevant only to a certain extent as its effects have been registered only by specific businesses, on the other hand its social impact has apparently been quite influential on the local community as a whole. Although the results provided are not remarkably solid and unequivocal, it seems like it is actually community inclusion and social participation that have been of outmost importance for the overall success of the Schieblock -and perhaps of many other creative adaptive reuse projects. The main reason being that it's exactly community inclusion and social participation that can create a strong sense of belonging and identification with the specific initiative and enhance its likelihood to attain a good outcome.

7.2 - LIMITS & FURTHER RESEARCH

However, these outcomes are most certainly not an instrument for wide generalizations. Although adaptive reuse projects and the creative economy have often offered possibilities for urban regeneration strategies, heterogeneity and specific characteristics make an actual generalization impossible. The Schieblock, like many other flagship cases, is characterized by a bundle of features which create a unique environment and particular conditions, influencing the project in a way that cannot be the same elsewhere.

Beside this general limit that affects every creative adaptive reuse project, further limits characterize the results of my thesis. First of all, my research is qualitative, it is a tentative

approach mainly carried out in order to explore some specific issues and see how they can apply to a concrete case, rather than generalizing its findings. Taking into account a variety of analogous cases, and cross-comparing them applying a quantitative approach, some of the findings could have been eventually generalized, but this is not our case.

Moreover, this research just exemplifies one specific project, which has as many similarities as deep differences from others. Additionally, it focuses just on one specific trend within a multitude of urban regeneration strategies, and finally my description is partial, as it does not capture the multiplicity of perspectives on the whole process of creative adaptive reuse, with all its different facets and shades.

Furthermore, although this thesis encompasses and leverages on an abundance of theoretical assumptions from a quite extended literature review, the final results are still vulnerable as the sample used to collect empirical evidences is not without shortcomings. The main shortcomings are two: the sample of interviewees is not big enough, and both the area and the time over which data has been collected are too narrow. Exactly due to these reasons, making generalizations and extending the findings across a large population might be imprudent. Extending the analysis sample of this study and the number of interviews, as well as the time frame over which the study took place, the results might be more reliable.

In this extent, further research could be carried out on a variety of aspects. The first-hand data sample could be enriched, accounting not only for more local business and residents, but also for the role of the Municipality, which has often been depicted by the project initiators and their advocates as focused merely on monetary and financial issues, while its stand is certainly much more complex. Interviewing also urban planners, social analysts and politicians, accounting for their opinions and their points of view as well, could have provided a broader understanding of all the complex issues involved in the Schieblock project.

Another interesting side-aspect that emerges and that deserves further analysis, is how the impact of these initiatives has been communicated outside the area itself and throughout the city. In other words, following which path the external perception of the area has changed from dangerous, dirty and sketchy to young, dynamic and creative. A lead could be better understanding the presence and the role of creative human capital in the project. For instance, it could be possible to map how the attendance of the place evolved, from the initiators and their affiliates, eventually to other arty people from related fields, but also students of the Willem de Kooning art academy in Rotterdam, industrial designers and architects from the TU Delft, then finally to other like-minded students and so forth.

And still, talking about human capital, it could be interesting to have also some further insights on how these initiatives can function as hubs, as important nodes of creativity able to create formal networks from informal ones. Therefore another lead could be investigating how word of mouth and the perception of a space as cool and alternative, can actually become driving elements of economic, social and cultural change. In our case perhaps it could be possible to try charting how the positive snowball effect of the Schieblock was created, and eventually the role of the social networks in it.

Finally, the biggest gap concerning not only this research but the topic literature in general, is how to properly evaluate the impact of creative adaptive reuse projects, and finding measures able to account not only for the economic but for the socio-cultural outputs produced as well. Apparently, a new trend in this matter is trying to assess the number of activities started, and evaluating how sustainable and fruitful they are in the long term. An example could be considering how many start-ups or how many creative initiatives have been launched in a precise area in a determined span of time, and which percentage of them has proved to be

effective and sustainable in the medium-long term. But the research is still at its first steps and is far from being trustworthy and reliable (Mignosa, 2014).

7.3 - CONCLUSION

To conclude, the Schieblock is not too different from many other vacant buildings in the RCD or other areas, buildings that have an incredible potential waiting to be discovered, explored and exploited. Many of these empty physical structures can become important places of urban interaction and social aggregation, providing an alternative platform for inspiration and creation. Creative reuse projects are in fact gaining a renewed role, mainly because the society as a whole is changing and is trying to overcome the plastered market dynamics, finally looking for more and better gathering and interaction places. To put it in a different way, the community needs spaces to become places. Unfortunately though, the condition of the Schieblock as a place and not merely as a space is threatened by the temporality characterizing the project. As many people say, once the Schieblock BV will cease to exist, the area might be sucked once again in a grey vacuum of vacancy and anonymity. Notably though, these are mere speculations, as for what we know in ten years from now the Schieblock could actually become a permanent project and act as a springboard for a new series of successful creative initiatives.

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9) APPENDICES

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

N1

- age & sex: 25, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Visual Arts

- How do you like the area? Yes, it's nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice, Alternative, Political.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Ugly, Empty, Boring.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? Definitely, it developed the area. Now it's more welcoming, full of social places.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Depends on what they do.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Social gathering place. Gave me a place to hang out with friends and my boyfriend.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not to me personally, but you could.

N2

- age & sex: 23, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Performing Arts

- How do you like the area? Not bad.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Innovative, Dynamic, Interesting.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Solitary, Grey, Depressing.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Absolutely.

- How? And Why? The project made the area one of the hotspots of Rotterdam, here you can meet so many different people!

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I hope so, we'll see how it'll develop.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? I had the chance to meet many people in that area, and found it a great place where you can hang out with friends.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? I actually met some guys and yes, I'd say it's a great meeting point!

N3
- age & sex: 32, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Interior Design.

- How do you like the area? I like it!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Relaxed, Good Music, Nice People.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Grey, Not Eye-catching, Not Attracting.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? Creativity of people getting together.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know, probably it will be another thing.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Happier, perfect offer dancing. Everybody's welcome!

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No, but I was not looking for it.

N4

- age & sex: 34, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Furniture.

- How do you like the area? Love it!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Chilling, Colorful, Good Vibes.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Awful, Grey, Unwelcoming.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Definitely.

- How? And Why? It offers a place to meet people and spend nice time relaxing.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know, but ùi guess that something will change.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It opened a new part of the city, never considered that area a nice place to hang out with friends.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? I, actually never looked for meeting new people, but it certainly offers that kind of chances or possibilities.

N5

- age & sex: 26, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Curator, Line Producer.

- How do you like the area? I really like it!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Upcoming, Grungy, Hipster.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Derelict, Cheap, Criminal.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? More visible, visitable place, lively community.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Gone is gone.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? For what concerns business dynamics.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Yes, and also give the possibility to strengthen relationships.

N6
- age & sex: 27, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Bartender, Entrepreneur.

- How do you like the area? It's pretty nice!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Positive, Amazing, Upcoming.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes, I biked by.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Unknown, Unreliable, Melancholy area.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Absolutely!

- How? And Why? It made the whole area more visible, and opened to the whole community.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I've no good feelings about the future transformation.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It provided a new place where you can go chilling or partying! It became "something" not just an area.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? It's possible, it depends on what you're searching for!

N7

- age & sex: 29, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Marketing Consultant.

- How do you like the area? Not bad at all!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Suggestive, Interesting, Somehow charming.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Desolated, Wasted, very cheap.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Of course, it gave a great push to the social life in that area.

- How? And Why? It gave a cozy and welcoming feature to the place and, as a result, it catches the interest of many different people from different ages and backgrounds.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't think so, even tough it has really grown in popularity.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It became a new meeting point, both for social and business life!

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Surely it gives such chances, although I never met new people there, but I think it just because I have never been there with such purpose!

N8

- age & sex: 24, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Restoration.

- How do you like the area? Extremely Nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Urban, Business, Vibrant.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Less-Safe, Dirty, Unknown.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Very Positive.

- How? And Why? Became a place, while it was not.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Chance, not in worse

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Part of your life work, belong, home.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? I met my husband in here, and most of the business people I'm in touch with.

N9
- age & sex: 28, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Bartender.

- How do you like the area? It's a pretty nice area.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Welcoming, Young, Upcoming.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? I just heard some stories and I would describe it as desolated and sad.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Absolutely yes, I saw how was before, now it's a different place.

- How? And Why? It has become a meeting point for young and old people, for business men or chilling friends.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know, but for the role that is getting I think it hardly will loose its vibes.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It gave me the chance to meet lots of interesting people.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Yes it did.

N10

- age & sex: 25, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Social Developer.

- How do you like the area? I like it.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Creative, Innovative, New

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? -

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes, on the social aspects.

- How? And Why? It has been good for start ups and entrepreneurs, because of the cheap rents and the networking.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Depends on what they're going to make.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It provides my daily dinner. The food is good and the atmosphere is nice.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Yes I met lots of people.

N11
- age & sex: 25, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Teacher.

- How do you like the area? It's ok!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice, Innovative, Upcoming.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? -

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? For the social life of the area, absolutely yes!

- How? And Why? It affected positively the social life.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? It's only about the future projects.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Not at all.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Yes, it gave the chance to meet lots of people.

N12

- age & sex: 27, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Tutor, school assistant.

- How do you like the area? Nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Innovative, Young, Lively.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Unwelcoming, Grey, Criminal.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Definitely, improved the feature of the area.

- How? And Why? Renewing and modernizing the whole area.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I hope, because it really made something to this place.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? I found a new nice place where to chill out and meet some friend or I also had some business meetings here.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Kind of.

N13

- age & sex: 60+, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Office work.

- How do you like the area? It's pretty good.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice, Different People, Dynamic.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Better, Quiet, Minimum people.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? It's ok.

- How? And Why? Less immigration, more Dutch people. Too many black faces in Rotterdam, it's not good.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Let's say they surely won't get better.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Not at all.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Maybe.

N14
- age & sex: 60+, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Work in a shop.

- How do you like the area? It's a nice area.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Alright, Alive,

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Silent, few people, Grey.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? More variety of people, it gave a more joyful look to the whole area. But there are too many Immigrants.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I can't make a guess.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It doesn't.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? It became a meeting point, so yes I think you can have such chance.

N15

- age & sex: 58, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Office work for a company.

- How do you like the area? It's very nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Lively, Innovative, a bit noisy sometime.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? I did.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Grey, a little poor, Quiet.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? For some point of view yes.

- How? And Why? It gave a more welcoming feature to the area.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? It depends on what they will make then!

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Actually it doesn't in my everyday life.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No, but I never looked for it.

N16

- age & sex: 24, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Journalist.

- How do you like the area? Nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? New, Upcoming, Young.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? More desolated, lonely.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? Start-ups, opportunity being incentivized, cheaper rents..

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Not if rents go up, no.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It did, I come here very often with friends, I like chilling out in here.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Yes, there're a lot of interesting people around the area.

N17
- age & sex: 27, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Insurance company.

- How do you like the area? It's really nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Innovative, Welcomy, New.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? I just know it was different, in a bad way.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? The area is now more controlled, and gives you many different chances.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? If they'll find out some other nice project it may be!

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It's a nice place where to hang out and find interesting different people from different backgrounds.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Yes it did, but not significative.

N18
- age & sex: 22, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Assistant for an insurance company.

- How do you like the area? It's good.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Vibrant, Suggestive, Good Music.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Grey, Gloomy, Poor.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes it was.

- How? And Why? Start-ups, more positive and controlled.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I hope they will figure out something to make it remain.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Became a place where you can find a lot of young people and business chances.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not yet, I'm used to hang out there with my friends.

N19
- age & sex: 53, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Energy, public relations.

- How do you like the area? Yes I like it.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Dynamic, Lively, bloody good for.. ?

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Old demolished houses, not lively, not safe.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? Vibrant, more social controlled.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Only temporarily.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person?

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not yet, but there's a possibility.

N20

- age & sex: 51, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Public relations.

- How do you like the area? It's nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Innovative, Business, Younger.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Poorer, Dull, Still.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Sure it was.

- How? And Why? More social controlled and variety of interesting people.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Maybe, don't know.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It actually didn't, I came here just a couple of time.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not to me, I wasn't searching for it, but I think it would have.

N21

- age & sex: 33, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Textile designer

- How do you like the area? Yes, I like it!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Open wide area, Creative, Avant-garde.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Dull, Grey, not inspiring.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? Shows identity, brings creativity. Central hotspot of Rotterdam, because people from outside perceive it as cool.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Depends on what's coming in here.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? You can stay and drink while socializing.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No, not yet, but it's really nice as a meeting place. Highly possible.

N22
- age & sex: 29, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Interior Designer.

- How do you like the area? It's nice.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Upcoming, Innovative, Dynamic.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Sad, Criminal, Cheap.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Pretty much, yes.

- How? And Why? Became a meeting point for many different students and business people.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? It depends on what will be planned for the area.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? I cheered here a couple of time, but it didn't impacted my everyday life that much.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not yet, but I was not searching for it.

N23
- age & sex: 31, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Webshop administrator, Graphic Design.

- How do you like the area? It's the first time I come here and it gave me a positive impression.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Berlin Style, Colorful, Arty.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? I passed by it.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Boring, Closed, Unattractive.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Very positive, Rotterdam needed a more controlled scene.

- How? And Why? Abandoned building has purpose now!

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? No, everyone would move on.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Very positive, happy, Rotterdam needs this!

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? For artists it's important, but personally no!

N24
- age & sex: 29, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Journalist.

- How do you like the area? I like it a lot. If I gotta evaluate from 0 to 6 I'd say 4,5.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Urban regeneration, Development and Sustainability:

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Not really.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Super rough, neglected, heroin addicts.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Very positive.

- How? And Why? Gave back a welcoming feature to the area.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? It'll change for sure.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Over all the initiative was positive and I found a place where to hang out with friends drink beer and fine good food.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not really, I come here with friends.

- Extra comments: Due to the crisis, there was a luck of funds and LSI could not proceed with the construction. Nevertheless the municipality wanted to finalize the building construction project and decided to buy the place and lease it back to LSI. By doing so the owners could have had enough liquidities to develop the building (practice used by the municipality for the Rem Koolhaas' Towers and the Calypso building). Beside the state funding LSI almost went bankrupt and had to stop aging the project and fire a huge amount of people. As the municipalities investment (53Millions) was frozen and there were no perspective of having it back, new solutions had to be found. It's at this point that Zus&Codum stepped in and started the Schieblock BV Project. Although it's positive impact, this is not what the municipality wants, due exactly to tare huge investments. It is a AAA Area, so they don't want a BierGarten or the Perron, they want offices and parking lots to rent or sell at very high prices.

N25

- age & sex: 26, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Sustainable Entrepreneur.

- How do you like the area? I like it.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Hipster, Hangout, Extraordinary.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Not.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Gloomy, Prostitutes area, Neglected.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Of Course.

- How? And Why? People are much better.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Things will change.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Made me happy, because it increased the happiness factor in the city!

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not to me, but I wasn't searching for, I'm used to chill here with friends.

N26

- age & sex: 41, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Pharmacist.

- How do you like the area? Yes.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Hipster, Beer and Burgers.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Avoid, Ghetto, Not to go to.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? Nice vibe, gather place, different, hard to describe, you have to feel it.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Probably not, depends.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It's good to know different places, and get in touch with different people. (mostly dutch)

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? It's the first time I come here, so I don't know, but I'd say yes!

N27

- age & sex: 30, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Brand positioning.

- How do you like the area? A lot.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Creative, New, Inventive.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? No food & drinks, Ordinary, just pass by.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Absolutely.

- How? And Why? It brought changes to the whole city of rotterdam.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? No, depends on how it will change.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Yes, it made me understand that is possible to go back to basics.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No but I wasn't searching for it.

N28
- age & sex: 27, female.

- profession/area of expertise: Designer.

- How do you like the area? A bit.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? No, non sense.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? I just know it was different in a bad way.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes it was positive but now there's another problem.

- How? And Why? Full of hipsters over concerned about themselves...

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done?   No, because after the project, the municipality will proceed with the construction of the new RCD.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? It made me understand that even if this place will be dead in a few years there's a revolution going on and people are taking their places back.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects?   Not really.

-Extra comments: It's interesting to see (beside the way this place is slowly changing) how a creative milieu can be facilitated. How the makeover of the space can bring a good vibe, full of creativity and art. But consider that they are already having an attitude. Leveraging on their coolness and already raising the prices. I do not know if you are aware of the argument of the

flow: creative class - hipsters - rich people. The Schieblock of today is already different from the Schieblock of 3/5 years ago, something of the original project has been lost.

N29

- age & sex: 39, male.

- profession/area of expertise: Cook.

- How do you like the area? A bit.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Old fashioned, Opportunity.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? No food/drinks, Ordinary, just pass by.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes.

- How? And Why? Brought changes.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? No, but street food will remain.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Awareness of how quality of food/drinks can be, without a structured restaurant.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? I was not searching for it, but surely it does.

N30

- age & sex: 37, female.

- profession/area of expertise: film maker.

- How do you like the area? A lot

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Cool, Hip, Alternative

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No, I moved here 3 years ago.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? I don't know, but I heard really bad.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes

- How? And Why? It changed for the better

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Probably not.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Actually not that much

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? I wish it did!

- Extra: I asked to move here, I was looking for a location for my team of film makers, editors etc, but when I asked for it I received a very rude answer, something like "well we are not sure you are suited for this office, you know this is the Schieblock…" it was pretty sad I got really upset. But the food is good and the vibe at the street level is nice so I still come here…

N31
- age & sex: 32, male.

- profession/area of expertise: journalist.

- How do you like the area? Yes I do.

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice, good food, good beer.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Well I passed by it.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Dangerous, heroine, prostitutes.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes indeed

- How? And Why? It definitely improved.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Probably not, even though it depends on the next project.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Well I have a cool place where to hang out after work before going back home. Although some of the people here get on my nerves, specially at night.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not too much beside hanging out.

- Extra: Well the original vibe is gone, I remember it used to be a bit different a few years ago. Now it is full of hipsters super concerned on the way they look and on putting on an attitude. It was much more relaxed back in the days and the conversations you could have were better. But this does not hold for everybody and it happens mostly at night.

N32
- Activity: Dry- clean

- For how long in here: almost 5years

- How do you like the area? Yes

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice people, lots of people, business

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? I lived close by.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Different, dangerous, bad.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes

- How? And Why? People know what they wear, they have style now.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Better business now.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No

N33
- Activity: Shisha Lounge

- For how long in here: a couple of years

- How do you like the area? Yes

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice, just nice it's ok.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? I don't know.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? I don't know

- How? And Why? I don't know

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? Maybe

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Good business.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Yes, yes

N34
- Activity: Shell gas station

- For how long in here: Me? A couple of years but this station has been here for a while

- How do you like the area? It's good, but not as before

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Big streets, central, cars.

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? What is the Schieblock?

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Better, more people, more business. Plenty of people came from abroad to have meetings here, there were always so many cars.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? I don't know

- How? And Why? People know what they wear, they have style now.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Well not much.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No

N35
- Activity: Cafè

- For how long in here: This year

- How do you like the area? A lot!

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice people, hip, cool

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? I don't know but I heard it was bad.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes

- How? And Why? Well if it was bad and now it's like this, then it was good

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know, probably not

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Well I work here, it's good!

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects?

N36
- Activity: Restoration

- For how long in here: a couple of years

- How do you like the area? Very much

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Relaxed, Interesting, Artistic

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Just passing by

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Grey, unhappy, sketchy.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes

- How? And Why? People hanging out here are much better than before

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know, probably not.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Better business now.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Well I met my girlfriend here.

N37

- Activity: Design studio

- For how long in here: Few years

- How do you like the area? Yes

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Dynamic, New, Arty

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Dangerous, Rough, Unhppy

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes

- How? And Why? Well, look around and look at all the new initiatives and commercial activities.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know, but honestly I don't think so.

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? I have a good activity and a hangout place

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? Not directly, no

N38

- Activity: Kebab

- For how long in here: years

- How do you like the area? Nice

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Lots of people, nightlife, business

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? I live near here.

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Not nice, it was bad.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? Yes

- How? And Why? More business.

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Better business now.

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No

N39
- Activity: Photography studio

- For how long in here: almost 10 years
- How do you like the area? Yes

- Could you describe it in 3 words? AAA, central, very good

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? Yes

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? Almost the same

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? I don't know

- How? And Why? -

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? -

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? What initiative?

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No

- Extra: initiatives don't matter, only the Municipality can make a change.

N40
- Activity: Adecco HR

- For how long in here: me? one year but this has been here for a while.

- How do you like the area? Yes

- Could you describe it in 3 words? Nice people, lots of people, but business could be better I guess

- Did you come here also before the Schieblock BV project? No

- How was the area back then? Could you describe it in 3 words? I heard there were more people.

- Do you think the impact of this initiative was positive? I can't say

- How? And Why? -

- Do you think this vibe will remain even after the temporary project is done? I don't know

- How did this initiative impact you as a person? Bit did not

-Did it give you any new chances/possibility as meeting new people and getting in touch with potential partners, getting to know creative projects? No