Master Thesis in Cultural Economics & Entrepreneurship

ART & THE URBAN SPACE. A study on the Art Gallery District of Pietrasanta, Italy.

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the conceptualization of cultural districts or clusters. Its origins, development and features, partially based on the transposition of the theory on industrial districts, are reviewed. Therefore, the reasons behind the clustering tendencies of cultural industries are analysed. Moreover, the research examines the impact of these industries on the economic, social and urban realms of the city. To this end, a case study approach is applied. In particular, the theoretical assumptions derived from the literature are tested in the case of art galleries agglomerated in a little borough in Tuscany, Pietrasanta. Through a set of interviews conducted with participants in the artistic community of the town, the relation between art, art galleries and the urban space is investigated. The study sheds light on development patterns of cultural district and the relational dynamics among actors. In addition, it is found that art galleries are likely to cause gentrification generating increase in prices and displacement of commercial activities and residents. Finally, the findings suggest that art, and the ways in which it shapes the urban space, are in constant evolution.

KEY WORDS: Cultural district, clustering, locational factors, urban regeneration, gentrification.

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Source: Instgram.com

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

"Geography is dead". This idea arose at the beginning of the 19th century with the development of the telegraph, telephone and automobile and has since strengthened with the development of online worlds and air travel (Florida, 2003). However, globalization seems to have reconfirmed the key role of proximity and concentration of firms, meaning people are now deemed more important than ever.

From an economic standpoint, the centrality of cities is indisputable nowadays. From the 1970s onwards, the crisis of Fordism with the decline of the manufacturing sector sanctions the beginning of a new and widespread phase of urbanization all over the world. The current urban morphology reflects the economic trends of post-Fordism, being shaped by those rising industries that have surpassed the manufacturing system, namely the high-technology and digital industry, advance service activities and the arts and cultural industry (Scott, 2011). As far as the cultural industry is concerned, its centrality is the result of a growing attention to the symbolic value of products, for instance their aesthetic or intellectual elements, besides their utilitarian function. This shift responds to new consumer preferences and the demand for differentiated rather than standardized products (Scott, 2001). In the symbolic or cultural economy, cities represent creative fields, providing a fertile soil for both production and consumption of arts and culture. Indeed, they are characterised by the concentration of skilled workers, facilitating exchange of knowledge and information; and they support the need for networking and face-to-face interactions, still fundamental in the cultural sector (Scott, 2001). As a result, the inner city, pole of the cultural production in the pre-industrial era, is being re-colonized by cultural and creative industries (Hutton, 2009). Moreover, policy-makers and urban planners are turning great attention towards these industries because of their capacity in reviving urban spaces and enhancing the city's global competitiveness.

Nowadays, theories of economic growth have abandoned the relevance of traditional factors of competitiveness, such as proximity to natural sources and transportation routes, and have placed the human factor at the core of the regional development. As a result, the attractiveness of a place has become a major issue because of its capacity in pulling skilled and talented workers in. The first in noticing the correlation between city attractiveness and economic growth was the economist Jane Jacobs in 1984, who theorized the concept that has

later been defined "Jacob's externalities", according to which the proximity of firms is a key element because it allows the exchange of knowledge among people with different human capital, boosting innovation and economic development. As a consequence, the attention of policy-makers, developers and urban planners has shifted from *hard locational factors,* more concrete and strictly related to the economic sphere, such as labour pool, infrastructure and capital; to *soft locational factors,* intangible elements more related to subjective and personal motivations such as the quality of life and urban amenities. Therefore, today the focus of urban policy is how to build up a *creative city* and to attract the *creative class* in order to spur economic growth. *The Creative City: a Toolkit for Urban Innovators* by Charles Landry (2000) and *The Creative Class* by Richard Florida (2002) have turned into bibles for policy-makers and urban planners.

In the contributions by Landry (2000) and Florida (2002), cultural clusters emerged as a driving force for economic growth. Creative and cultural industries show a natural tendency to cluster, especially in urban context where they have the chance to interact with skilled people of different sectors and exchange knowledge and information, favouring the creative process and enhancing competitiveness (Scott, 2001). Indeed, these industries rely heavily on informal interactions, through which evaluation, valorization and recognition of cultural goods happen (Currid, 2007b). Scholars have largely analysed the dynamics characterising cultural districts or clusters, in order to assess whether they resemble industrial districts and show similar features. The development of a cultural district or cluster can result from both a top-down or bottom-up approach. Hence, they can come into being because of private initiatives undertaken by cultural organizations and firms or through the implementation of public policies of territorial planning. In fact, over the past years the creation of a creative milieu has become a key strategy for the regeneration of depressed urban areas, enhancement of the artistic and cultural heritage, attraction of tourists and investors and the strengthening of local cohesion and identity (Cinti, 2008). Culture-led regeneration policies often involve the building up of flagship cultural infrastructure or the organization of major cultural events. In many cases, they are the result of the current economy, which is a mixture "of economy of leisure, culture and creativity" (Mommas, p.507, 2004; as cited by Cinti, 2008).

However, the boost of regional economic growth should not overshadow possible negative effects of culture-led regeneration policies on societies, which are mainly manifested through gentrification and social exclusion. Indeed, the process of gentrification typically involves the displacement of commercial activities and original residents, determining a social and economic upgrade of the urban area. The controversial nature of gentrification, as well as its link with art and artists, has been amply discussed by scholars. Some of them have proposed

the existence of a 'positive' model of gentrification capable of boosting urban renaissance and producing benefits for both original residents and new comers (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005). Nevertheless, the process of gentrification and its impact on the urban realms is in need for a more nuanced understanding and a more punctual discerning of its positive and negative effects (Mathews, 2010).

1.2 Research question and objectives

The cultural district or cluster stands at the core of this thesis: starting from its origins, to its development and features and finally to its impact on the city in terms of urban morphology, economic and social effects. The aim of the research is *to validate the existence of a cultural district or cluster and to assess its impact on the urban realms.* The relevance of this topic is enforced by the increasing attention of policy-makers and urban planners on cultural districts and their inclusion in urban regeneration strategies. To achieve the goal of this research, a specific case study will be analysed: the art gallery district of Pietrasanta. Once the presence of a cultural district in Pietrasanta has been assessed and its development traced, the study will analyse its impact on the economy of the city and on its social and spatial geography.

Pietrasanta is a small borough of 25,000 inhabitants in Tuscany, Italy, which houses an agglomeration of numerous art galleries. On a societal level, the case at issue appears particularly interesting because of the small dimension of the town. Indeed, most of the literature focuses on cities and metropolises as cultural poles in the current economic context. Therefore, this research will fill this gap in the literature on cultural clusters, shedding light on the artistic and cultural scene off the beaten track of the major cultural centres worldwide. Moreover, the case study will provide new insights into different streams of literature: first, it contributes to the literature concerning locational factors of creative and cultural industries investigating the reasons behind clustering of art galleries; second, it adds insights on the development and configuration of cultural districts; third, it provides new evidence concerning their impact on the economic, physical and social sphere of the city.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

Besides the introduction, the thesis is structured around five sections: the theoretical frameworks, the introduction to the case study, the methodology, the analysis of the results and

the final conclusions. In the second chapter, a theoretical framework is built on the basis of the review of theoretical papers and empirical researches. In order to define the concept of cultural district, the starting point of the literature review is the theory on industrial districts, from which the theoretical foundations for the cultural district are derived. Subsequently, the main contributions on cultural district are reviewed. Moreover, some empirical studies concerning art gallery districts around the world are introduced. Finally, the last section deals with the issue of gentrification and, more broadly, with the impact of cultural and creative industries on the city. The next chapter is an introduction to the case study in which a historical overview of Pietrasanta is presented. Subsequently, the methodology deals with the operationalisation of the research. The following and central chapter is focused on the analysis of the data collected and presents the main findings of the research. The chapter is divided into two main sections, which addresses the two theme of the thesis: the assessment of the presence of the cultural district and the evaluation of its social, economic and urban impact on the city. Finally, in the last section conclusions are drawn out and the main implications and limitations of the study are addressed.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The cultural district

2.1.1 In search of a definition: Industrial district or cluster?

The first scholar who focused on the role played by proximity in economic activity and in theorizing the industrial district was Alfred Marshall in 1920 in his book *Principles of Economics,* which was inspired by the production system that characterized some English cities, for instance Sheffield, at the end of the 19th century. He conceived the district as a bunch of small factories and workshops concentrated in a specific area and specialized in different stage of the same production process. This manufacturing system was able to achieve the same advantages of a factory system, in which the different phases of production happen under the same roof of a large manufacturing plant. In this perspective, firms could benefit from agglomeration economies, external to the single unit but internal to the district. However, the presence of small firms in the same area alone does not form a district. In fact, a major aspect of Marshall's theory is the "industrial atmosphere", a fertile business and social environment which foster the creation of new knowledge and facilitate the sharing of them. Marshall had a pioneering role in shifting the focus of his economic analysis from the means of production, such as machines and facilities, to the role of human actors. He saw a district where everybody saw just an agglomeration of firms.

The Marshallian concept of industrial district gained new attention and recognition with the decline of Fordism. In particular, Italian scholars turned to this theory due to the changes the Italian manufacturing system was experiencing in the late 1960s. Indeed, at that time, when large companies were facing a period of crisis, Italy experienced a bloom of small technically well equipped firms concentrated in some specific area. These were not the bigger cities but relatively small areas, the so-called "Third-Italy", neither part of the already developed capitalistic areas nor the depressed Southern Italy. The success of these businesses was surprising for those economists who had initially dismissed the new model as precarious and marginal because of the small dimension of the companies, their obsolete organization and their specialization in industrial sectors considered mature and without any opportunities of growth, such as the textiles, wood furniture and garments. The conditions that allowed the rise of industrial districts in Italy were: on the supply side, a peculiar cultural complexity of values and knowledge and a credit system that could finance new initiatives; and on the demand side, a

large middle class who asked for new high quality products (Becattini, 2002). The Italian industrial districts resembled the Marshallian model, as was soon clear to Becattini, the economist who recognized the same features of Marshall's theory in the Italian production system. Each district was characterized by small businesses collected in a circumscribed geographical area and interconnected to each other, horizontally and vertically integrated, covering all the stages of the production chain in which they were specialized. Consequently, they competed and collaborated at the same time. Being located in the same district allowed them to easily find contractors, sign contracts with suppliers and test the quality of goods. This was possible thanks to the social structure of the district, which permits to reduce transaction costs but also facilitates the circulation of knowledge. Furthermore, the accumulation of social capital and mutual trust among the actors within the district build up a community of people that operates along with the population of firms (De Marchi and Grandinetti, 2014). There is an unwritten code of rules and values followed by the actors within the community, which makes it a sustainable model (Becattini, 1991), even though it is not easily replicable because of the natural embedding of the system in a specific community. According to Becattini (1991), this communitarian factor is the key feature of the Marshallian ID which he defines as a socioeconomic entity which simultaneously displays geographical, social and cultural identity.

During the 1990s, the competitive advantage achieved by districts of small firms despite the technological superiority of big industrial firms, renovated the interests of scholars in the study of clusters. While many believe location did not matter anymore for economic activity due to globalization and the widespread use of ICT (Cairncross, 1997; O'Brian, 1992; as cited by Martin and Sunley, 2003), other economists and economic geographers have argued that location in the global economy counts even more and the focus should be on regional economies and not national ones (Porter, 2000). In the development of a theory on economic localization, Michael Porter has played a prominent role in redefining the idea of cluster, on the basis of the Marshall's definition, and its implications in terms of policy. Defining clusters, Porter wrote:

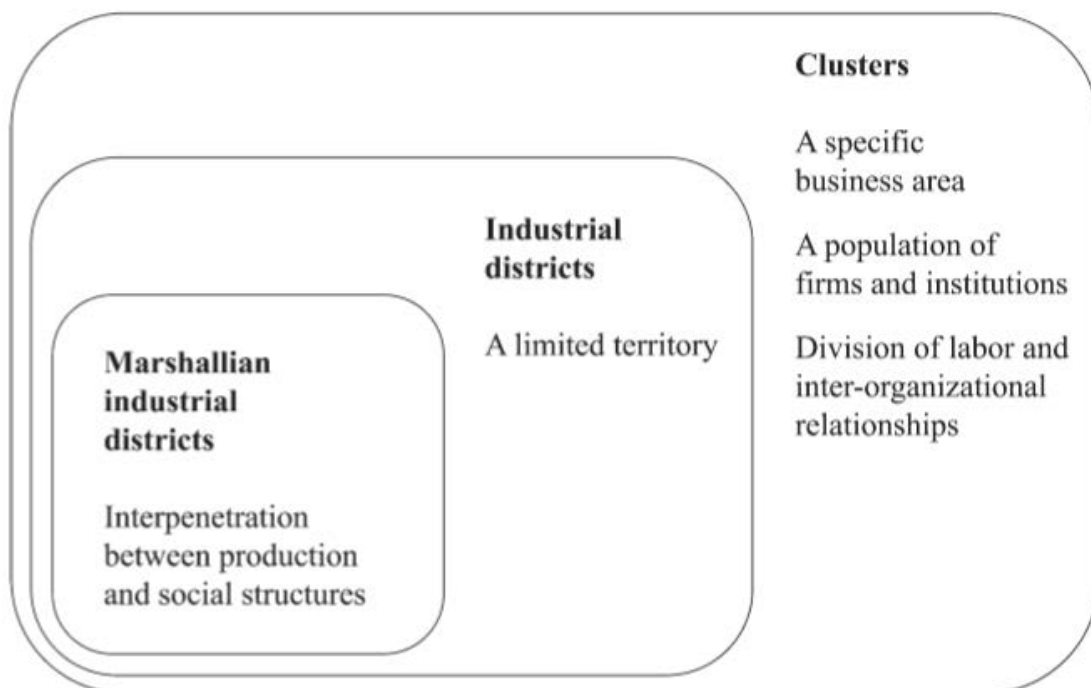*"A cluster is a geographically proximate group of interconnected companies and associated institutions in a particular field, linked by commonalities and complementarities."* (p.16, 2000)

However, as critics have pointed out (Simmie, 2004; Martin and Sunley, 2003), the lack of clear geographic extension of the cluster in his definition is a major issue. Porter himself acknowledges:

"Drawing cluster boundaries often is a matter of degree and involves a creative process informed by understanding the linkages and complementarities across industries and institutions that are most important to competition in a particular field." (p.202, 2000)

Consequently, clusters can be defined at a metropolitan, regional, national or international level. This has led to semantic ambiguity, with the definition of a series of different neologism to define it, such as 'industrial districts', 'neo-Marshallian nodes', 'innovative milieu' or 'learning regions', and the classification of many cluster typologies, which are the results of different patterns of development. In conclusion, there is no agreement in the literature on the difference between the terms cluster and district; as a consequence sometimes they are used as substitutes, while in some other cases they represent different concepts (Belussi, 2006). In the effort of defining the difference between these units of study, De Marchi and Grandinetti (2014) argue that the industrial district is a cluster covering a limited area and the Marshallian ID can be considered as a subcategory of industrial districts. The picture below exemplifies this view:

Figure 1: Marshallian ID, Industrial district and Cluster.

Clusters

A specific business area

A population of firms and institutions

Division of labor and inter-organizational relationships

Industrial districts

A limited territory

Marshallian industrial districts

Interpenetration between production and social structures

Source: De Marchi & Grandinetti, p. 74, 2014.

The cluster theory proposed by Porter is embedded in a wider theory on competition. He argues that local proximity contributes to the spread of innovation which stimulates productivity growth and then determines competitive advantage. However, in an empirical study focused on the UK, Simmie (2004) tested Porter's hypotheses and showed that cluster dynamics do not deliver innovation. In fact, high-technology firms, even the smallest ones, undertake and benefit from relationships with other firms on a national and international scale rather than on a regional and local scale (Simmie, 2004). Furthermore, he argues that Porter focuses too much on localisation economies and underestimates the importance of urbanisation economies and the prominent role of cities in the current economy. A clear distinction in this sense is proposed by Lorenzen and Frederiksen (2008), who compare and describe systematically the differences between cluster in small regional locations and cluster in urban regions. In particular, urbanisation economies are a consequence of a city's diversity of industry, which allows possible collaborations with firms in different fields; diversity of labour, due to the presence of people with different backgrounds and skills; and finally diversity of institutions and infrastructures, such as big and global connected universities, multinational firms, airports and diverse offers of housing and cultural activities. On the other hand, localisation economies arise from industry specialisation, reliant on coordination and knowledge spillovers; specialization of labour markets relating to skill specification and the specialisation of institutions based upon high levels of technical education, services and conventions suited to industrial niches.

In underlining the benefits of co-location for firms, Porter (2000) cites a better matching with the local labour market, a more effective relation input-output and technological spillovers occurring among firms. However, he focuses more on the competitive dimension of the cluster rather than his internal architecture. As stressed by some scholars (Storper and Venables, 2004; Bathelt and Turi, 2013), a fundamental aspect to deepen is the local knowledge spillover that relies on face-to-face interactions among the actors within the cluster. Consequently, the choice of clustering hinges on the necessity of interactions required by certain kinds of activities. These scholars have analysed in depth the kind of interactions among actors and the process by which knowledge is exchanged. Four different properties of face-to-face interactions have been identified. First of all, advantages related to communication and exchange of information on new technologies. These are easily codified by components of the same district that apply the same knowledge and share the same language. In fact, a community is characterized by a tacit form of knowledge, which is difficult to codify by outsiders. Second, repeated interactions help in reducing free-rider and coordination problem, typical of economic relationships, and improving transparency and clarity in the transmission of information.

Moreover, this interaction helps the building of trust, on which relationships among firms are based, and promote collaboration in solving common problems. Third, screening competitors and gaining information on technology is costly and time consuming. Co-presence in a localized area allows the creation of a social and professional network through which firms can screen their competitors and collaborators and share values. While for instance in the technological sector these networks are usually national or international, as previously stated; as far as the cultural field is concerned, for instance in the fashion or art sector, these networks, apart from the top ones, are highly localized. Fourth, beyond the visual and verbal communication, co-presence allows a measure of the performance and provides motivation. In fact, as psychologists have argued, the human nature features a propensity to imitation and competition (Storper and Venables, 2004). These emerging knowledge flows and the sharing of opportunities and information determined the so-called local 'buzz' (Bathelt and Turi, 2013).

In particular, as stressed by Currid and Williams (2009), the social agglomeration is relevant for all industries but in the case of cultural ones it represents their raison d'etre. Face-to-face interactions are at the basis of the process of evaluation, valorization and recognition of cultural goods because of the fact that they are taste-driven goods and people prefer to consume them socially (Currid and Williams, 2009). In exploring the cultural and social scene in New York, Currid (2007b) demonstrated how the social milieu shapes the career of artists and the process of cultural production. In particular, participation in social events can shape artists' careers, thanks to the informal interaction with gatekeepers and producers, and gain insight on peers' review on their cultural goods. Moreover, it stimulates cultural exchange and cross-fertilization among actors of different cultural industries. In fact, in many case artists collaborate and work in different fields of the cultural sector. In this perspective, gallery openings, fashion weeks, nightlife and so on, are much more than fun events: they are crucial moments for the creative industries generating economic values and transactions. However, there are also some drawbacks: artists especially complain about the hypersocializing nature of the artistic career. Indeed, in their opinion too much of the artistic career is dependent on these events and the previous meeting with gatekeepers can also affect the artistic production and its authenticity. Finally, the New York social milieu and the convergence of different cultural industries has a great impact on the image of the city which can add some value to cultural goods produced there (Currid, 2007b).

2.1.2 The creative class

The new economy has shifted the attention of policy-makers from the concentration of firms to that of talented and skilled people as a critical factor for economic growth. Indeed, according to the human capital theory, cost-related factors, for instance proximity to natural sources, conventionally considered a key element of success, does not matter anymore. In 1984, Jane Jacobs was the first to note that the attractiveness of a place correlated to economic growth. A few years later, Robert Lucas (1988; as cited by Florida, 2003) theorized the concept of "Jacob's externalities", according to which the proximity of firms is a key element because it allows the exchange of knowledge among people with different human capital, boosting innovation and economic development. On the basis of these premises, Richard Florida (2003) built up his creative capital theory. As a consequence, he has tried to understand why the *creative class,* as is defined a group of people with high human capital crucial to success, is attracted by a specific location. In defining the features of the creative class, he argues that creative people are those able to "create meaningful new forms" (Florida, p. 8, 2003). In particular, he distinguishes two categories: first, the *super-creative* core that includes people involved in the highest stage of the creative process and produce new forms or designs, such as engineers, scientists, university professors, architects and artist; second, the *creative professionals* employed in knowledge-based jobs and who deals with creative problem solving, for instance lawyers and managers. From the results of his analysis, Florida has designed a new geography of creativity. He has discovered that personal motives rather than business reasons drive locational patterns of the creative class. They are attracted by urban amenities such as the cultural environment, the urban landscape and its architecture, the quality of life and the presence of other talented and creative people. As a result, he has theorized the paradigm of the "3Ts of economic development" (Florida, 2003): talent, tolerance and technology. In fact, he argues that a tolerant environment, populated for instance by gays, bohemians and highly-educated people, attracts talented groups who in turn stimulate local growth through the introduction of high and new technologies. Moreover, he emphasizes the fact that it is fundamental for a place to have all three in order to boost regional economic development. Policy makers then should focus on the attractiveness of the city as a first step to pursue economic development.

Despite being highly successful among policy-makers, turning into a key element to be included in policies and projects by urban planners and economic developers, Florida's theory (2002) has often been criticized by scholars for its originality, for the difficulties in gathering the cause and the effect (it is not clear whether people follow firms or the opposite), and for the risk of generating inequality within the city (Gleaser, 2005; Malanga, 2004; Peck, 2005; as cited

by Florida, 2014). As noticed by Bader and Scharenberg (2010) Florida's (2002) creative class is related to the top end of it, graduated professionals and already successful entrepreneurs in the cultural field, but not to artists who still have to make their own way. Indeed, reviewing the literature on locational patterns of artists, Mathews (2010) shows that many studies have found that these are attracted mostly by marginal spaces, for instance downtowns of big cities, because these results more stimulating for them due to their ethnic heterogeneity, social tolerance, aesthetic and monetary appeal. These factors are usually highly valued by artists because of their authenticity in rejection of the conventional middle class' choices. These spaces provide them great inspiration and freedom to experiment. On the contrary, Florida's creative class seems to search for already established and gentrified cities that provide a wide cultural offering as well as the aforementioned characteristics. Furthermore, according to Hall (1999) artists need something to react to, for instance the established order of society, positioning themselves as outsiders. What he has noticed in analysing major art centres over the centuries, from Athens to Florence, from London to New York, is that they were all passing through a phase of transition, due to a tension between conservative forces and new radical ones, before gaining the status of art cities. Indeed, this turbulent atmosphere stimulates artists and attracts them *in loco*.

In conclusion, as pointed out by Grodach (2010, p. 76):

"Incorporating community-based arts into a definition of the cultural economy adds a third dimension to this debate that, although it continues to treat the arts as instrument, considers artistic and cultural activity rooted in specific communities as a means of empowerment and improvement for existing places and populations, not simply as an amenity or industrial subsector."

Indeed, in his empirical research on the Dallas-Fort Worth art scene he explores the role of small and middle-size art spaces instead of flagship cultural institution and their relationship with community-based artists and audience. He shows that arts spaces such as art schools, art centres, galleries and performance spaces are key actors in fostering local development. In particular, they act as incubator for stimulating creativity of local talents; provide opportunities for marginalized groups; attract tourism and boost consumptions; build social capital and local identity.

2.1.3 From the industrial district to the cultural district?

The concept of cultural district, inspired by the model of the industrial district, was first developed in the UK during the 1970s. The cultural sector was seen for the first time as a leading industry in boosting economic growth, on the basis of the ground-breaking studies on the creative industries conducted by the *Department of Culture, Media and Sport* (DCMS) and the theory on the creative city developed by Landry in 2000 (Usai, 2016). As a result, the plan for the *London Docklands*, which included the building of the *South Bank Centre* and the *Tate Gallery*, being the first urban strategy involving the power of cultural industries in stimulating the economic growth was developed. In particular, the aim was the requalification and revitalization of the London suburbs. Since that moment, in a growing number of cases policy-makers and urban planners have adopted culture-driven policies in order to regenerate urban areas, attract tourists and investors, enhance the artistic and cultural heritage and strengthen the local identity. In this context, the constitution of a cultural district or cluster has been considered one of the most powerful means, which can drive a sustainable economic growth. In terms of definition, the terminological ambiguity between the terms 'cluster' and 'district' remains but they both refers to "a well-defined and 'labelled' city area where a high concentration of culture stimulates the presence of concurrent services and activities" (Cinti, p.71, 2008). As a result, in comparison to the concept of industrial district, here it is imperative to take into consideration the relevance of the cultural and social dimension of the cultural district, in addition to its economic one (Cinti, 2008). Many scholars dedicated themselves to the study of the possible paths of development of a cultural district, although results are really difficult to generalize because each one is highly correlated to its context. Moreover, only some scholars have taken into consideration the concept of industrial district as a starting point for their analysis, among them there are Italian scholars, such as Santagata (2004, 2006) and Lazzeretti (2003, 2008), and some others, for instance Van Den Berg (2001) and Costa (2002), (as cited by Cinti, 2008). The peculiarity of the Italian literature is that it puts a strong emphasis on the local culture embedded in the territory and on the social dimension of the district. However, despite the premises being similar, the conclusions drawn by Italian scholars appear quite different. In this section, some of these contributions are reviewed.

In defining the concept of cultural district, Santagata (2006) argues that two conditions are necessary: an industrial district in the Marshallian sense and an "idiosyncratic" culture. Firstly, an idiosyncratic culture depends on local resources both tangible, such as mines, climate or water, and intangible, for instance crafts traditions, universities and cultural centres. Secondly, these resources need to be combined with the population of a specific area because

the construction of internal and external reputations of a given cultural good hinges on their interpersonal relations. Moreover, culture is highly linked with time and space and so are culture-based goods. In fact, their production is highly related with a place, its community and its history. At the same time, a cultural good is the product of the creativity of one generation. However, the succession to the next one can threaten the traditional culture because of the possible opposition of the young actors to the old ones and to their ideals. Consequently, in some cases the intervention of institutions would be necessary, for instance through the means of trademark, in order to protect the accumulation of cultural capital from the continuous passage from one generation to the other. This is specifically the case of Italian cultural districts which often deal with longstanding artisanal traditions, such as the Caltagirone pottery district or the one for Nativity scene figures of San Gregorio Armeno in Naples, but also with territory-based agricultural productions, for instance the wine cultural districts of Piedmont–Langhe and Tuscany-Chianti. Therefore, the allocation of a trademark will protect this kind of production from unfair competition, certifying the quality of the good; it will create a monopolistic advantage through product differentiation, allowing an increase in the price; and it will also provide an incentive for producers to invest in quality. To conclude, according to Santagata (2006), the cultural district plays a key role in the preservation of longstanding traditions, which are highly rooted in their spatial dimension. Here, *"[the local community] translates creativity into culture, and culture into valuable economic goods and services"* (Santagata, p. 8, 2004).

In his contribution, Santagata (2004) also theorizes four different models. First of all, the *Industrial Cultural District,* a cultural district that respond to the same logics and dynamics of the 'classical' district model. However, sometimes it could be necessary for the government to intervene in order to protect the collective culture and stimulate economic growth, for instance with the allocation of property rights and trademarks to recognize the peculiarities of the production of a specific area, which is not reproducible elsewhere. In this case, the result is an *Institutional Cultural District.* Third, the *Museum Cultural District*, built around a museum network in major cities of art (i.e. Venice or Florence) rich with historical monuments and art collections. In this case, the intervention of the government is needed in order to reach the optimal size of the district, which ensures productive efficiency and quality of the service, preventing the site from touristic congestion. Finally, the *Metropolitan Cultural District* designed to regenerate areas facing economic industrial decline. Cities in this category are not characterized by an abundant historic and artistic heritage but represent a fertile place for artistic production, thanks to the policy developed. Therefore, the models theorized by Santagata (2004) attempt to gather many different cultural and artistic dimensions, from the craftsmanship, to agricultural

practices, to artistic heritage, to the realm of the creative industries. As noticed by Usai (2016), in the analysis carried out by Santagata the industrial cultural district and the metropolitan cultural district are typical of the Anglo-Saxon model of cultural district and resemble respectively the development of major cultural cities and the numerous urban plans applied in American and UK cities over the past years. On the other hand, the institutional cultural cluster and the museum cluster are more representative of the Italian panorama, where institutional and private actions are directed to the promotion of the artistic and local heritage.

According to Sacco and Pedrini (2003), the different models proposed by Santagata, especially the industrial cultural district, are affected by a historic limit, too linked with the past Italian reality characterizing the 1960s and 1970s. The four ideal models appear more as different stages of the evolution from industrial to post-industrial era rather than single and independent entities, reflecting the new role attributed to culture in the current economy. Moreover, they are not exclusive units but they can be complementary. In order to define the cultural district, Sacco and Pedrini (2003) argue the approach should not transpose the elements of the industrial district to the cultural one but understand the dynamics of creativity. Furthermore, they have underlined a relevant aspect that differentiates in their opinion the industrial district from the cultural one: while the former is dedicated to the production of a single product, the latter is characterized by the presence of one sector or multiple sectors and the production of many different cultural goods, which have their roots in the local traditions but are the results of a process of cross-fertilization inside and outside the district. In another article, Sacco and Blessi (2006) define the *evolved cultural district* characterized by the presence of different *filière*, one influenced by the other. According to them, the co-presence of these industries has three major effects on the district, which go beyond the mere stimulation of economic growth and have their roots in three different theories: first, the attraction of other creative workers, as argued by Florida (2002); second, an orientation to innovation, as theorized by Porter (2000) in his cluster theory; third, the development of a life context which stimulates people's *capability*, that is the freedom to follow the quality of life according to our own nature and aspirations, instead of economic and utilitarian inputs, as it was theorized by the Indian philosopher and economist Amartya Sen in the 1980s. Finally, the cultural district is determined by a combination of top-down and bottom-up elements because of the intervention of both private and public actors. To conclude Sacco and Pedrini (2003) argue that more conditions are required at the same time for the development of a cultural district:

- entrepreneurs interested in the promotion of the local culture through innovative initiatives;

-   a deep and diffuse consciousness of the local heritage;

-   openness to new creative and experimental forms of art expression;

-   the capacity of networking with external and leading actors within the same sector or a different one;

-   the presence of local institutions that operate as facilitators to incentivize and promote the local production of arts and culture;

-   the availability of building stock to be allocated for cultural activities;

-   different local institutions capable of monitoring the quality of the cultural offer and subsidizing new initiatives, also with the support of private actors;

-   the presence of institutions that offer educational programmes in the cultural field.

Another approach is the one undertaken by Lazzeretti (2003, 2008). The focus in this case it is not the cultural district in itself but its *degree of cultural districtualization*, analysing it in a dynamic perspective. The emphasis here is on the concept of districtualization as proposed already by Becattini (2002) in relation to the industrial district that is not to look at the features of the district in abstract terms, but to contextualize the analysis and look at the degree of districtualization of a territory as a process that evolves over time and space (Lazzeretti, 2008). The unit of analysis is the city of art that is considered as a high cultural local system: a specific territory defined as a *high cultural place* being characterized by the presence of a set of artistic, cultural and environmental resources, plus a set of actors, institutions and private, who deals with the management of these resources. The totality of local resources and actors gives rise to the *high cultural cluster*. In particular, the set of resources composing the heritage of a region or city can be synthetized by the acronym CAEH: cultural, artistic and environmental heritage. Cultural elements are for instance behaviours, habits, customs and traditions; the artistic heritage includes monuments, museums and archaeological sites; and environmental heritage is related to the urban and natural landscape. These resources do not always directly generate economic profitability, as also stated by Sacco and Pedrini (2003), but any other kind of value and stimulate synergies among actors. Therefore, cultural assets do not represent revenues but resources because of their role in potentially activating new activities (Lazzeretti, 2003). At the same time, culture can be seen as a productive factor in a process of wealth generation. As a result, the city of art, the high cultural cluster, should be first considered as a place of life rather than from a mere managerial perspective (Lazzeretti, 2008).

In conclusion, nowadays a cultural district or cluster often represents a policy instrument and its implementation has become one of the major themes in urban planners and policy-makers' agenda. Its role can vary from the attraction of tourist flow, as in the case of

Bilbao; to the enhancement of artistic and cultural heritage, as happens in many cases in Italy, such as in the Langhe region and in the pottery district of Caltagirone; or to regenerate urban areas, as it was for London Docklands. However, as noticed by Evans (2009), cultural and creative clusters, named quarters by the authors, should be distinguished on a policy level because they produce different effects from an economic, social and cultural perspective, as is summarised in the following table:

Table 1: Rationales for Cultural and Creative Industries Clusters.

Rationales	Cultural Quarter	Creative Industry Quarter
Economic	Local economic development Visitor economy Branding (Evans 2003, 2006b) Zoning Culture and regeneration	City-region economic development Knowledge economy Creative tourism (Richards & Wilson 2007) Production chain Innovation spillovers
Social	Identity Mono-Use Ethnic quarter	Mixed-use and –tenure (Evans & Foord 2009) Diversity (Evans & Foord 2006) Urban design quality
Cultural	Historic preservation Conservation, crafts (skills) Festivals Cultural City	Creativity Design and architecture Showcasing / trade fairs (Evans 2007) Creative City

Source: Evans, p. 39, 2009.

Those policies are drawn on the basis of a natural attitude to clustering observed among cultural and creative industries, but even a top-down approach should intervene to help sustain a local artistic scene already embedded in the territory and not plan from scratch the birth and development of a cultural scene. In analysing the case of Piedmont's music scene, Mazzau and Montanari (2008) demonstrated that a successful cultural policy, aimed at fostering economic growth, should be developed on the basis of a detected local cultural 'germs' and any action should be planned in order to build upon the local cultural context. The authors argued the government should act as a facilitator in the development of a cultural district, constructing a 'soft infrastructure', for instance an informal network platform, to facilitate relationships among actors and adopting strategies based on local traditions and heritage. The result will be the production of cultural goods perceived as authentic expression of the local and social context. In conclusion, Mazzau and Montanari (2008) suggest the shift from a "monument logic to a movement one" (p. 667) that is based not on the creation of a spectacular project but at the stimulation of local and autonomous cultural forms of expression. Indeed, as noticed by Sacco

and Pedrini (2003), a cultural district cannot be a 'cathedral in the desert': "*it cannot grow out of any delightful town with a beautiful cathedral, a castle or peculiar local traditions; however, it is possible and advisable to favour the natural cultural orientation of that local systems […] that are already developing autonomously a lively entrepreneurial environment*" (p. 36). The next section investigates the possible paths of development of cultural districts, with specific reference to those displaying concentrations of art galleries.

2.1.4 Art gallery districts in practice

Some empirical researches have tried to assess the logic behind the growth of art gallery districts by investigating the locational factors influencing art gallerists' choices. In this section some of them are introduced. The majority of studies deal with global art centres and particularly New York, because of its large population of galleries and the rise and fall of many different artistic neighbourhoods. From the Upper East Side and Midtown in the first half of the twentieth century, with major art dealers such as Leo Castelli; to Greenwich Village which hosted and nourished Abstract Expressionism, between the post-WWII and the early 1960s; to Soho from 1960 to 1989 with its vacant industrial buildings, particularly appealing to artists; to the East Village from the mid-1970s until the end of the 1970s, home of the Neoexpressionist and other avant-garde artists, such as Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Andy Warhol; finally, Chelsea from the 1990s until the present, which apparently is being replaced by Harlem, according to the last news (Duray, 2016). In explaining this evolution, Currid (2007a) argues that the presence of important institutions, in particular museums, can be valued as an attractive amenity by art galleries: many of them initially settled down in the Upper East Side where the Guggenheim, the Whitney, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art are located, or in Midtown, next to the Museum of Modern Art. Later on, art dealers choose SoHo in the 1970s because they were attracted by the large community of artists already present in the neighbourhood at that time. In the case of Chelsea amenities such as the building stock composition have played an important role. Old and abandoned industrial site have attracted artists and galleries satisfying the demand for bigger spaces that could host artworks of growing dimensions in fashion during the 1990s.

In a quantitative research, Schuetz and Green (2014) analysed this path over a period of 34 years. Their results show that new art galleries tend to emerge within already established clusters and this ensures longevity to the business. This is typical of retailers of expensive and quality differentiated products, such as jewellery or antiques, which benefit from co-locations

reducing buyer search costs and sharing consumer bases (Eaton and Lipsey, 1979; Dudey, 1990; Picone, Ridley, and Zandbergen, 2009; as cited by Schuetz and Green, 2014; Schuetz, 2014). The results of the empirical analysis seems to be applicable not only in big cities, as the sample include leading galleries in the sector; but also to smaller cities considering that the majority of galleries in the data set are independently owned and non-star galleries. Moreover, Molotoch and Trekson (2009) argue that art galleries in SoHo and Chelsea are scene dependent, thus they favour the social environment to other factors, such as rent or infrastructure, in their location choices.

Another study by Rius Ulldemolins (2012) on Barcelona highlighted commercial advantage as a key factor in deciding the location of a cluster of art galleries. Moreover, the author distinguishes a dominant art gallery district and a peripheral one in the Spanish city. In fact, what emerges from the study is that major galleries tend to cluster in a dominant district in the city centre (Consell de Cent), where the high price of spaces represent an entry barrier for new galleries and allow an elite group to strengthen the reputation of the area and develop the local art market. On the other hand, alternative galleries can locate in more accessible neighbourhoods in order to differentiate themselves from more commercial galleries. Their medium-term strategy is to build up a new gallery district opposite to the traditional art market in the city. Finally, also in this case the proximity to museums, for instance the MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona), has been considered an attracting factor by art galleries.

In conclusion, the studies conducted confirm the tendency of art galleries to cluster, as with many other cultural industries, and show that in their location choices art gallerists are driven by a combination of both urban amenities, such as the presence of museums or building stock, and agglomeration economies, in already established cultural districts next to other galleries.

2.2 Gentrification or Arts-led Regeneration?

"Each story of regeneration begins with poetry and ends with real estate".

As succinctly stated by Klunzman (p. 2, 2004; as cited by Evans, 2005), urban regeneration and its implementation are embedded in a thorny and complex discourse, which is highly correlated with the concept of gentrification. The term 'gentrification' was introduced in 1964 by the urban geographer and sociologist Ruth Glass in order to indicate the process of rehabilitation of poor and working class neighbourhoods due to the occupation of derelict blocks by the middle-class, the 'gentry', as was happening at that time in the East End in London. This definition is characterized by a strong class dimension and lays the accent on the shift happening in the social geography of the gentrified neighbourhood. Over the years, the etymology of the term has been largely discussed and many scholars, driven by optimism, have attributed a positive connotation to the process of gentrification. As a consequence, new terms have been implied, such as 'renaissance,' 'regeneration,' and 'revitalization' among others. Although many have seen an economic, social and physical upgrade in the process of gentrification, this assumption is highly controversial meaning that the gentrified neighbourhoods were devitalized and lacking any forms of culture before the upgrade. Nevertheless, as acknowledged by the economic geographer Neil Smith (1996), today it would be anachronistic dismissing the link between gentrification and redevelopment. In 1960s, when the original definition of gentrification was coined, this was restricted to the phenomena of residential rehabilitation noted by Glass; consequently, it was still meaningful to distinguish between gentrification, as the process of rehabilitation of building stock, and redevelopment, which entailed the building of totally new constructions. However, nowadays the distinction between these two concepts is blurred. According to Smith (1996), gentrification should be considered as the "class remake of the urban landscape" (p.39). Under the umbrella of this definition multiple processes can be incorporated, namely economic, social and physical differentiation of the urban realm. It is precisely this multi-fold nature that makes gentrification a chaotic concept (Rose, 1984; as cited by Smith, 1996). In the context of this research, gentrification is intended in the sense attributed by Zukin (1987): a process of both spatial and social differentiation.

From a historical perspective, over the years the process of gentrification has evolved in different forms and has expanded in a number of places. Hackworth and Smith (2001) traced

the pattern of gentrification and identified three main 'waves'. According to them, the 'first wave' of gentrification, which can be associated with the period described by Glass, was marked by sporadic and state-led actions regarding neighbourhoods in cities in the north eastern USA and Western Europe. The 'second wave' started running from the beginning of the 1980s and lasted throughout the decade. This was characterized by a geographical expansion of the gentrification process and by the intervention of developers who invested huge capital, as occurred in New York in neighbourhoods like Soho, Tribeca and the Lower East Side. This period was also the most controversial, marked by strong activism and resistance opposed by the population. Finally, a 'third wave' followed in the 1990s: this showed a similar pattern to the second one but it was much more intense. It reached more remote areas and involved the public sector, becoming state-led instead of developer-led. However, activist protests slow down and manifestation were sporadic. Despite the utility of this classification, some scholars have stressed the necessity to distinguish different patterns of gentrification according to geographical areas, especially drawing differences between USA and Europe. Moreover, according to Cameron and Coaffee (2005), two models of gentrification can be identified: a core one, typical of big metropolis such as London and New York where wealthy investors represent the driving force of the process; and a periphery model, more common in smaller cities where usually the process is initiated by the government.

Besides the dispute over the etymology of the term, the process of gentrification has been highly discussed also in regards to the identification of its causes. According to Cameron and Coaffee (2005), three main drivers can be identified that, in part, respond to the historic classification of the process. The first wave of gentrification can be associated with production-led explanations that take into consideration economic factors. In particular, as outlined by Smith (1996) in his 'rent gap theory', gentrification is a product of the land and real estate markets: once urban developers and investors perceive a positive gap between the current rent and the potentially achievable rent of a property, they would renovate it in order to increase its profitability. Therefore, production-led explanations are focused on urban cycles of investment and disinvestment of economic resources in the property market.

However, as already mentioned, the concept of gentrification has evolved over the years, including other realms apart from the real estate one; and so have its explanations. The second wave of gentrification has been related to consumption-led reasons linked to consumer preferences and shaped on consumer demand. In this context, artists have been introduced in the discourse of gentrification and culture, rather than capital, has been considered as a key driver of the process. The first direct link between capital and culture and their correlation in

the process of gentrification was made by Zukin in 1982 in her seminal work "Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change", in which she conceptualized an "artistic mode of production" that is the symbolic appropriation of an urban space by artists who then attract investors. Indeed, focusing on the city of New York, she noticed how artists took over industrial buildings as a result of a shift in the global economy from industrial to post-industrial era. According to Zukin (1982), victims are not residents but workers who are forced to abandon their locations by artists. As a result, in this perspective artists have an ambivalent role, causing the displacement of workers and then being displaced by the middle class. However, the core of Zukin's (1982) work is not gentrification itself but the process of commodification of the arts and of the artistic milieu. Indeed, investors and developers take advantage of the capacity of artists in upgrading the urban space, making it more appealing, through their "artistic mode production". Hence, art and culture become economic goods that are evaluated on the basis of their value in attracting investors, tourists and other cultural industries in order to favour capital accumulation. Finally, this process of commodification of the arts results in a consequent loss of authenticity of the artistic milieu.

Ley (1996; as cited by Cameron and Coaffee, 2005), who was among the main supporters of consumption-led explanations and of the role of artists as pioneer in the process of gentrification, reached the same conclusion of Zukin (1982) in regards to commodification of the arts and loss of authenticity of the milieu. However, in his perspective artists are 'heroic victims' stalked by a 'new middle class', high in both cultural and economic capital. According to him, artists, who instead are poor in economic capital but rich in a cultural sense, are attracted by authentic spaces characterized by ethnic diversity and social tolerance where they are free to experiment and interact with people from different backgrounds, in rejection to the conventional middle class. Moreover, they search for low-rent neighbourhoods, which also offer great spaces for their studios and have peculiar and distinctive architectural style. Therefore, artists represent the "colonizing arm" of this new middle class because of their capacity of aestheticizing and revitalizing urban neighbourhoods in decline, being finally displaced by new comers (Ley, 1996).

At last, the third wave of gentrification is associated with the prominent role played by the government in promoting a 'positive' model of gentrification aimed at regenerating dismissed urban areas. Thus, strategies based on the enhancing of arts and culture have been included in the agenda of policy-makers. In this context, Evans (2005) distinguishes three models of policies: culture-led regeneration, cultural regeneration and culture and regeneration. In the first case, culture is considered the catalyst in the process of regeneration and the plans

are aimed at rebranding the place and promoting a new image through the building of a cultural flagship complex, for instance superstar museums, or the hosting of large events such as the EXPO. The second model of cultural regeneration is based on the implementation of different cultural activities, building up a comprehensive cultural policy in which cultural quarters often play a relevant role. Finally, in the third case cultural is not initially integrated in the policy plan but it is implemented in a later stage, after the observation of cultural initiatives undertaken by private actors.

To sum up, the relationship between art and gentrification has changed over the years. In particular, as stressed by Cameron and Coaffee (2005), during the first wave the link between gentrification and art has been marked by the rise of artistic milieus thanks to the *production* of art; the second wave has been characterized by a shift from production to *private consumption* of art and a process of commodification; finally, the third wave involved the intervention of the government and the accomplishment of policies aimed at promoting *public consumption* of art through the building of flagship infrastructures and the organization of festivals and other art-related activities. Despite the initial distinction between production-led and consumption-led explanations, these are actually mutually dependent, representing two sequential moments rather than two different models (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005; Mathews, 2010).

Looking specifically at inner city centres, which usually display high concentration of cultural and creative activities, these are currently being re-colonized by these industries due to the decline of the era of Fordism (Hutton, 2009). Indeed, while the nineteenth-century industrial city was dominated by factories, the current city bares much more resemblances to the pre-industrial configuration of a city of art that was characterized by the presence of artisanal workshops. This is due to the fact that the contemporary cultural economy shows some similarities with the pre-industrial one, such as an emphasis on customized and craft products, a return to smaller studios and combined working and living spaces instead of huge factories, and so on. In studying the case of London, Hutton (2009) traced the historical patterns of the different production regimes and representative industries in the inner city of London, as shown in the table, which can be representative of a more global trend that considers the wide range of activities taking place in the city.

Table 2: Different production regimes and representative industries in the inner city of London.

I	II	III	
Pre-Fordist industries	**Fordist industries**	**Post-Fordist industries**	
		A Intermediate service industries	B Cultural/New Economy industries
(1) Skilled artisans, artists, apprentices	(1) Operatives: skilled, semi-skilled labour, managers and supervisors	(1) Segmented labour: executives, managers, professionals, technical, sales and clerical	(1) Specialized neo-artisanal labour, design professionals, scientific and IT staff, artists, sales, managers
(2) Workshops, shops, residential space	(2) Factories and plants	(2) Office buildings	(2) Studios, workshops, live works, work lives, offices
(3) Artists	(3) Food and beverage production	(3) Corporate control: head and regional offices	(3) New media/multimedia
Bespoke tailors	• bakeries	Intermediate banking and finance	Internet services and web-design
Bookbinders	• breweries	• merchant banking	Computer graphics and imaging
Jewellers	• food processors	• fund managers	Software design
Milliners	Garment production (long-run, mass market)	• stock exchange	Digital arts
Model builders	• factories and plants	• insurance	Graphic design and arts
Musical instrument makers	• sweatshops	Producer services	Digital publishing and printing
Perfume and scent makers	Printing and publishing	• legal firms	Film production and post production
Precision instrument makers	• mass-market integrated Fordist production	• accountants	Video game production
Silver plate engravers		• marketing	Music studios
		• management consultants	Galleries: curatorial services
		Property	Specialized food and beverages
		• development companies	• organic food
		• property manager	• specialty bakeries
		• estate agents	• specialty coffee roasting
		• research and market intelligence	• ethnic foods and beverages

Note: (1), labour; (2), infrastructure; (3), representative industries. Source: Hutton, p.616, 2009.

Moreover, the shift from production to consumption that many neighbourhoods have experienced has been accompanied by a retail revolution that has progressively transformed the retail landscape since 1960s (Zukin *et al.,* 2009; Thomas and Bromley, 2002). In particular, the advent of large chain stores, discounts, outlet shopping villages and finally the online shopping has put strong competitive pressure on traditional and mom-and-pop shops. Meanwhile, in big

metropolises and larger cities many neighbourhoods have been subjected to a process of 'boutiquing' (p. 47, Zukin *et al.,* 2009), with the arrival of 'cool' restaurants, cafes, shops and art galleries; inner city centres in smaller cities and little towns have experienced a progressive decline due to retail disinvestment, especially due to the building of shopping malls just out of the city. Therefore, the government has often intervened in order to stimulate commercial revitalization throughout a process of gentrification. As a consequence, in many cases gentrification has been received with great approval by politicians and media because of its revitalizing power (Zukin *et al.,* 2009).

Despite of the growing number of policies that try to boost urban renaissance through gentrification, the question on the existence of a 'positive' model of gentrification, which implies the creation of a more sustainable social mix and benefits for both existing residents and new comers, is still an open one. Scholars and policy-makers have largely debated whether gentrification generates positive or negative effects on the city. Atkinson (2004, p. 112) resumes these in the following table:

Table 3: Summery of neighbourhood impacts of gentrification.

Positive	Negative
Stabilization of declining areas	Community resentment and conflict
Increased property values Reduced vacancy rates	Loss of affordable housing Unsustainable speculative property price increases Homelessness
Increased local fiscal revenues	Greater draw on local spending through lobbying by middle-class groups
Encouragement and increased viability of further development	Commercial/industrial displacement
Reduction of suburban sprawl	Increased cost and changes to local services
Increased social mix	Loss of social diversity (from socially disparate to affluent ghettos)
Decreased crime	Increased crime
Rehabilitation of property both with and without state sponsorship	Under-occupancy and population loss to gentrified areas Displacement through rent/price increases Displacement and housing demand pressures on surrounding poor areas Secondary psychological costs of displacement

Source: Atkinson, p. 112, 2004.

In practice, however, it is difficult to evaluate the general impact of gentrification, discerning positive and negative effects and establishing which ones prevail on the others. Nevertheless, some researchers claim art can foster revitalization without causing negative gentrification and the consequent displacement of artists (Currid, 2007a; Grodach, 2010). A pivotal role in theorizing the contribution of artists to the local development is played by Markusen and Schrock (2006) who conceptualize the "artistic dividend" that is the additional economic contribution to local development. In fact, they argue that impact studies underestimate it because they base their economic analysis on industries data instead of occupational data, thus they measure only the impact of art organizations. According to them, artistic activities generate both current revenues and returns on past investment. The former are gained by local actors who supply materials and equipment, work in the production of art works and mediate in negotiations; and the latter refers to the human and economic capital deriving from previous investments from artists, art organizations, investors and the government. In this sense the artistic dividend can be considered as a public good. According to Evans (2005), a substantial limitation that affects both policy documents and scientific research is an overstatement of the economic dimension of culture-led regeneration. Indeed, as underlined by Bassett (1993, p. 1785; as cited by Evans, 2005):

"Cultural regeneration is more concerned with themes such as community self-development and self-expression. Economic regeneration is more concerned with growth and property development and finds expression in prestige projects and place-marketing. The latter does not necessarily contribute to the former".

Hence, it is fundamental to reconsider, both in terms of prospective plans and a posteriori assessment, the social and physical dimension of culture regeneration. In particular, especially with regards to flagship cultural buildings that, despite their widespread popularity and imitation, can raise issues of social exclusion and gentrification and their potential detachment from the local community would show its drawbacks in the long term.

Previous studies that have tried to assess the contribution of arts and culture to local development are mostly case studies, which, even though provide insights on local government strategies and their achievements, do not leave any room for possible generalization. Moreover, they usually focus on the cultural industry as a whole without tracing any differences among distinct art activities. In an empirical research, Grodach *et al.* (2014) try to overcome these limitations: they distinguish the impact of commercial art activities and fine arts and search for common patterns in the USA by analysing 100 metropolitan areas. The results suggest that fine arts, such as museums, art schools and theatres, are associated with revitalization of

neighbourhoods, while commercial arts, for instance music, film and design, are more likely to cause gentrification. Furthermore, differences in the level of change of neighbourhoods can be identified: fine arts determine a slow and gradual growth instead commercial arts cause rapid and drastic changes. In an empirical research focused on art galleries, Schueltz (2014) tried to establish if they are the cause of gentrification in Manhattan or there are other factors influencing it. In order to do that, he focused on exogenous and fixed amenities, thus natural and historical amenities, because he assumed that if galleries decide to set up their studio in a neighbourhood with a high level of exogenous amenities, gentrification could be a result of them and not due to the presence of art galleries. The quantitative analysis suggests that galleries tend to be located in close proximity to other star galleries and other amenities such as museums or parks, but there is little evidence that they represent the primary cause of gentrification. Regardless, Molotoch and Trekson (2009) stressed the fact that, while the arrival of artists is much acclaimed and appreciated, the one of art galleries is usually not so welcomed. Furthermore, Mathews (2010) claim to a differentiation of types of art galleries, for instance experimental, commercial and international. In fact, these can be usually related to different stages of gentrification: experimental galleries are more likely to go along with artists in the creation of an artistic milieu, while commercial and international galleries tend to show up after the shift from production to consumption of art.

In conclusion, the analysis of cycles of art galleries can provide useful insights on the different stages of gentrification; however, this has been little studied. Here, I respond to the call made by Mathews (2010) to further explore the impact of art galleries on the urban space and social composition, which I will analyse in the case of Pietrasanta, attempting to shed some light on the controversial process of gentrification. Moreover, in another paper Mathews (2008) claim also the need for a more nuanced understanding of this process. In particular, she pointed out the role of non-visible factors in the process of gentrification should be taken into consideration: for example, how the presence of artists in the past has influences on the current identity of the milieu, although they have been displaced. In fact, by studying the art district of Yorkville in Toronto, she demonstrated how the current art gallery district and its image have been built upon the history of art production characterizing the neighbourhood in the 1960s. Therefore, the present art scene of Yorkville is the result of a process of commodification of the art and the construction of a discourse around the original productive nature of the artistic milieu. The function of what Mathews defines "artistic memory" (p. 666, 2010) is often disregarded by scholars even though it plays a key role because art is never present in a fixed form but it evolves over time. In this research, I will also explore the realm of non-visible

factors in the process of gentrification and fill this gap addressed by Mathews (2008). My contribution hinges on the study of the art gallery district of Pietrasanta. The next section provides a historical overview of the case study at issue.

3. CASE STUDY: PIETRASANTA

3.1 Pietrasanta & the craftsmanship industry

Pietrasanta is a small medieval borough located in Versilia, in the north-west of Tuscany, in a wonderful location at the back of the Apuan Alps looking to the Tyrrhenian Sea. Its population amounts to around 25.000 inhabitants.

Figure 2: Location of Pietrasanta.

Source: Google Maps.

Despite its small size, it has a long and intense history. Founded in 1255 by the nobleman Guiscardo Pietrasanta, it built its fortune from the abundance of minerals native to the territory. Indeed, Pietrasanta is part of the Italian industrial district dedicated to the manufacturing of marble, along with eight other towns located in the province of Lucca and Massa Carrara. In 1513, three leading centres, Pisa, Genoa and Florence were disputing proprietorship of the town, but it was Florence who prevailed and Pietrasanta became part of its dominion on the basis of an arbitration led by Pope Leone X. During that period, the

excavation activity in the quarries located in Versilia provided marble for the building of statues, churches and palaces in the region and in the rest of the country. A pivotal moment in the history of Pietrasanta was the arrival of the famous Italian artist Michelangelo Buonarroti at the end of 1516. Indeed, Pope Leone X appointed Michelangelo to design the façade of the San Lorenzo church in Florence, to be realized with the marble extracted from the Seravezza quarry, next to Pietrasanta. However, the lack of a proper road to bring the extracted marble from the quarry to the sea, where it would have been shipped to Florence, slowed down the works and after a few years the initial project was finally abandoned, provoking strong discontent from Michelangelo. After this failure, the interest of the Florentines in the extraction of marble was subdued for the next few decades. It was only with Cosimo I de Medici, in 1561, that the activity again gained strong attention. He ordered the construction of the Palace of Seravezza, through which he could better control both the territory and the continuation of the "Road of Marble", left unfinished by Michelangelo. After a flourishing period, marked by the arrival of great artists working for the Medici's court, the marble economy passed through a crisis again during the domination of the Lorena family and the Napoleonic period.

In the 19th century, with the Restoration and the Industrial Revolution, the marble sector experienced new developments. Indeed, until that moment working techniques remained almost unchanged, while now new instruments were introduced, making excavation and manufacturing of marble easier and accelerating the production. In 1821, the former Napoleonic official Alexandre Henraux and Marco Borrini founded a company and re-opened a dismissed quarry. Next to the work of excavation, they setup a workshop for the artistic manufacturing of marble sculptures, one of the first ateliers in the area. Moreover, Borrini became one of the main promoters of the establishment of a school for the artistic manufacturing of marble, aimed at filling what was a gap on the area. As a result, in 1842, with the approval of the local government, the School of Fine Arts was established, which provided a technical education to instruct future artisans. From that moment, the number of marble studios grew exponentially. At that time, the production was characterized by many phases and each one was realized by a different artisan: one (*scandagliatore*) was appointed to select the right material for the artworks; another (*sbozzatore*) to rough-hew the block; another (*smodellatore*) to sculpt the essential lines; another (*pannista*) to sculpt the clothes; another (*accessorista*) to sculpt the accessories; another (*ornatista*) to sculpt the decorations; another (*visagista*) to define the details of the human figures; another (*lucidatore*) to smooth the final sculpture. The entire economy of Pietrasanta became based on the manufacturing of marble and other auxiliary activities, such as modelling, mold making and manufacturing clay sculptures and metals for

working instruments. The ateliers were spread out all over the city and the biggest factories were employing more than one hundred people. The market was based on the demand of sculptures, architectonical elements and furniture, mainly committed by the church; funerary sculptures and monuments, required by the growing middle class; public monuments; classical statues commissioned by museums and art galleries; and furniture for private houses. During these years, the business was characterized by a strong international appeal and marble artworks were exported all over the world: across the rest of Europe, especially France, and to North and South America. Moreover, between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, other artisanal activities were developing next to the marble industry in order to satisfy the religious demand of ornaments and the necessity to integrate more techniques on the final sculpture or monument. These craft activities included: artistic foundries, mosaics, fine art printing, inlay artwork, ironwork and ceramics. As a result, Pietrasanta became a self-sufficient system in which many different specializations were, and are still today, concentrated on the same area, allowing artists and entrepreneurs to easily find partnerships and collaborations in the field of art, architecture and decoration.

World War I interrupted of the works, which were restarted with some difficulties after the conflict; there was a high demand for war memorials and reconstruction of bombed buildings. The stock market crash in 1929 affected foreign demand, although this was compensated in part by the growing national demand from the Fascist regime, which considered marble as the most prestigious material. World War II imposed another interruption, after which the marble sector experienced huge changes due to the combination of different factors. First of all, the demand was scarce because of the association of marble with the architecture of the Fascist regime; second, the mechanization of the manufacturing determined the reorganization of the process, which now employed less artisans; third, the increase in labour costs; and finally, the decline of the classical canons in sculpture and the affirmation of new aesthetic standard in modern sculpture. Moreover, the School of Fine Arts also passed through a phase of renovation and the education was now more focused on theory than on the application of practical techniques. From the mid-1950s, the number of foreign sculptors coming into the country to produce locally and improve their skills increased significantly. In 1956, the British sculptor Henry Moore arrived in Pietrasanta, with unusual requests to the artisans of the Henraux Company, such as using travertine instead of marble, translating a 20 cm sketch into a 4 m sculpture and experimenting with new tools, unknown to the local artisans. The marble companies and the artisans were challenged by the new requests coming from the market and the new generation of artists, therefore those who were not able to

adapt did not survive. In 1957, the Biennale of Carrara was established in order to relaunch and rejuvenate the marble and promote new artistic expressions in sculpture. Furthermore, in the early 1960s, Erminio Cidonio, CEO at Henraux, organized workshops and initiatives inviting artists from all over the world, such as Joan Mirò, Andrè Bloc, and Isamu Noguchi, to work with the marble in Pietrasanta. These collaborations, at Henraux as well as in other ateliers, revisited totally the relationship between artisans and artists. Until that moment, artists had completely trusted the artisan and delegated to him the realization of the entire sculpture; instead, now artists were present during all the phases of manufacturing, collaborating alongside artisans and challenging them with the use of unusual materials and the realization of abstract sculptures of huge dimensions. During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, Pietrasanta was animated by the arrival of artists and architects from all over the world who created an exciting cultural buzz. As a result, the presence of foreign recognized artists also attracted many Italians, such as Arnaldo and Giò Pomodoro, Pietro Consagra, Andrea and Pietro Cascella. In addition to the revival of marble, bronze also acquired new value in the sculpture field. One of the leading foundries in Pietrasanta, Tommasi & Vignali, hosted and realized artwork for consecrated artists, such as Jacques Lipchitz, Charles Umlauf, Fiore De Henriquez and Laura Ziegler. The growing application of bronze in sculpture resulted in the opening of new foundries. Indeed, many artists favoured bronze to marble because of the chance of producing more copies of the same sculpture. As far as the mosaic and the ceramic industries are concerned, the techniques remained almost unchanged, in contrast with the marble and the bronze sectors; the demand continued to be sustained by their auxiliary role to the other sculpture businesses. Indeed, it became a common practice to combine more techniques on the same sculpture.

In the new millennium, the entire sector is marked by a new crisis due to the unstable economic situation worldwide and the competition with emerging countries, for instance China. Commissions fell in all specializations, except in the bronze industry, and many enterprises were forced to close. Furthermore, the increasing mechanization requires the employment of a smaller number of artisans and the bureaucratic difficulties in ensuring a practical education make the access to the profession unattractive for many young students, unless it is the family business. Associations, such as CAMP (*Consorzio Prodotti Artistici del Marmo e dell'Artigianato Tipico di Pietrasanta*) and *Artigianart*, try to promote the craftsmanship sector and disseminate the know-how handed down from generation to generation. With the same spirit, some studios setup a cultural foundations, for instance in 2003 Studio Sem opened the MuSA Museum (Museo Virtuale della Scultura e Architettura) in order to promote the sculpture medium; others, such as Angeli and Massimo Pellegrinetti, periodically open their door and organize

sculpture exhibitions. The past two decades have also been characterized by a process of relocation of the artisanal ateliers. Indeed, in the past these were localized in the city centre but they have relocated to the periphery of the city due to many factors, such as new sanitary and security norms, necessity of bigger spaces for bigger machinery, intolerable noises, increasing real estate prices and the presence of tourists.

Despite the crisis, Pietrasanta continues to be one of the most important centres worldwide for the production of sculptures. In fact, there is no other place in the world combining geographical proximity to the natural source of materials, a self-sufficient system with different specializations and excellence and quality of the manpower. Artists in particular are aware of this. Pietrasanta has attracted both consecrated contemporary artists, such as Fernando Botero, Kan Yasuda and Igor Mitoraj, who have produced their sculptures here, as well as young students willing to learn and search for artistic inspiration. While some artists have just passed by, some others came and never left because they fell in love with Pietrasanta and its unique atmosphere.

3.2 Arts and Local Culture: Promotion & Exhibition

In the mid-1970s, the centre of the inner city of Pietrasanta started to become increasingly animated. A group of sculptors and artisans installed in the main square, *Piazza Duomo*, some of their artworks, not only with the aim of exhibiting their sculptures, but also telling a story, the process of its creation. Indeed, the following editions entitled *"Scultori ed artigiani in un centro storico"* (Sculptors and artisans in a historic centre) were supported by the municipality and, apart from the exhibition of the artworks, included sections describing the technical aspects of the manufacturing and meetings to discuss different aspects, issues and the future of artistic craftsmanship. Indeed, as reported in a communication of the municipality, the exposition was motivated by the will of relaunching the marble industry, disseminating a better comprehension of contemporary sculpture, honouring the work of the artisans and recognizing Pietrasanta as an international pole of the sculpture industry.

In the following years, Jette Muhlendorph, a Danish journalist, photographer and art critic who came to Versilia with his husband that was a sculptor, played a pivotal role in promoting local culture. She was astonished by the work of local artisans and the excellence of the craftsmanship industry. Consequently, Jette decided to document artisans' works and organized an exhibition in 1982 in the complex annex to San Agostino church, (*Il Passato e la Presenza: per un Museo dei Bozzetti, documentazione dell'attività artistica e artigiana in Versilia).* The exhibition included photos, catalogues,

articles, drawings, projects and videos testifying the craftsmanship tradition in Versilia. The final purpose, apart from getting the public to know the impressive work of the artisans and the international artists coming in loco to produce their artworks, was to promote the establishment of a permanent collection of sculpture maquettes. The project was well received by the government and in 1984 the *Museo dei Bozzetti* (Maquettes' Museum) came to birth. The collection included maquettes, models, drawings and sculptures of national and international artists that have come to Pietrasanta to make their creative ideas, their dreams come true. The collection allows exploring the panorama of sculptures and displays the main artistic tendencies characterizing the 20th century and also contemporary sculpture. Indeed, the collection is permanently developing and growing up with new donations coming from contemporary artists. Moreover, the museum space, developed on the basis of the forward-looking idea of Jette Muhlendorph, was enlarged in 2000 in order to host the growing collection. First, with a second exhibition space that counts different sections: the Contemporary section, the Sculptors Sketch Gallery, the "Donna Scultura" section, the First 20th Century room and the Teaching Atelier; second, with an open-air extension called "Park of Contemporary Sculpture", consisting of a route of monumental contemporary sculptures donated by artists to the City Council and located in different public spaces, such as squares, roads and gardens. Finally, in 2003 the Maquettes' Museum was entitled to Pierluigi Gherardi, public functionary who dedicated himself to the realization of the museum.

3.3 The inner city as cultural hub

From the historical overview, it can be easily deduced that the hub of cultural activities over the centuries has always been the inner city. However, the territory of Pietrasanta has expanded over the years. Consequently, from a jurisdictional perspective, today the Municipality of Pietrasanta includes different suburbs besides the historical city centre, namely Strettoia, Capriglia, Capezzano a Monte, Valdicastello Carducci and Marina di Pietrasanta. The following picture shows the administrative boundaries:

Figure 3: Administrative boundaries of Pietrasanta.

Note: (A) Strettoia, (B) Valdicastello, (C) Capriglia, (D) Capezzano. Source: www.geoplan.it

This study focuses in particular on the inner city, considering that the majority of cultural industries are concentrated in this part of the city. The following map displays the historic centre of Pietrasanta (Source: www.comunedipietrasanta.com):

Figure 4: Inner city of Pietrasanta.
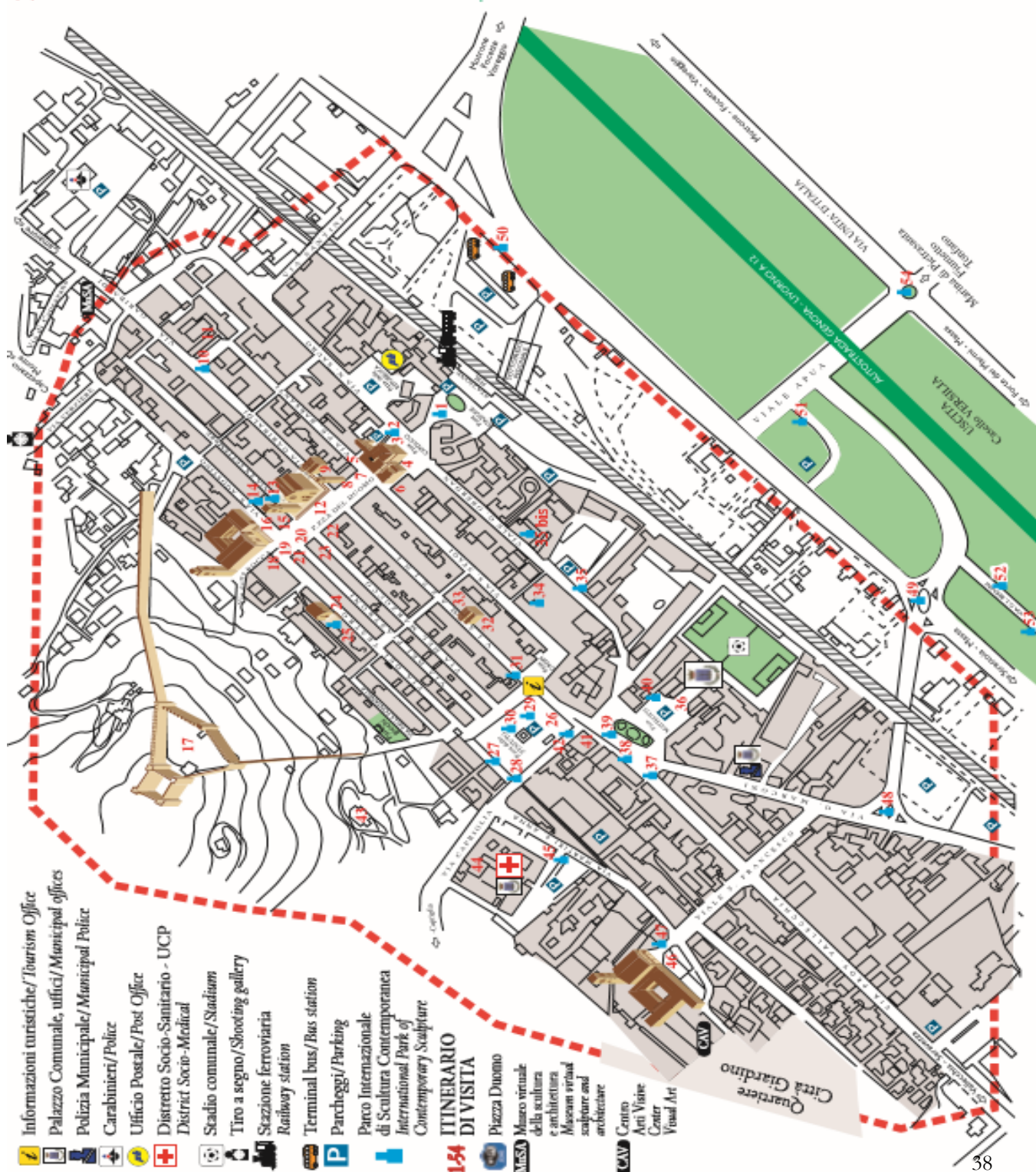
LEGENDA

1 — Myoma – Chiave del sogno, 2004, Kan Yasuda
2 Propulsione, 2003, Franco Miozzo
3 Arlecchino, 2011, Joseph Sheppard
4 Rocchetta Arroghina e Porta a Pisa
5 Il Cavalletto (omaggio agli artigiani), 2006, Romano Cosci
6, 7 Lapidi a ricordo delle frequentazioni di Michelangelo
8 Torre dell'Orologio
9 Battistero
10 Il pugilatore, 1992, Francesco Messina
11 Campanile dell'ex Monastero di S. Leone
12 Duomo di S. Martino
13 San Martino, 2003, Rinaldo Bigi
14 Il centauro, 1994, Igor Mitoraj
15 Palazzo Moroni e Museo Archeol. Versiliese "Bruno Antonucci"
16 Chiesa e Convento di S. Agostino, Centro Culturale, Biblioteca Comunale e Museo del Bozzetti
17 Rocca di Sala e Palazzo Guinigi
18,19,20 Colonna del Marzocco e Monumento a Leopoldo II
21 Fonte del Marzocco e della Libertà, Palazzo Pretorio, Teatro Comunale
22 Palazzo Panichi Carli
23 Palazzo del Coniglio
24 Chiesa di S. Nicola di Sala
25 Donna, 1995, Costantino Nivola
26 Piazza dello Statuto
27 San Giovanni, 1957/58, Rosario Murabito
28 Il cerchio del vento, 2003, Junkyu Muto
29 Il cavallino, 1970/80, Ferruccio Vezzani
30 Danzatore, 2003, Anna Cromy
31 Peace Frame, 2006, Nall
32 Chiesa di S. Antonio e San Biagio o della Misericordia
33 Casa natale di Padre Eugenio Barsanti
34 Serenata, 2005, Rinaldo Bigi
35 La campagna va al mercato, 1968, Marcello Tommasi
35 bis Amanti alati, 2012, Eugenio Riotto
36 Piazza Giacomo Matteotti e Palazzo Comunale
37 Il Guerriero, 1992, Fernando Botero
38 Memoria di Pietrasanta, 2001, Pietro Cascella
39 San Martino, 1997, Franco Miozzo
40 L'eredità, 2009, Stanley Bleifeld
41 Palazzo della Posta Vecchia
42 Sfinge e colomba, 2002, Alba Gonzales
43, 44 Villa Barsanti, Ex-Ospedale Lucchesi
45 Il Viandante, 2002, Michele Benedetto
46 Chiesa e convento di S. Francesco
47 S. Francesco, 2000, Harry Marinsky
48 Double epeé, 1999, Sophia Vari
49 Il giudizio del Minotauro, 1992, Franco Adami
50 Riflessione, 1993, Michele Benedetto
51 Monumento al soldato alleato, 2000, Marcello Tommasi
52 I tre pugni, 1974, Alberto Cortina
53 Senza titolo, 1972, Tadeusz Koper
54 L'oiseau, 2001, Jean Michel Folon

Informazioni turistiche/Tourism Office
Palazzo Comunale, uffici/Municipal offices
Polizia Municipale/Municipal Police
Carabinieri/Police
Ufficio Postale/Post Office
Distretto Socio-Sanitario – UCP District Socio-Medical
Stadio comunale/Stadium
Tiro a segno/Shooting gallery
Stazione ferroviaria Railway station
Terminal bus/Bus station
Parcheggi/Parking
Parco Internazionale di Scultura Contemporanea International Park of Contemporary Sculpture

1-54 ITINERARIO DI VISITA

Piazza Duomo

MVSA Museo virtuale della scultura e architettura Museum virtual sculpture and architecture

CAV Centro Arti Visive Center Visual Art

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Strategy and Research Design

In the theoretical framework, the nature of cultural district; its bedrock in both agglomeration economies and urban amenities theories; the possible paths of clustering followed by cultural and creative industries and specifically art galleries; and finally, its effect on the urban spaces and local community have been reviewed. This framework represents the starting point to analyse the case of Pietrasanta. More broadly, the aim of the research is *to validate the presence of a cultural district or cluster and to assess its impact on the urban realms.* Focusing on the specific case of Pietrasanta, the research sets out to answer the following **research question**:

> *To what extent does the concentration of art galleries in Pietrasanta give rise to a cultural district? If it does, how does the cultural district impact the economic, social and urban realms of the city?*

Therefore, the study looks at the features and the development of this potential cultural district and what are the effects on the urban space generated by the presence of art galleries. Moreover, in order to define the origins of the district the research will investigate the locational factors that have influenced art galleries in the choice of Pietrasanta.

A far as the research strategy is concerned, a distinction can be traced between quantitative and qualitative research. The former usually implies a deductive approach, consisting of testing hypotheses, and is characterized by an emphasis on quantification of the data collected. Instead, the latter is predominantly based on an inductive approach through which theoretical concepts emerge from the data and is apt to better understand social reality, thanks to its emphases on words rather than numbers (Brayman, 2012). However, this classification is indicative but not straightforward. Indeed, the association between qualitative strategy with inductive approach and quantitative strategy with deductive approach is not always valid. In this case, a qualitative research strategy has been adopted because its approach suits better with the scope of the research, allowing a detailed description of a phenomenon or a specific unit of analysis. Nevertheless, the research is characterized by a deductive orientation and the hypothesis derived from the theoretical framework drive the process of data gathering in order to be empirically tested. In fact, "[in qualitative research] the findings are fed back into the stock of theory and the research findings associated with a certain domain of enquiry"

(Brayman, p. 24, 2012). This implies that results can be fed back into different stocks of knowledge at the same time, for instance in this specific case factors related to both agglomeration economies and urban amenities might emerge from the analysis. As a result, especially in this final step, a deductive approach can also entail elements of inductiveness. Finally, the research strategy has been developed on the basis of an epistemological interpretivism, a theory of knowledge according to which the social world can be understood through an examination of the perception that its participants have of it (Brayman, 2012). Indeed, the point of view of the actors operating in Pietrasanta will be gathered and their behaviour will be examined considering that specific context.

With regards to the research design, a case study approach was chosen according to the exploratory nature of the research. This kind of studies implies a deep analysis of a single event, or a single organization or community in a given location (Brayman, 2012), as it is in the case of Pietrasanta. Indeed, the advantages of case studies are represented by the chance of elucidating unique features of a specific case and testing or generating hypothesis. On the other hand, findings are not often generalizable and it could be difficult to establish cause-and-effect relationships among the data collected (Rutteford, 2012). Therefore, the case study at issue is supposed to give new insights in relation to cultural district, although the final objective is not to generalize the results. In particular, its peculiarity is due to the peripheral nature of this location in comparison to circuits of art in major cities, allowing a reconsideration of small and medium centres in the dissemination of cultural knowledge. Finally, I will answer my research question by means of interviews and field observations. The methods applied and their practical implementations are explained in detail in the following sections.

4.2 Data Sample

The first phase of the sampling process consists of the identification of the population found to be interesting for the study. In this case, it is represented by the population involved in the cultural scene of Pietrasanta, which includes artists, art galleries, art organizations and institutions. However, it is extremely difficult to quantify these categories. In fact, the flow of artists working locally is in constant evolution, many of them come just for a few months and many others have their atelier set permanently. The situation is similar with regards to art galleries, it is extremely difficult to estimate how many there are, considering the high turnover of galleries that open and close during a relatively short period or operate only temporarily on the area, usually just for the summer season. According to the webpage *infoimprese.it*, an online

register developed on the initiative of all Italian local Chambers of Commerce, the number of for-profit activities dedicated to retail selling of pieces of art amounts to twenty-nine. However, it needs to be specified here that the research is focused on art galleries intended as "a space committed to the exhibition, promotion and selling of art"[1]. In particular, the sample deals with art galleries operating on the primary market and run by art dealers who operate as intermediaries, matching demand and supply. Furthermore, in this market the role of art galleries goes beyond the matching of demand and supply because they operate as gatekeepers. As stressed by Caves (2000), gatekeepers operating in the cultural and creative industries are in charge of the scouting of artists as well as the advancement of their career. In so doing they reduce information and search costs for collectors who will rely on the judgement of gatekeepers. Indeed, the art market is characterized by an issue of information asymmetries due to the difficulty in evaluating works of art. However, art gallerists, as well as other experts in the field, should possess the symbolic capital necessary to esteem the value of an artwork (Velthuis, 2011). Art gallerists are not just order-takers and, once they have selected an artist, they invest time and economic resources to promote the career of his or her career, sharing the risk of this operation (Caves, 2000). Indeed, as argued by Caves "their relationship resembles a joint venture more than a principal–agent relationship" (2000, p. 39). In doing so, art gallerists are competing with artists who try to sell their work by themselves. However, the sample here does not include any artists' studio.

To the end of building my sample up, I have then consulted other online sources in order to narrow down the number of art galleries: the webpage of the Municipality, the *Pagine Gialle* register (an Italian telephone register that includes contacts of both businesses and privates), different websites of art galleries' associations and online databases. However, only the first two sources have provided me a wider list, which closely resembles the real situation. From this research, the resulting number of art galleries on the area amounts to fifteen. I have then contacted them by e-mail, to try to create a varied sample, balancing the number of recently-opened galleries and the oldest one to gain a more complete overview. This sampling technique is defined *purposive* because participants are not sampled randomly but in a strategic way in order to ensure heterogeneity in the sample (Brayman, 2012). Nevertheless, after the first responses, thanks to which I have adjusted the list as it was not updated, the respondents have provided me with new contacts. Therefore, in this second step of the sampling process a *snowball* technique was applied. Indeed, a snowball sampling occurs when some participants provide contacts and useful information on other people potentially relevant to the research. As

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[1] Definition retrieved from http://www.angamc.com/convenzioni#; Art 1. Statuto Sociale Associazione Nazionale Gallerie d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea.

noticed by Bryman (2012), a snowball sampling is frequently preceded by another technique, such as a purposive sampling. Moreover, thanks to the suggestion obtained, I have also contacted some artists currently living and working in Pietrasanta, where they have set their own atelier. Finally, again due to the snowball effect, I have reached one representative of the office of the Municipality in charge of the local cultural policy and agenda (Assessorato alla Cultura). The fact that other people operating in the field had already agreed in participating to the research and they were recommending me to their colleagues demonstrates how credibility and reputation are key factors in the cultural sector, which can provide a greater access to the network. A whole overview of the interviews is included in Appendix A. The following table details the participants to the study that have been interviewed.

Table 4: List of interviewees.

#	Art Galleries	Name
1	Accesso Galleria	Brad Brubaker
2	Galleria Susanna Orlando	Susanna Orlando
3	PH Neutro Galleria	Sara Delussu
4	Gelstat Gallery	Claudio Francesconi
5	Galleria Ponzetta	Francesco Ponzetta
6	Galleria Flora Bigai Arte Contemporanea	Flora Bigai
7	Galleria Marco Rossi Arte Contemporanea	Cristina Ghisolfi
8	FienilArte Social Art Gallery	Augusto Palermo
9	Galleria Barbara Paci	Barbara Paci
	Artists	
10	Armen Agop	
11	Veronica Fonzo	
12	Antonio Trotta	
13	Elisa Giannini (Teresa Cinque)	
	Representative of the Municipality	
14	Valentina Fogher	

Source: Own Elaboration.

4.3 Data Collection

Data has been mainly collected by means of semi-structured interviews with key representatives of the art community. The qualitative interview technique has been considered as the most suitable method because of its illustrative nature, allowing the gathering of detailed information. In fact, the objectives of the thesis are multi-fold: they go beyond the systematic assessment of locational factors, including the identification of cause-effect relations and social dynamics. In particular, the interviews were semi-structured that is based on an interview guide of questions related to the main theme. Therefore, this structure is flexible enough and permits

to focus on a particular topic but it also leaves room for the interviewees to analyse in depth some aspects they value as particularly relevant. Indeed, considering that this study is aimed at gathering the subjective point of view of the interviewees, open-ended questions allow them to reflect and give a testimony of their experience in Pietrasanta and possibly provide new input to the research. Any quantitative measures would not be able to express the essence and atmosphere of this place or resume the social interactions happening among the community. As mentioned in the literature review, Currid (2007b), along with many other scholars, has stressed that the economy of cultural and creative industries relies heavily on social mechanisms; indeed, galleries openings, parties and meetings in informal settings are not just fun but also the most important scenario of economic agreements. Therefore, in order to understand how these dynamics happened to be in Pietrasanta, the discursive nature of interviews was considered the most appropriate.

Moreover, the data gathered through the interviews will be integrated by participant observations made during one-week permanence on site (from 18th to 25th of March 2016). In this period, I had the chance to take part in two main social events: the inauguration of an exhibition organized by the municipality ("Rinaldo Bigi: L'Incanto e il Peso dei Giorni") and the opening of the new space of an existing gallery. As a result, I could observe behaviours, listen to and participate in conversation with both people involved in the field and citizens of Pietrasanta. In order to register information during or after informal conversations with people on site, I used to take scratch notes, writing down in my notebooks brief sentences, quotes and key words, which I have reviewed a posteriori. These informal conversations were particularly useful framing an idea of the impact that the concentration of art galleries has on the urban settings and its evolution over time, plus an evaluation of it by the local community, especially people not directly involved in the field but living in Pietrasanta. As a result, I have tried to also gather the perception that external actors had of the phenomena and implement it with the internal point of view of art gallerists. Finally, I have also visited a couple of marble studios where I have spoken with artisans and discovered more about the economy of Pietrasanta and its social context.

As regards the interviews, they took place between March and April 2016. They last around 35 minutes on average, were conducted in Italian and English and were digitally recorded. They were mostly conducted face-to-face, though two of them were conducted on the phone due to the time constraints of the interviewees. All interviews started with an introduction to the research, a confidentiality reaffirmation and a description of the interviewee, including both general (name, age, gender, etc.) and specific information (job, number of years

active in Pietrasanta, etc.). As mentioned, the interviews were carried out on the basis of an interview guide, displayed on the next page. This was developed on the basis of the theoretical framework and was focused on different topics that were introduced through open-ended questions but directed to gather specific aspects and information related to that. In fact, I have noticed that introducing more general topics was a good strategy to get a broader amount of meaningful information. In particular, five blocks of questions were developed according to the topics. First of all, in order to identify the origins of the district, respondents were asked to identify the locational factors that have influenced them in the choice of Pietrasanta. As a result, on the basis of the main streams of literature concerning theory of industrial district and cluster, three categories of locational factors were identified; these related to agglomeration economies, urban amenities or the social dimension of the cluster. Secondly, on the basis of the reviewed contribution on cultural districts by Italian scholars, in particular the *high cultural cluster* introduced by Lazzeretti (2003, 2008) and the characteristics presented in the contributions by Santagata (2004, 2006), Sacco and Blessi (2006) and Sacco and Pedrini (2003), questions related to the relevance and influence of the local and idiosyncratic culture have been included in order to grasp its impact. Moreover, a question on the role of the Municipality was included in order to establish whether the district is the result of a bottom-up or top-down approach. Finally, the respondents were asked to reflect on the positive or negative impact that the concentration of galleries had on the urban space and the local community. However, a different outline was used for the representative of the Municipality. Indeed, in this case the focus was on the initiatives undertaken in the past and on future projects and perspectives.

Table 5: Outline Interviews.

	Art Galleries & Artists
	When did you set your business up in Pietrasanta? Why did you choose Pietrasanta? Which aspect of this location do you value the most? Which kind of collectors visits Pietrasanta, and your gallery? Which kind of artists (or art galleries) do you collaborate with? Do they operate locally?
Factors related to AGGLOMERATION ECONOMIES	- Proximity to competitors/partners (Marshall, 1920; Becattini, 1991, 2002; Porter, 2000) - Proximity to suppliers (Marshall, 1920; Becattini, 1991, 2002; Porter, 2000) - Proximity to costumers (Schueltz and Green, 2014) - Proximity to other industries in the regions, i.e. tourism

	industry (Lorenzen and Frederiksen, 2008)
Factors related to URBAN AMENITIES	- Quality of life - Building stock for cultural venues - Museums and cultural activities - Presence of talented, open-minded people (Source: Florida, 2002).
What kind of relationship do you have with your peers? Do you usually collaborate? Have you ever collaborated with the Municipality?	
SOCIAL DIMENSION: INTERNAL & EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE DISTRICT	- Kind and level of interactions (repeated, casual, etc.) - Knowledge spillovers: access to knowledge and information - Collaboration and/or competition - Trust, i.e. solving common problem - Imitation of competitors - Relevance attributed to the network (Source: Storper and Venables, 2004; Bathelt and Turi, 2013).
Is there a relevant local culture in your opinion? Do you think it is promoted enough by local institutions? Is there openness to experimentation and innovation?	
CULTURAL DIMENSION OF THE DISTRICT	- Relevance of heritage and idiosyncratic culture (Cultural, artistic and environmental resources) - Cross-fertilization and experimentation in cultural production - Role of institutions and private in promoting and supporting local culture and art production (Source: Lazzeretti, 2003, 2008; Sacco and Blessi, 2006; Sacco and Pedrini, 2003; Santagata, 2004, 2006).
Do you think the cultural scene of Pietrasanta has improved positively in recent years? Do you see any drawbacks? What are your expectations for the future?	
GENTRIFICATION OR ARTS-LED REGENARATION?	- Regeneration of a declining area vs. displacement of local private and business - Increased fiscal revenue vs. increased prices - Increased social mix vs. loss of social diversity - Loss of authenticity of the place

	- Community: conflict or collaboration? - Drawbacks and possible improvement for the future (Source: Atkinson, 2004).
	Art Galleries & Artists
When did you set your business up in Pietrasanta? Why did you choose Pietrasanta? Which aspect of this location do you value the most? Which kind of collectors visits Pietrasanta, and your gallery? Which kind of artists (or art galleries) do you collaborate with? Do they operate locally?	
Factors related to AGGLOMERATION ECONOMIES	- Proximity to competitors/partners (Marshall, 1920; Becattini, 1991, 2002; Porter, 2000) - Proximity to suppliers (Marshall, 1920; Becattini, 1991, 2002; Porter, 2000) - Proximity to costumers (Schueltz and Green, 2014) - Proximity to other industries in the regions, i.e. tourism industry (Lorenzen and Frederiksen, 2008)
Factors related to URBAN AMENITIES	- Quality of life - Building stock for cultural venues - Museums and cultural activities - Presence of talented, open-minded people (Source: Florida, 2002).
What kind of relationship do you have with your peers? Do you usually collaborate? Have you ever collaborated with the Municipality?	
SOCIAL DIMENSION: INTERNAL & EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE DISTRICT	- Kind and level of interactions (repeated, casual, etc.) - Knowledge spillovers: access to knowledge and information - Collaboration and/or competition - Trust, i.e. solving common problem - Imitation of competitors - Relevance attributed to the network (Source: Storper and Venables, 2004; Bathelt and Turi, 2013).
Is there a relevant local culture in your opinion? Do you think it is promoted enough by local institutions? Is there openness to experimentation and innovation?	
CULTURAL DIMENSION OF THE DISTRICT	- Relevance of heritage and idiosyncratic culture (Cultural, artistic and environmental resources) - Cross-fertilization and experimentation in cultural production - Role of institutions and private in promoting and

	supporting local culture and art production (Source: Lazzaretti, 2003, 2008; Sacco and Blessi, 2006; Sacco and Pedrini, 2003; Santagata, 2004, 2006).
Do you think the cultural scene of Pietrasanta has improved positively in recent years? Do you see any drawbacks? What are your expectations for the future?	
GENTRIFICATION OR ARTS-LED REGENARATION?	- Regeneration of a declining area vs. displacement of local private and business - Increased fiscal revenue vs. increased prices - Increased social mix vs. loss of social diversity - Loss of authenticity of the place - Community: conflict or collaboration? - Drawbacks and possible improvement for the future (Source: Atkinson, 2004).

	Policy-maker
When has the cultural office of the Municipality (Assessorato alla Cultura) started actively operating on the territory? Which public spaces in the city are intended for cultural activities? How do you promote local culture and artists? Can you tell me about the current cultural project organized by the Municipality? And what about past initiatives? Have you ever collaborated with private local enterprises i.e. art galleries? Have you ever collaborated with other institutions on a regional, national or international scale to promote local culture? What do you think about the future of Pietrasanta?	
CULTURAL POLICY	- Museum and other institutions - Past Projects with artist, art galleries and others - Current and future initiatives - Positioning in the regional, national and international art and tourism circuit

4.4 Data Analysis

In order to proceed to the analysis of the qualitative data collected through the interviews, which were digitally recorded, these were transcribed using a free online software (otranscribe.com). Interviews were transcribed in the original language, Italian or English, while only quotations reported in the analysis were translated to English. In fact, the use of direct quotations to support conclusions helps to make the argument feel more real to the reader (Schulz, 2012). The interviews were not transcribed verbatim, indeed utterings and redundant words were cut off.

Following up with the analysis, the transcripts were analysed through Atlas.ti, a qualitative software tool useful to support the phase of organization and coding of qualitative data. The coding process is the most crucial moment in qualitative analysis and it deals with the review of the data collected and the identification of potentially significant information from a theoretical point of view (Bryman, 2012). The coding process was developed in three steps: the first step consisted of an *open coding*, during which I broke down the interviews, identified relevant sentences and paragraphs, and attribute to them a code; after this, I proceeded with a *selective coding*, during which I reviewed the large number of codes and searched for relationships among them in order to reduce them to a manageable number; finally, through a process of conceptualization, I grouped them in categories according to relevant themes (Bryman, 2012). In particular, I applied a combination of inductive and deductive approaches. As a result, while some codes were derived from the theoretical framework, others, such as "city image" and "seasonality of activities", were introduced simultaneously during the coding. Indeed, a grounded theory approach implies that concepts should emerge from the data. Moreover, as soon as I introduced new codes, I went back to the previous interviews in order to compare them and adjust the codes. In fact, a constant comparison of the data facilitates the emergence of categories and themes (Shultz, 2012).

Once I coded the interviews, I built up my discourse on the basis of the main themes that emerged, wrote down the key findings and compared them with the theory presented in the theoretical framework in order to derive my final conclusions.

4.5 Limitations

Qualitative research in general presents some limitations. First of all, it is extremely subjective because it relies too much on the point of view of the person interviewed, which is often unsystematic (Bryman, 2012). However, as in this case, only people actively involved in a community can grasp its essence and provide an overview on it. Therefore, it is valuable to collect their opinions. A second limitation is due to the fact that findings depend on the interpretation given by the researcher and can be influenced by his/her characteristics, such as age, gender, personality, education and so on. Third, the results of qualitative researches are usually restricted and highly correlated with the case at issue, therefore they cannot be generalized to other cases. Furthermore, when the sampling is not random, it is not possible to generalise about the entire population, as in this case (Bryman, 2012). Nevertheless, the aim of this research is not to generalise the results and to help that, a data triangulation procedure has been employed, which Creswell and Miller (2000) argue increases the validity of the study. This technique consists of applying different data sources, theories and methods and searching for convergence among them. In this research, triangulation was applied both for data sources, collecting the point of view of different actors (art gallerists, artists and representative of the Municipality), and different methods, implementing the interviews with field observations and secondary data. Finally, there is usually a lack of transparency in relation to the process carried out by the researcher from the sampling to the interpretation of the final results (Bryman, 2012).

5. RESULTS

The following sections deal with the analysis of the qualitative data collected through interviews and field observations. Here, the findings are related back to the theoretical framework in order to deduct the conclusions. The analysis is structured around two main objectives: the legitimation of the cultural district and the assessment of its impact on the economic, physical and social spheres of the city. As a result of the coding process, five main families have emerged that correspond to just as many themes: agglomeration economies, urban amenities, social and cultural dimension of the cluster and gentrification or urban regeneration. The whole coding list can be found in the Appendix B.

The first part of the discussion addresses the following question:

To what extent does the concentration of art galleries in Pietrasanta give rise to a cultural district?

Therefore, the core of the analysis is the definition of the cultural district, which can be resumed by the following equation:

High Cultural Cluster = set of cultural, artistic and environmental sources (HC Place) + set of private and public actors

This is based on the conceptualization of the cultural district proposed by Lazzeretti (2003, 2008). Her model has been selected as bedrock for the analysis because of its dynamic perspective. Indeed, the emphasis on cultural districtualization rather than on a static theorization of the cultural district appears more suitable to the long and mutable relationship of Pietrasanta with the arts and culture. According to Lazzeretti (2008), the High Cultural Cluster is usually represented by an art city composed of different sub-clusters, which originate from a set of cultural, artistic and environmental resources (CAEH). From this perspective, Pietrasanta can be seen as the city of art and the art gallery district as one of its sub-clusters, along with the sculpture industry. Finally, the second part of the chapter addresses the question:

To what extent does the cultural district impact the economic, social and urban realms of the city?

The analysis is structured into three steps. The first deals with the identification of the CAEH set of resources that characterises Pietrasanta, in order to assess if it represents a High Cultural Place. Subsequently, to evaluate the degree of cultural districtualization and determine whether the sub-cluster of art galleries derives from the local culture, the correlation between these cultural elements and the

locational factors influencing the art gallerists will be tested, comparing systematically these two set of information. Moreover, the identification of the locational factors will be useful to check the connection between the presence of artists and the arrival of galleries and test the "colonizing arm" hypothesis proposed by Ley (1996) or, to put it in Zukin's words, the "artistic mode of production". Finally, the second part of the analysis addresses the impact of the art galleries on the urban space and on the city's economy and social dimension. The table outlines the main steps of the analysis.

Table 6: Step of the Analysis.

Steps of the analysis	Action
Assessment of High Cultural Place	Identification and cataloguing of cultural, artistic and environmental sources
Legitimation of the cultural district	Identification of locational factors influencing the actors Evaluation of the correlation between locational factors and cultural elements
Assessment of the impact generated by the cultural district	Evaluation of positive and negative effects generated by the cultural district

Source: Own Elaboration.

5.1 The cultural district

5.1.1 Pietrasanta as a High Cultural Place

"In my opinion, the importance of Pietrasanta is not just the material, the marble, but its spirit, the soul of the place. There is this heritage but it is not possible to describe it. It's not just a street, or a mountain, or a specific artisanal studio, but it's the soul of the place that makes the difference".

According to Armen Agop, an Egyptian artist who arrived in Italy after winning the Prix de Rome and was soon conquered by Pietrasanta and its atmosphere, finally moving in permanently in 2000, there is something special there that shapes the soul of the place that cannot be defined. However, the following section will attempt to provide a basic identification of the discerning elements of the location uncovering not only the heritage of Pietrasanta, but also the character. As already mentioned, Lazzeretti (2003) provides a classification of the set of material and immaterial resources composing the heritage of a specific place. She distinguishes three main components that can be synthetized by the acronym CANH (cultural, artistic and environmental heritage). Cultural resources are represented by local traditions, cultural events, a particular atmosphere, universities and others institutions from that specific place; artistic components concern monuments, museums and archaeological sites; finally, environmental ones are related to the urban and natural landscape, including urban morphology, flora and fauna. Santagata (2006) defines the resulting totality of these elements as *idiosyncratic culture*. The following paragraphs describe the different factors characterizing Pietrasanta that have emerged from the interviews and they will then be catalogued according to Lazzeretti's classification.

By all accounts, it is undoubted that the fortune of Pietrasanta hinges on the longstanding craftsmanship tradition related to sculpture. Most of the interviewees cited Michelangelo Buonarroti, emblem of the Italian art history, and the fact that he went to Pietrasanta in 1255 in order to work on his projects. This period represents a cultural crossroads, a turning point in the history of Pietrasanta, the first impetus to the local economy. It needs to be noted here that the proximity to the quarries is a key environmental factor, the importance of which should not be underestimated. Consequently, as previously explained in the introduction to the case study, over the centuries the entire economy of the town was built around the sculpture industry, giving rise to a self-sufficient system. More recently, from the 19th century, as mentioned by Valentina Fogher, representative of the Municipality, a further stimulus was provided by the School of Fine Arts, whose educational programme fomented more systematically the craft traditions and the local

knowledge. A second cultural crossover in the history of Pietrasanta is represented by the arrival of Henry Moore in 1956 in order to realize his art project entitled "Reclining Figure". Indeed, this moment marked the beginning of a new era for the local sculpture industry, with increased opening to the modern artistic language in sculpture. Pietrasanta particularly flourished in the 1970s and 1980s and the affluence of artists from all over the world contributed to foster a thriving atmosphere. Its international dimension was, and still is today, highly captivating for artists and art-related professionals as well as the local community. Armen Agop, artist, acknowledges that:

"The treasure of Pietrasanta is in the people that converge here. I had friends from all over the world, from Japan, to Scandinavia; so, there is a cultural melting pot that enriches the soul of this place. The fact that it is so cosmopolitan makes it really different from any other typical little Italian town".

In addition to this, Brad Brubaker, art gallerist at Accesso Galleria, notices:

"If you are here in the summer, the number of shows you can go to and the quality of art you can see is amazing. It could literally take you hours to go around the town because there is so much to see. And then you go to have dinner and you see the artists at dinner, and you see collectors at dinner, and you see curators at dinner...You know, it is just filled. For instance, this past November I was sitting at one of the bars in the piazza and it was myself and another gallerist, and two tables from us there were a couple of artists, and at another table a curator, at another one an artisan...And if you think about all this people sitting in these little bar in November, everyone is connected to art. It's amazing".

As explained by Brad Brubaker, today Pietrasanta benefit from the affluence of both artists and art professionals, for instance curators and art gallerists. Their presence contributes to create an exceptional atmosphere that favours the social interaction among these actors, thanks also to the small dimension of the town. The presence of these people coupled with the art exhibitions organized by the galleries nourishes the cultural dimension of Pietrasanta. In addition there are many other cultural public initiatives, as noticed by Valentina Fogher, representative of the Municipality, for instance: the Versiliana festival, which includes shows of music, dance, theatre and poetry scheduled from June to August; "Pietrasanta in concerto", an international festival of

classical music; and national prizes to the arts and culture, such as the "Giosuè Carducci" prize for poetry and the "Barsanti Matteucci" prize.

Art is tangible everywhere in Pietrasanta. The results of the local tradition and of the link between the city and the arts are visible to everybody. The sculptures donated by artists who have produced locally have given rise to the "Park of Contemporary Sculpture", an art route through the city. Moreover, periodically the Municipality organizes sculpture exhibitions in the spaces of the Cultural Centre "Luigi Russo", including San Agostino Church, the cloister, the park, the dock of Marina di Pietrasanta and, in the case of monumental sculptures, the main square, Piazza Duomo. Finally, since its opening in 1984 the Maquettes' Museum has represented a reference point in the dissemination of the history of the local artisanal tradition, dealing with an exploration of the panorama of sculptures and the main artistic tendencies characterizing the 20th century and also contemporary sculpture. All these artistic elements testify the artistic heritage of Pietrasanta and contribute to foster its current cultural dimension.

The respondents consider the natural and urban landscapes to be two other distinctive traits of Pietrasanta. In regards to nature, Elisa Giannini, a contemporary artist born and raised in Pietrasanta, said:

"Geographically speaking, this land has something to express, it is actually particularly interesting in terms of nature and power. It's a soft and kind power because it's not dangerous and impetuous. It gets under your skin, seeping into your pores, and it influences you somehow. […] Here, nature is particularly gentle with the human kind, it is really welcoming".

Describing the Tuscan landscape, Elisa Giannini refers to its liveability due to its gentle power; its attractiveness transmits good feelings to her. The landscape of Pietrasanta is somewhat unusual in that it is surrounded by both the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Apuan Alps. The natural landscape is as beautiful as the urban and architectural one. Indeed, Pietrasanta has the charm of the typical old Italian medieval borough, with its characteristic red brick architecture. Many interviewees referred to the astonishing square, Piazza Duomo, as a relevant space of the town in terms of both cultural venue and living place. Again, Elisa Giannini argues:

"Piazza Duomo is a magic place, it has a high appealing value. It is part of people's life. It still has the same role that it had in the past, being the pole of both social life and commercial activities. It is the meeting place, you don't even need your mobile phone, you just go there and you'll meet your friends. It is a community gathering space".

In conclusion, different elements that compose the heritage of Pietrasanta have emerged from the interviews. It is striking that many respondents have used the same expression that describes the cultural dimension of Pietrasanta: "*Here, the art is in the air*". The reviewed elements are condensed and catalogued in the following table:

Table 7: Cultural, Artistic and Environmental Heritage.

CULTURAL ELEMENTS	ARTISTIC ELEMENTS	ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS
- Artistic Craftsmanship (sculpture industry: marble studios, foundries, etc.) - Appealing atmosphere due to the presence of artists and art-related professionals - School of Fine Arts - Cultural events and festivals	- Maquettes' Museum - Cultural Centre "Luigi Russo" - Park of Contemporary Sculpture - *Piazza Duomo* - *Typical Italian medieval architecture*[2]	NATURAL LANDSCAPE: - Marble quarries - Welcoming nature URBAN LANDSCAPE: - Piazza Duomo - Typical Italian medieval architecture

Source: Own Elaboration.

The following section explores whether art galleries have taken into consideration the cultural, artistic and environmental elements when deciding their location. This will help us understand whether the concentration of art galleries is a result of these elements and verify the presence of a cultural district. Therefore, the next few paragraphs will deal with the identification of the locational factors that have influenced art galleries choosing Pietrasanta.

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[2] According to the classification proposed by Lazzeretti (2003, 2008), architectural style and spaces characterizing the urban morphology compose the urban landscape, thus the environmental heritage of the city. However, in the case of Pietrasanta Piazza Duomo and the typical Italian medieval architecture represent as well elements of artistic relevance. Therefore, the two factors have been included in both categories.

5.1.2 Locational choices of art galleries in Pietrasanta

As explained in the introduction to the case study, the relationship between Pietrasanta and the arts has deep historical roots. However, the emergence of art galleries on the area is a relatively recent phenomenon. It was only in the early 1990s that the first galleries began to arrive in the inner city. At that time, Piazza Duomo, the main square and now hearth of the artistic and cultural activities, was just a large car park. Indeed, when Marco Rossi, owner of a group that today counts four art galleries in Italy, opened in Pietrasanta in 1994 there was just one other gallery in the city centre, "La Subbia". Those first years were not simple, the trial stage was slow. Flora Bigai, who opened her gallery in 1998, remembers:

"When I opened in Pietrasanta I was kind of a precursor because the situation was really different at that time. It was 1998, I inaugurated the gallery with an exhibition on Picasso that had the purpose of ending the century with the artist that in my opinion had better represented the 20th century. […] It was an extraordinary exhibition organized in collaboration with Marina Picasso […], but in the first year came in only 20 people to visit it. So, in the end I became doubtful, I thought <<Maybe it's not the right place>>. Fortunately, I was wrong."

Indeed, the new millennium was marked by a boom of openings that reshaped the entire city centre. The process is in constant evolution and nobody longer knows how many galleries there are exactly. It needs to be noted that almost all the interviewees already had some kind of link with Pietrasanta or Tuscany before opening their gallery. In fact, some of them were born in Pietrasanta (Claudio Francesconi and Barbara Paci); others where already living in Pietrasanta (Susanna Orlando, Francesco Ponzetta and Augusto Palermo) or in Tuscany (Brad Brubacker); finally, others regularly visited the near Forte Dei Marmi (Marco Rossi and Flora Bigai), a well-known summer destination. For most of them it was their first art gallery (7 out of 9), while a couple of them (Galleria Susanna Orlando and Galleria PH Neutro) moved from Forte Dei Marmi to Pietrasanta, in 2013 and 2012 respectively. In the next sections the locational factors, hard and soft ones, that have influenced art gallerists in their choices are analysed and the origins of the potential district are determined. The factors have been derived from the reviewed literature on industrial districts and the more recent creative class theory.

5.1.2.1 Agglomeration Economies

Hard Factors are usually related to business motivations and are aimed at benefiting from agglomeration economies, as mentioned by different scholars, from Marshall, to Becattini, to Porter. Therefore, this category includes factors such as the willingness to set in proximity to competitors, to costumers, to suppliers and to other industries.

Considering the long standing industry of marble, the tradition of sculpture manufacturing, and the presence of marble ateliers, foundries and other artisanal studios, the association of these businesses with art galleries could assumed to be automatic. One would expect that the art galleries have appeared in order to bridge a gap between local artistic production and the market, a process of vertical integration which link suppliers to intermediaries and finally to costumers. However, the most striking aspect is that these two circuits are almost totally independent from each other. Elisa Giannini, whose artistic pseudonym is Teresa Cinque, daughter of a marble artisan, is a contemporary artist born and raised in Pietrasanta. Consequently, she has assisted in the evolution of Pietrasanta and remembers:

"Initially, what maybe dazed us a little was that those art galleries that were appearing didn't have any kind of links with the local reality; they were usually branch shops of art galleries from Milan or other cities, or where part of important groups of galleries. So, they were like meteorites falling down from the space. They didn't fit at all with the local context."

Indeed, most of the art galleries in Pietrasanta do not focus on sculpture but they deal with contemporary art, from visual arts to photography. As a result, the proximity to suppliers does not seem to be a relevant motivation to establish an art gallery in Pietrasanta. Only a few of the interviewees mentioned some collaboration with artists producing locally, but they have not specifically set their business up with this purpose. Brad Brubaker, American art gallerist of Accesso Galleria, has explained this point:

"Well, most of our artists are foreign. […]. I mean, I do know some of the artists that work here, particularly with marble, I have been at their studio a few times, I've walked around there...But at this point I

am not particularly interested in working with any of the artists producing here because their work is already very exposed in Pietrasanta. Everybody has seen the stuff already. I don't know any of the galleries that works a lot with anyone artists. They work much more outside PS. It doesn't particularly interest me because the work has already been seen by people here. So, it's not that unique".

Therefore, art galleries are more interested in bringing something new and unseen to the artistic scene of Pietrasanta rather than collaborating with local artists. This is a logic aspect reflecting the role of art galleries. In fact, the proximity to artists' studio would represent an incentive for collectors to step over the gallerists, visit artists' ateliers and buy an artwork directly from them. However, while this is doable in the case of a young and upcoming artist, it would be more difficult in the case of a consecrated artist whose studios would be difficult to access. As a result, some of the galleries, for instance Galleria Barbara Paci, do represent some of the most famous artists in the top end of the art market, who have contributed to the fame of Pietrasanta, such as Fernando Botero, Igor Mitoraj and Kan Yasuda. Moreover, as noticed by Cristina Ghisolfi, public relation manager at Marco Rossi Arte Contemporanea, Pietrasanta has got a vocation for sculpture collectors who visit it expecting to see some sculptures exhibited. Consequently, in comparison to the other galleries of the group, in the one of Pietrasanta they have adapted their cultural offering to the city and dedicated more exhibitions to sculpture.

However, even though the proximity to the circuit of artistic manufacturing of sculptures is not considered relevant from the point of view of supply, it is of considerable value in terms of the atmosphere it creates. Indeed, all the interviewees agree on the fact that Pietrasanta has a predisposition to the art business because of its sculpture tradition, making it an appealing place to set up an art gallery. Indeed, Sara Delussu of Galleria PH Neutro explains:

"After three years of activity, we moved the gallery from Forte Dei Marmi to Pietrasanta because we felt the necessity to be located in an area more suitable for the art business. Over the past few years, Forte Dei Marmi has lost this predisposition; it now deals more with the fashion industry. Consequently, the people that visit it have different kinds of interests. On the other end, Pietrasanta is better known for the arts and its cultural events. […]. The proximity to the foundries, the artisanal studios, so to be in an environment more close to our cultural offering was a key motivation in our decision. In fact, the tourists who come to Pietrasanta

are different from those who go to the coast; they are sensitive to the arts. Even though, there are only a few kilometres of distance you can notice the difference in the public".

Therefore, the proximity to the sculpture industry also reflects on the public visiting Pietrasanta, in fact most people coming here are specifically interested in art. With regards to nationality, most of the gallerists mentioned that the group of collectors visiting their galleries is a mix of Italians, not so many from Tuscany but much more from Milan, Turin and the north of Italy; and foreigners, both from Europe, for instance Dutch, British, French and Germans, and from other continents, such as America. It needs to be noted that a large group of these collectors regularly frequent the area and many of them have a holiday home nearby. Indeed, Tuscany is a famous tourist destination, well-known worldwide for different aspects, from food to wine, from cultural heritage to nature. For instance, both Susanna Orlando and Flora Bigai, mentioned the presence in town of "Enoteca Marcucci", a renowned and high quality winehouse and restaurant, which has been attracting visitors since 1987. Hence, the proximity to the Tuscan tourist, food and wine industries, along with the sculpture industry, all contributes to attract the public to Pietrasanta and therefore to the galleries. As a result, even though collectors are not local, they frequent Pietrasanta, making the proximity to customers another appealing locational factor for art galleries. Indeed, the art gallerist Susanna Orlando answered this way when asked about the reason why she moved the family gallery from Forte Dei Marmi to Pietrasanta after 35 years:

"I moved because of the vitality of collectors in Pietrasanta. Here there was a truly art path. […]. Here pots were boiling! There were already many of my colleagues, the city was attractive, fresh, appealing and many collectors were walking around".

Furthermore, many gallerists, especially those who opened more recently, have mentioned the proximity to other art galleries as an advantage. Indeed, starting up in an already flourishing context can favour new comers. This result is consistent with the findings reviewed in the literature relating to art galleries in New York by Schuetz and Green (2014) and Molotoch and Trekson (2009), according to which new art galleries tend to locate within already established clusters because this practice is likely to ensure longevity to the business. To

sum up, hard factors such as proximity to customers, competitors and other industries, appear to be relevant for art gallerists who have decided to set up their business in Pietrasanta.

5.1.2.2 Urban Amenities

As reviewed in the theoretical framework, with the new economy attention has shifted from business motivations to personal ones in terms of locational factors. Indeed, the *creative class,* as defined by Florida (2002) is attracted by urban amenities such as the cultural environment, the urban landscape and its architecture, the quality of life and the presence of other talented and creative people. In this section, these elements are tested in the case of Pietrasanta.

A relevant factor for most of the interviewees is the presence of artists from all over the world which creates a unique atmosphere. According to the art gallerist Barbara Paci: *"The arrival of art galleries is a natural consequence of the constant presence of artists, such as Mitoraj, Botero and Kan Yasuda, to cite but a few of them".* In fact, as already mentioned, from the 1970s artists from all over the world were flock to town in order to work with the local artisans. Older people from Pietrasanta I spoke with during my investigation, clearly remember the time when the official language at the bar was English. Consequently, despite its small dimension, Pietrasanta is an international pole where people with different cultures, backgrounds and lifestyle live side by side and share their daily lives. Moreover, in this context, as noticed by Valentina Fogher, representative of the Municipality, a factor that should not be underestimated is the proximity to the international airport of Pisa, which is only 45km away. Nowadays, this facility, which can be included in the realm of urban amenities, makes Pietrasanta easily accessible and allows artists to come on a daily basis in order to meet with the artisans and check ongoing projects. Furthermore, over the past few years, the range of people related to the cultural sector visiting Pietrasanta has broadened, including not only artists but many others personalities from the art world. Claudio Francesconi of Gelstat Gallery, born and raised in Pietrasanta, explains this evolution:

"The city has experienced a great explosion. Above all, the fact that many artists have decided to come here and work assiduously during part of the year led to the formation of a substratum that has determined the beginning of the phenomenon, what then became: The Case of Pietrasanta. This Case has attracted over the years

investors and art galleries from outside, who have decided to establish their branches here, temporary or permanent. […]. Consequently, other professionals arrived, such as curators, journalists, critics and collectors, who were matching a holiday with the discovery of an Italian centre for contemporary art. So, the fact that, just walking around here, you can find important personalities of the Italian art world is an incredible phenomenon. This is the key to the success of Pietrasanta".

As explained by Francesconi, the presence of artists and then art gallerists represent a key factor in attracting other talented, well-known and professional people in the field of arts. This correlates with Florida's theory on the *creative class* and its locational patterns.

The cultural environment characterizing Pietrasanta is impressive, considering that it is just a little town. In fact, respondents acknowledge that there is no other place that can praise the combination of such a number of factors related to the arts, including the longstanding tradition of manufacturing sculpture, the presence of artists and other talented people, cultural activities such as exhibitions and art-related festivals organised by the cultural office of the Municipality. Furthermore, the building stock and its predisposition for cultural events represent another key factor of the attractiveness of Pietrasanta. Indeed, the main square, Piazza Duomo, with its beautiful churches and historical buildings framed by astonishing mountains, represents a perfect stage for sculpture exhibitions and other cultural activities. Moreover, the medieval brick buildings, typical of many Tuscan boroughs, rather than dismissed industrial buildings, create an appealing atmosphere for the art activity of contemporary art galleries. Finally, half of the interviewees speak of the quality of life in Pietrasanta as an attractive factor, which has actually convinced them to settle their life and business here rather than in any other bigger city. Many of them came to this conclusion after living abroad. This was the case for Francesco Ponzetta, art gallerist of Galleria Ponzetta, who after living several years in London decided to put down his roots and opened an art gallery in Pietrasanta, because:

"It is a nice and comfortable place to live in. You can find nature and fresh air, the sea is nearby and you can eat really well. People are sociable, so it is easy to get on well with them. It's a place with a great quality of life. Pietrasanta is small, but it hugs you!"

Therefore, as stressed by Florida (2002), today people take much more into consideration quality of life, so personal motivations, in their locational choices. Another

interesting aspect that has emerged from the interviews was the impact Pietrasanta's reputation had on art galleries locational decisions. Indeed, many of the interviewees claim that Pietrasanta is really well-known in Italy as well as abroad. Flora Bigai, an art gallerist, narrates:

"This city is so small but incredibly well-known all over the world. Indeed, when I was attending international art fairs and on the stand was written Pietrasanta and Venice, because for a while I also had a second gallery in Venice, obviously there was no need to explain to the world where Venice is, but surprisingly many people already also knew Pietrasanta, because of its tradition and relation to the arts".

If a couple of decades ago Pietrasanta was renowned in the art world for its craftsmanship tradition in the field of sculpture, thanks to consecrated artists who have produced their artworks there, nowadays, it is also well-known for the presence of a stunning number of art galleries, considering its small dimension. Therefore, today many galleries are willing to open an exhibition space in Pietrasanta in order to benefit from the effects of its reputation. However, as stressed by Wenting *et al.* (2010)*, this does not actually represent a proper locational factor because it is not the result of an independent decision but the imitation of the locational decision made by previous actors.

In conclusion, nowadays soft locational factors, such as quality of life and presence of talented people, appear to influence locational choices of career people, as showed here with regards to art gallerists in Pietrasanta. However, they were not the only reasons for setting a business in a specific location, as theorized by Florida (2002) about his creative class, but they were matched with economic motivations.

5.1.2.3 Social dimension of the cluster: internal and external relationships

As introduced in the theoretical framework, certain scholars, for instance Storper and Venables (2004) and Bathelt and Turi (2013), have stressed the fact that some activities rely heavily on face to face interactions that provide them easier access to knowledge and information, the chance to screen competitors but also build strong relationships with partners in order to solve common problems. This section deals with an evaluation of the relevance that the social dimension has for art galleries in Pietrasanta and its impact on their location choices. Moreover, evidence related to the interaction between art galleries and the institutions has been

included in order to grasp an idea of the degree of cooperation with the governance system and its role in the development of the district.

Looking at the relationship with colleagues and at the level of interaction among gallerists, the opinions of the respondents appear quite discordant. While some spoke of a serene atmosphere and a good vibe among art gallerists, others have argued that there is almost no interaction and everybody looks after their own interest. The situation is controversial. If on one hand, as it has been noticed by the gallerist Barbara Paci: *"The intelligence of the art gallerists in Pietrasanta is visible in the fact that everyone displays a different cultural offerings not to invade the space of the others";* on the other hand, they inevitably share the collectors base being located so close to each other. However, this proximity could also be exploited in a productive way. In fact, it appears desirable a more consistent and frequent dialogue among art gallerists in order to solve common problems and collaborate to achieve similar goals. As noticed by Sara Delussu of PH Neutro Galleria, the city is so small that everybody would benefit from a well-thought strategy. Only one of the interviewees mentioned a past attempt to establish an association of art galleries. Nevertheless, few gallerists are aware of this weakness, as emerged from the interview with the art gallerist Claudio Francesconi:

"I think there should be more cohesion and organization. In regards to the organizational set-up, we should create a concrete structure in order to better coordinate our energies. So, for instance, organize more than one exhibition on the same day. In this way, the collector who comes from Milan is more stimulated by the fact that he can attend up to three openings on the same day rather than just to one. Unfortunately, it doesn't work like that and, even those times we have tried to set the basis for a fruitful collaboration, it has appeared really difficult because many of the gallerists who operate here, do not live here as well, so they are not always present".

To this end, Barbara Paci has suggested the establishment of a *Collector Night,* a project that has been informally organized in previous years and that is pending the formal approval of the Municipality. A better organizational set-up should also be matched with a more systematic communication with the media and a structured promotional campaign. Susanna Orlando, art gallerist, argues:

"Journalists keep on naming Pietrasanta 'Little Athens' ('La Piccola Atene') and this is shameful, they should name it 'Little Chelsea'. Obviously it depends on what you are referring to, I mean if you are speaking about famous sculptors related to the history of Pietrasanta, that's ok you can speak about 'Little Athens'; but if you are speaking about contemporary art galleries that conduct an interesting artistic research, you

cannot name it 'Little Athens'! I fear it is not mentioned due to the ignorance of whoever is in charge of the communication, because they don't know what's going on here. There are two expressions that are killing Pietrasanta: 'Little Athens' and 'Dinner Town' ('Cena Town'). Journalists have fun making up these expressions. I have never read about a correction by the Municipality. So, let's start with communication".

With regards to this, many art gallerists have claimed the scarce attention paid by the Municipality and the necessity for more publicity of the art galleries from the public institutions. A couple of gallerists have expressively spoken about "a typical Italian attitude of the government". Along with advertising, there are other basic measures that could be improved as noticed by the gallerist Brad Brubaker, for instance an up-to-date webpage with the list of art galleries and their e-mail addresses and an online agenda featuring the openings and main events organized by the galleries.

As far as the interaction with the Municipality is concerned, some art galleries have mentioned past collaboration regarding the joined organization of exhibitions in public spaces. More than one has noticed a shift in the public intervention between the previous and current administration. Cristina Ghisolfi, public relations manager at Marco Rossi Galleria, explains that the current administration seems to select more international artists and collaborate with established galleries outside Pietrasanta for the organization of public exhibitions. She suggests the shift is due to a lack of public funds, probably due to the large financial cuts that little towns as such as Pietrasanta have experienced in recent years. Indeed, as acknowledged by Valentia Fogher, representative of the cultural office of the Municipality, a public exhibition requires a large amount of economic resources and art galleries represent great sponsors in this context. In particular, the collaboration with established art galleries working outside Pietrasanta appears to be more fruitful because they can usually invest larger amounts of money and take care of the entire organization of the exhibition, so that the Municipality intervene only for technical support. On the other hand, most of the art galleries in Pietrasanta are small businesses that do not have the same availability of economic funds. Hence, the collaboration with them would require a great effort from public institutions.

Finally, a few interviewees have also underlined the limits of this close system of art galleries and the necessity to search for professional partners outside Pietrasanta. In fact, while the Municipality has partners also outside Pietrasanta, the interaction between local galleries and external actors is scarce. This is discussed by Augusto Palermo of FienilArte Social Art Gallery:

"It is difficult to set up professional collaborations here. Pietrasanta is a small community and it tends to avoid external competition, opposing resistance to outsiders. It is a close system that risks imploding. I would like to collaborate with art galleries here if there will be the chance, however today I am trying to communicate and collaborate with external exhibition spaces".

The rejection of close communities, which are usually characterised by an introspective attitude and little contacts with external stimulus, as showed by Augusto Palermo, reflects the concept of 'quasi-anonymity' introduced by Florida (2002) in his contribution. He argues that while in the past tight-knit communities characterised by people and firms linked by strong ties, as those that gave rise to the original concept of industrial district, were considered the key of economic success; nowadays, communities based on this kind of social structure are not competitive anymore. Indeed, these now result invasive and restrictive, working against prosperity. According to Florida (2003), even though people recognize the importance of communities, they prefer weak ties that leave room to independent live paths and interaction with external actors.

To conclude, the coordination among art galleries in Pietrasanta seems still to be in an early stage, even though better collaboration and communication would be desirable. Therefore, the social dimension does not appear to be a relevant factor for the clustering of art galleries in Pietrasanta. As noticed by Evans (2009, Table), while innovation spillovers are pertinent to the clustering of creative industries, they do not seem applicable to cultural clusters, perhaps due to the fact that the structure of cultural industries is resilient to the change imposed by new technologies and they have been only partially affected by the Internet and the digital revolution.

5.1.3 Legitimization of the cultural district

Comparing the artistic, cultural and environmental heritage of Pietrasanta and the locational factors of the art galleries, there seems to be a high amount of correlation among them. First of all, the local artisanal traditions from which the sculpture industry has developed has provided fertile *humus* for the development of cultural activities. The presence of artists, coming to Pietrasanta to work with local artisans, has created a peculiar atmosphere, international and inspiring, as well as leading to the foundation of the Maquettes' Museum and the organization of periodic art exhibitions in the inner city, and finally shaped the urban spaces, with the disposition of sculptures in public areas. This is coherent with what has been

argued by Sacco and Pedrini (2003) and Lazzeretti (2003, 2008): local cultural resources do not always, or do not only, generate directly economic profitability but can provide another kind of value and stimulate synergies among actors, which can finally result in the rise of new cultural activities. Therefore, Pietrasanta shows a high degree of districtualization: the original *filière* of the sculpture industry, which can be considered an industrial cultural district *à la* Santagata, even though this needs to be further explored, has finally generated the rise of the art gallery district. In particular, Pietrasanta has shifted from a place of production to one of exhibition of art, turning into a showcase for contemporary art. The findings confirm the critique moved by Sacco and Pedrini (2003) to the models theorized by Santagata (2006), which in their opinion represent different stages of the evolution from industrial to post-industrial era rather than single and independent entities. Hence, Pietrasanta reflects the model of the *evolved cultural district,* as defined by Sacco and Blessi (2006), that is characterized by the presence of different *filière*, one influenced by the other; as well as the *high cultural cluster* conceptualized by Lazzeretti (2003, 2008), where the set of artistic, cultural and environmental resources set the basis for the development of different activities in the long-term.

Moreover, other characteristics of the territory have been taken into consideration by art galleries in their location choices, for instance the peculiarity of the urban and natural landscape. With respect to the cultural dimension of Pietrasanta, art galleries in Pietrasanta play a double role. In fact, on one hand they exploit and have their roots in the CAEH set of resources, on the other hand they contribute to the cultural atmosphere of the city with the organization of events and the attraction of art professionals, such as curators and art critics.

Figure 5: Art Galleries and the CAEH resources.
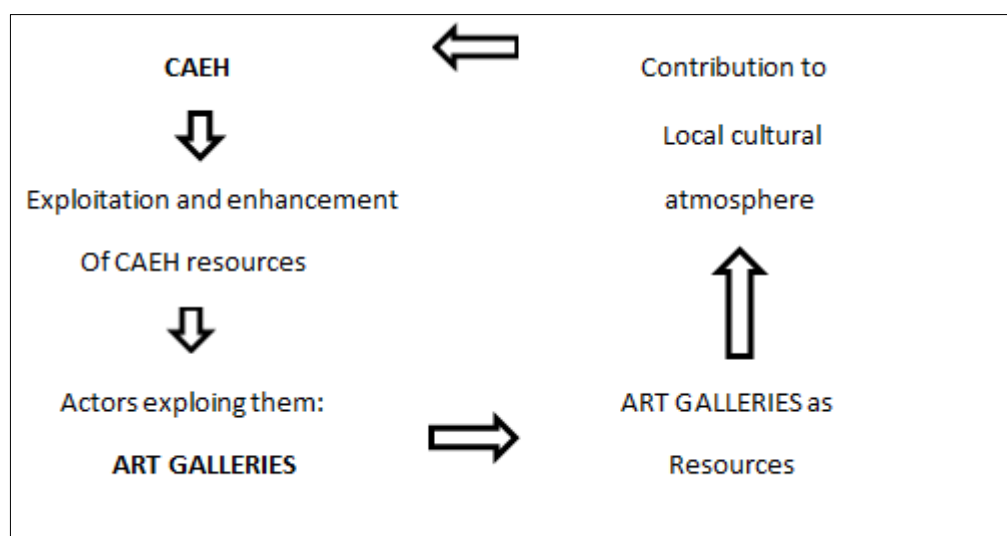
Source: Own re-elaboration based on Lazzeretti, p.664, 2003.

In terms of development, the cultural district has originated from the personal initiatives of economic actors. Therefore, it has developed on the basis of a bottom-up approach rather than top-down. The sporadic interaction between the Municipality and the art galleries has only concerned the organization of exhibitions and not the establishment of a more structured collaboration between public and private actors. As a consequence, it can be argued that the government has contributed only indirectly to the growth of the art gallery district, specifically through the organization of exhibitions with galleries and by attracting a larger public to Pietrasanta with public art shows. The following table provides an overview of the conditions that prove the existence of the cultural district in Pietrasanta.

Table 8: Legitimization of the cultural district.

High Cultural Place	+++
Network of economic and institutional actors	+++
Cooperation and synergy among firms	+/-, to be improved
Cooperation and synergy with the governance system	+/-, rarely
Local inter-sectoral exchange	+
Cooperation with external actors	+, few cases
Localized collective learning, innovation spillovers	-

Source: Own re-elaboration based on Costa, p. 12, 2010.

5.2 Gentrification or urban regeneration?

"There are two main aspects in this shift: on one hand, a more dynamic side, a renaissance, a change, the happening of something new, a new path; on the other hand, there is also the loss of old realities".

The statement made by Elisa Giannini, a contemporary artist born and raised in Pietrasanta, suggests the two-fold nature of the impact the cultural district, and more widely cultural and creative industries, can have on the city. As stated by Zukin (1987), gentrification deals with a social and spatial differentiation. The effects of this process have been extensively debated in the literature but it is clear that the situation is always controversial and there are both positive and negative aspects. This section addresses the evaluation of the impact that the art gallery district has had on Pietrasanta and the local community.

5.2.1 Urban Morphology, Social Differentiation and Commodification of Art

A major side effect in the process of gentrification is the displacement of households and commercial activities due to the increase of prices, a change of amenities and social context. Pietrasanta is no different and has experienced these side effects too. Elisa Giannini, who has lived there a great part of her life, has witnessed this evolution over the years and testifies:

"During the 1990s there has been a shift, that decade was key […]. One of the first strong signals was the disappearance of the artisanal studios from the inner city, but along with them many other commercial activities have disappeared: for instance, the normal supermarket, the normal bakery, the sewing shop, the shop for marble instruments. It was painful to see these shops leaving and being replaced by candy shops, restaurants and art galleries. I mean, I am glad to see art galleries, they bring arts and culture here, but we have witnessed the devastation of the entire social fabric of the city. This passage has been painful and brutal. […] What's more, people born in Pietrasanta or living here at one point started leaving the town because now it is super expensive. This is not so nice. The galleries obviously tend to attract people with higher incomes, and so do restaurants, shops and expensive houses. So, it has become a luxury place to live in for a person from Pietrasanta. Consequently, the locals, the indigenous, moved to less touristic towns nearby, such as Seravezza and Ripa".

In these words, it is evident the disruptive effects caused by art galleries, along with other touristic and commercial activities. The differentiation determined by the process of gentrification has affected both the urban morphology, reshaping the inner city, and the social dimension of the local community. As far as the urban space is concerned, today the city centre is a constellation of art galleries, estate agents, bar and restaurants. It is so striking that it gained the appellative of "Cena Town" (Dinner Town). Pietrasanta, as well as other cities all over the world, has experienced a process of 'boutiquing' as defined by Zukin *et al.* (p. 47, 2009) involving a major shift in the retail landscape of the town. However, it needs to be noted that art galleries have not caused the displacement of the artisanal studios. They have replaced them in the city centre but there is no evident cause-effect relation in this shift. In fact, many of the studios leaving the city centre were actually closing permanently due to the decline of the marble industry. Elisa Giannini and Veronica Fonzo, two artists interviewed, acknowledge that the demand for marble has dropped enormously over the past two decades because of the huge decrease in the demand for religious and funerary goods and new trends in contemporary art. Indeed, the high costs of manufacturing, shipping and insurance, matched with the introduction of new media and new trends in contemporary art, have set forth the end of the prosperity of the marble industry. Furthermore, as noticed by another artist, Armen Agop, the new technologic but extremely noisy instruments adopted today to work the marble, plus the necessity of bigger spaces for bigger machinery and new sanitary and security norms are incompatible with the current daily life in the inner city. Therefore, the increase in property prices generated by the arrival of art galleries is only one of the causes of the displacement of artisanal studios. On the contrary, it seems that the art galleries have provided an alternative source of income in the economy of Pietrasanta, counterbalancing the decline of the marble industries. In conclusion, Pietrasanta is not immune to the new wave of re-urbanization described by Scott (2000) and the global stall of the manufacturing sector.

Along with an increase in the revenues and the boosting of the city economy, the presence of art galleries have attracted a new wealthy public, as already noticed by Elisa Giannini. Over the past decades, the town had been animated by the presence of international artists coming from all over the world to work with the artisans of Pietrasanta. However, they mixed with the local community rather than altering it. The art gallerist Susanna Orlando describes this glorious period:

"Once upon a time, real artists used to sit in the main square, covered in dust, they used to have lunch at the worker circle and you were sat next to the big names of the art world. The few restaurants at that time

used to open at midday to prepare the soups for artisans and sculptors and after that they cleaned up the marble powder and set the table for tourists. At midday, there were just artists and sculptors and the lunch used to cost 10,000 Lire [approximately € 5, Ed.]. Now, there are only restaurants and a meal costs at least €40. Consequently, only people who can afford all this keep on coming to Pietrasanta".

During the golden age of Pietrasanta, from the 1960s to the 1990s, when many artists flocked to the town, the atmosphere was informal and convivial due to the fact that artists were simple and not pretentious at all. Many citizens, among the oldest ones I have spoken with, remember with nostalgia when in the main square *you could breathe the marble powder and listen to the noise of the chisels*. Nowadays, the atmosphere is totally different, Claudio Francesconi of Gelstat Gallery describes it with the following adjectives "*institutionalized, formalized and standardized*". Young artists covered in dust are not around anymore and only more successful artists, who can afford the high living costs, are still coming to Pietrasanta. Indeed, prices of both houses and goods have soared. As a result, the town has experienced a social upgrade after the arrival of galleries provoking the displacement of artists and residents. However, not everybody thinks this is necessarily a negative aspect. Susanna Orlando argues this is the result of choices that have favoured the quality and it helps to keep a high standard of public as well as of art galleries. Moreover, from a social perspective, there have also been some improvements in the local community. Antonio Trotta, consecrated artist who exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1968 and now boast a museum after his name in the town of Stio where he was born, arrived in Pietrasanta during the 1970s and notice that: *"In the past, people from Pietrasanta dedicated only to craftsmanship. Today the situation is better, many young people are getting interested in art, they are much more curious. Some interesting stuff is being produced".*

The findings confirm the theories of Ley (1996) related to the role of artists as gentrifiers: artists in Pietrasanta have operated as the 'colonizing arm' of the middle class, aestheticizing the inner city and making it more appealing. Two periods can be identified: the first going from the 1960s to the 1990s, when artists coming to Pietrasanta to produce their sculptures generated an artistic milieu, fostering a special atmosphere and organizing the first exhibitions in the city centre; the second running from the 1990s onwards, marked by the arrival of art galleries and a process of commodification of the arts and consequent loss of authenticity of the milieu. Hence, the art district has experienced a shift from production to consumption of art that reflects the evolving relationship between art and gentrification in response to different waves as stated by Cameron and Coaffee (2005). The shift involved both private consumption, boosted by art galleries, and public consumption, which was supported

by the organization of exhibitions by the Municipality in public spaces and the development of an art route in the inner city (Parco della Scultura Contemporanea).

Even though the art district has turned into a more exclusive high-retail space, there is a strong recall of the golden age of Pietrasanta when artistic production was flourishing. As described in the previous sections, by all accounts there is a constant reference to the bohemian atmosphere of the 1960s, 1960s and 1980s. Although many artists have been displaced and artistic production has almost disappeared, the artistic myths of Pietrasanta, from Michelangelo to Henry Moore, from Mitoraj to Botero, are still present in the narrative representation of the district. The image of Pietrasanta is the result of its history, of its "artistic memory" to put in in Mathews' words (p. 666, 2008). Therefore, non-visible elements concur in building the meaning of the district as much as visible factors (Mathews, 2008). The use of sculptures in public spaces has not only a decorative function, but it represents a "system of visual codification" (Mathews, p. 2826, 2008) that helps in defining the art district, serving the logic of the symbolic economy. As stressed by Mathews, aesthetization of a place is a common practice among policy makers and urban developers in order to brand place identity. However, this practice is not free of drawbacks. On one hand, sculptures can support the image of the art district; on the other hand, they can raise issues of exclusivity depending on who they represents, the local community and its history or the construction of a new image proposed by the government. Thus, Mathews (2008, 2010) suggested the process of selection of sculptures should be made in collaboration with the community in order to be sure it is meaningful for them.

In conclusion, in line with the contributions by Zukin (1982) and Ley (1996), the art gallery district of Pietrasanta is the result of a process of commodification of its artistic tradition and the presence of artists. These elements have become instruments of marketing in order to attract tourists and other cultural activities and finally generate economic returns. Today, art, exhibited in public and private spaces, instead of artists, shapes the identity of the art district. As a result of this process, Pietrasanta has experienced a loss of authenticity. In regards to this, Sara Delussu of PH Neutro Galleria has declared: *"It is a little bit depersonalized, there are less inhabitants… I mean, there are still some of them but much of the space has been left to guests, to tourists".* According to Evans (2009), the attraction of tourists is the major scope of cultural districts. Indeed, while creative clusters are related to the knowledge economy, cultural clusters particularly stimulate a visitor economy. The next section concerns the impact that the tourist industry has had on Pietrasanta.

5.2.2 The tourist industry & the issue of seasonality

"Pietrasanta is promoting many cultural and artistic events in order to attract cultural tourism. However, there is a general confusion among arts and culture and entertainment, but this is an international trend. […] So, what is currently happening in Pietrasanta is not different from the rest of the world. Here we are probably more pessimistic because the effects are much more visible than in big cities. However, some people are benefiting from the fact that the town has turned into a touristic location.[…] It depends on the points of view you consider when assessing the shift, as a gallery, a restaurant or the Municipality, which are interested in economic returns, or as a citizen. People from Pietrasanta are moving out and you can notice that because during the winter Pietrasanta is a ghost town. […] I am sorry because this town has an incredible heritage but they are not selling the fairy tale, the longstanding culture and tradition of Pietrasanta; they are promoting it as an entertaining place, 'Cena Town' and so on".

In the words of Armen Agop, one of the artists interviewed, you can perceive the disappointment for the invasion of the city by the tourist industry. As in the rest of the world, Pietrasanta is responding to the demand of the current economy, which is "mixed of economy of leisure, culture and creativity" (Mommas, p.507, 2004; as cited by Cinti, 2008). The arrival of art galleries and restaurants has fostered the touristic potential of Pietrasanta. The location has benefitted from its proximity to the coast, fostering its fortune upon the complementarity of seaside resorts such as Forte Dei Marmi and Viareggio. This complementarity manifests through the schedule of visitors who often spend their mornings at the sea and will pass the afternoon and evening within the town visiting restaurants and artistic locations who extend their opening hours to fit this model. Indeed, as emerged from the data, collectors are mainly Italians from other regions and foreigners that usually come to Tuscany to spend their holidays. As a consequence, Pietrasanta has adapted its cultural offerings to the necessity of visitors, thus most of the art exhibitions, including the public ones, take place during the summer season. The difference between the summer season and the rest of the year is striking. Armen Agop, along with other interviewees, has used the expression 'ghost town' to describe how Pietrasanta appears in winter.

By all accounts, the last few summers were too chaotic and the situation has become exaggerated. Indeed, Pietrasanta has turned into a must location for art galleries and art-related activities and the result has been the opening of a large number of temporary galleries and pop-up stores that open only for one season. Art gallerists claim the fact that the cultural offering is much more commercial and of low quality. Moreover, many of the new art spaces are just improvised and try to benefit from the city reputation, as explained by Susanna Orlando:

"Those temporary stores that arrive here are always avid, angry and hardened and if they don't work enough they speak ill of Pietrasanta. But it's not Pietrasanta's fault. The land needs to be harvested. You cannot seed, abandon the land, and then come in June and see the flowers blossoming. You have to keep the land alive. This is what us as professionals are doing here all year long. I have seen blossoming Pietrasanta, now it is time to prune it. The pruning should include a census of art-related activities, distinguishing art galleries from artists' studio, artisanal ateliers and so on".

Considering the fact that no license is required to start up an art gallery, it is easy to improvise this kind of activity. According to Susanna Orlando, a legal recognition of those art galleries that are operating all year long would be a good solution to this issue. The risk is that those low quality initiatives will affect the reputation of Pietrasanta and consequently the one of the most serious art galleries. However, for some of the respondents it will be a natural process, usually the best tend to emerge from the masses. The findings are coherent with the argument made by Mathews (2010), who stressed the fact that different type of art galleries can be associated with different stages in the process of gentrification. In Pietrasanta, experimental art galleries arrived in the early 1990s and concurred with artists in aestheticizing the urban space and in fostering a peculiar atmosphere; however, as long as the process of gentrification has progressed, commercial art galleries have appeared, affecting the authenticity of the place. Finally, another distortion resulting from the arrival of a large number of art galleries is represented by a kind of confusion in the cultural offering. In fact, Pietrasanta has traditionally focused on the dissemination of contemporary art; however, some of the latest galleries arrived here are specialized in modern art. According to Cristina Ghisolfi of Marco Rossi Arte Contemporanea, the loss of focus on contemporary art could affect the strategic positioning of Pietrasanta in the Italian art market and attract those collectors who look at modern art moved by financial reasons and consume art only as an investment.

Due to the seasonality of the commercial activity, art galleries have adapted their schedule to this and find other sources of income to balance the difference between the summer season and the rest of the year. Few galleries have mentioned the participation in art fairs as a mean of counteracting seasonality. However, as largely acknowledged, art fairs are extremely expensive and most of the galleries cannot afford this option. Some galleries try to keep the interest of collectors high from a distance, sending them online contents, or organizing an opening during the low season. Augusto Palermo of FienilArte Social Art Gallery, mentioned social networks, such as Facebook, Instagram, or Pinterest, as effective

means to get the public involved throughout the year. As it is, most of the time during the low season is dedicated to the arrangement of summer events as the schedule is extremely thick during the high season and everything need to be prepared in advance.

The issue of seasonality is relevant both for commercial activities and for the local community. Having a desert town during the low season affects the economy of the city and discourages people that actually live here or would like to move there on a permanent basis. However, there is the potential to counteract seasonality and keep Pietrasanta alive and liveable all year long, not just for the high season. Elisa Giannini argues:

"People who live here suffer from this situation. The income cannot be based on a three or five month basis. The schedule of the low season should increase and become more intense, there should be a more complete cycle of events. This place is ideal for tourism also during the rest of the year. It is not so far away, isolated, and winter is not that cold. On the contrary, people already tend to come here during public holidays, in the week-end, and many of them have a second house here, so it is not a place just to pass through but people usually come back. So, the premises are there for arranging something more during the winter. What's more, it would be great to recover the typical dynamics of a small town like this. This would contribute in recreating the social fabric of the town that has been wiped out. I mean, not only the locals would benefit from this, but also tourists would be glad to find a normal supermarket and greengrocer, along with art galleries and restaurants".

Over the past few years Pietrasanta has suffered from mass tourism and the consequent adaptation of the urban space to the necessity of guests. This has caused a major distortion of the economic and social life of the town. Nevertheless, the premises would allow for an adjustment of this situation. As already mentioned, Pietrasanta is characterized by a high quality of life, which keeps on attracting artists and tourists who often end up in setting here permanently or buying a second house; in addition, with some adaptations it could easily turn into a great tourist destination also during the winter season. Hence, in this context, a major and leading role should be played by the government.

First of all, commercial activities not related to the tourist industry but necessary in the daily life of the local community, such as a normal supermarket or a bakery and so on, should be incentivized to come back to the city centre. This operation is not free of difficulties. Tax exemptions or low interest loans in favour of people moving in the inner city would probably favour once again commercial activities such as art galleries, boutique and restaurants. Indeed, Pietrasanta is not characterized by retail disinvestment; on the contrary, as demonstrated there are more and more retailers who are ready to pay high rents, especially during the summer, in

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order to benefit from the tourist flow of the location. Thus, rental prices are not likely to decrease. A possible solution could be the allocation of economic resources by the Municipality in favour of small businesses and young entrepreneurs in specific sectors, specifically those that are currently not represented in the city centre. In particular, a public competition would allow people to present their project and through a selection, supported by professional organizations (i.e. Coldiretti, Confartigianato,etc.), the Municipality would succeed in promoting private initiatives in specific fields and in intervening indirectly in the reorganization of the retail landscape of the inner city. Second, decentralizing cultural activities and promoting exhibitions and events in other areas of the city would relieve the tourist pressure on the city centre. As underlined by Thomas and Bromley (2003), for little towns such as Pietrasanta it is extremely important to promote edge-of-centre sites, which need to be spatially integrated with the rest of the town. To this end, the Municipality should facilitate the access to those areas, especially through availability of transports and park spaces for car-holders, as well as improve amenities. Third, the Municipality should intervene in order to balance the programme of cultural activities between the low and high season, organizing exhibitions during the winter too to foster tourism during the rest of the year and consequently the economy of the city. Moreover, the high quality level of public exhibitions should be guaranteed because many respondents claim this has worsened over the past years. Some of the citizens suggest also enlarging the pedestrian area to encompass the entire city centre and ask for more control during the night hours in summer which are particularly chaotic. These basic expedients would ensure a better quality of life to the local community and the sustainability of cultural and tourist activities in the long-term.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The study lays out the conceptualization of cultural districts and analyse their impact on the city. To this end, a qualitative case study has been carried out. In particular, I have analysed the art gallery district of Pietrasanta, a little borough in Tuscany, Italy. Therefore the research project has addressed the following questions: *To what extent does the concentration of art galleries in Pietrasanta give rise to a cultural district? If yes, how does the cultural district impact the economic, social and urban realms of the city?*

In order to answer the first question, the case of Pietrasanta and its art galleries were analysed on the basis of the theoretical framework proposed by Lazzeretti (2003, 2008) and her cultural districtualization model. This dynamic perspective has been useful to help understand the degree of districtualization of Pietrasanta. The findings confirm that a high cultural place that is characterized by a set of artistic, cultural and environmental resources, such as the case at issue, can give rise to different realities in different periods. In Pietrasanta, an industrial cultural district *à la* Santagata, the one related to the sculpture industry, has set the basis for the development of a cultural district *à la* Lazzeretti, the art gallery district. Moreover, the study confirms the model of the *evolved cultural district* conceptualized by Sacco and Blessi (2006) that is characterized by the presence of different *filière*, one influenced by the other.

In the first part of the research, locational factor theories have also been tested. On a theoretical level, Florida's (2002) theory on the creative class has partially been confirmed: factors related to urban amenities do influence locational patterns of creative people but they are not the only reason; in fact findings also support economic reasons and the intention of businesses to exploit agglomeration economies. With regards to the social dimension of the cluster, access to information and knowledge spillovers, as suggested by Storper and Venables (2004) and Bathelt and Turi (2013), do not appear a strong motivation to cluster for art galleries in Pietrasanta. This is reflected in the weak ties among art galleries within the district. However, proximity to other galleries does appear to be relevant in order to share the consumer basis and benefit from reputation and social environment of an already established art district. This is coherent with findings in previous studies by Schuetz and Green (2014), Molotoch and Trekson (2009), Rius Ulldemolins (2012) and Currid (2007a, 2007b).

The second section of the study has tried to assess the effect that the development of the art gallery district has had on the social, economic and urban sphere of the town. The

investigation of the district of Pietrasanta has responded to the call made by Mathews (2010) to extend the investigation on art galleries in order to provide new insights on different stages of gentrification and a more nuanced understanding of the process. On a theoretical level, the study has confirmed the theory proposed by Ley (1996), according to which artists are the 'colonizing arm' of the middle class. Indeed, in the case of Pietrasanta, they appear to be the primary attraction for art galleries. With their arrival, Pietrasanta passed from a place of production to one of consumption of art, turning into a showcase for contemporary art. As a result, the art gallery district in Pietrasanta has originated from a process of commodification of arts in line with arguments by Zukin (1982) and Ley (1996). The study has also contributed to fill the gap in the literature identified by Mathews (2008) regarding the role of non-visible factors in the process of gentrification. In this context, the case of Pietrasanta represents a good example of how the "artistic memory" (p. 666, Mathews, 2008) of the place, represented by the successful sculptor industry, has influenced its future, which is still linked to the art field. Furthermore, the findings confirm the controversial impact of arts-related activities on the city. On one hand, art galleries have stimulated the economy of the city and attracted tourists; on the other hand, their arrival has determined an increase in prices and a social differentiation as well as a reshaping of the urban morphology, with the dislocation of commercial activities, local citizens and artists. Moreover, in the case of Pietrasanta the mass tourism boosted by the presence of art galleries has determined a high seasonality of economic activities. Therefore, the study does not appear to support the argumentations by Grodach (2010), Grodach *et al.* (2014) and Schuetz (2014), who argued art can foster revitalization without causing negative gentrification and the consequent displacement of artists.

Nevertheless, the distortion caused by a process of gentrification could be counteracted by the intervention of the government. Therefore, on a political level, the study confirms the potential of arts and culture in fostering the economy of a town or neighbourhood. At the same time, it calls for control and support by public institutions, even in cases similar to Pietrasanta, in which the development of a cultural district originates from an informal and bottom-up process. In this particular case, the Municipality of Pietrasanta should contribute in recreating the social fabric of the town and intervene in order to relieve the touristic and commercial pressure on the inner city, organizing cultural activities in decentralized areas of the town and integrating them with the city centre; promoting indirectly activities in sectors related to the daily life of citizens; programming cultural activities during the winter in order to counterbalance the high and low season and support a more sustainable economic model for the town. Furthermore, from the analysis of the district has emerged the necessity for a

dialogue between art galleries and public institutions. In particular, gallerists have claimed for governmental support, which should be manifested through a structured promotional campaign, a constant communication with media, the implementation of an up-to-date webpage and an online agenda with the schedule of gallery openings and cultural activities. Finally, the research has brought to light a deficiency in the organizational set-up of the district. Indeed, the coordination among art galleries in Pietrasanta seems still to be in an early stage and better collaboration and communication would be desirable. The establishment of an art gallery association would be a great means in order to solve common problems and collaborate to achieve similar goals.

In spite of its contribution to the field of analysis of cultural district and their impact on cities, the study is not free of limitations. Indeed, the case study strategy does not allow any generalizations of the findings on a geographical level as well as in terms of cultural and creative industries. Therefore, avenues for further research could include a multiple case study and the comparison between Pietrasanta and other similar Italian or foreign realities, which could also shed light on different policies applied. Methodologically, the qualitative and discursive nature of the research has allowed a wide understanding of how embedded local nature can activate and attract new activities. On the other hand, an evaluation of the impact of art galleries on the city based exclusively on the subjective perception of the interviewees is a limited aspect of the study. Consequently, another avenue for future research is represented by a quantitative analysis of the economic impact that the cultural district had, in order to confirm its role in enhancing an urban renaissance after the decline of the manufacturing industry. Finally, time constraints related to the master thesis schedule have not left room for a complete analysis of the complexity of Pietrasanta.

To conclude, the value of the study lies in the demonstration of the role of arts and culture in fostering urban redevelopment on a long-term basis, directly or through the activation of new activities. Moreover, the case study of Pietrasanta call the attention to decentralized urban area and peripheral centres aside major art cities in the world. Indeed, the power of arts and culture in boosting sustainable growth and regeneration goes beyond any geographical boundaries.

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APPENDIX A

Table of Interviews

#	Name	Date	Min.
1	Accesso Galleria Brad Brubaker	18th March 2016	43'
2	Valentina Fogher Representative Municipality	19th March 2016	37'
3	Susanna Orlando Galleria Susanna Orlando	19th March 2016	31'
4	Sara Delussu Galleria PH Neutro	19th March 2016	17'
5	Claudio Francesconi Gelstat Gallery	20th March 2016	60'
6	Armen Agop Artist	21st March 2016	45'
7	Francesco Ponzetta Galleria Ponzetta	21st March 2016	26'
8	Veronica Fonzo Artist	22nd March 2016	20'
9	Flora Bigai Galleria Flora Bigai Arte Contemporanea	25th March 2016	15'
10	Antonio Trotta Artist	26th March 2016	27'
11	Cristina Ghisolfi PR at Galleria Marco Rossi Arte Contemporanea	29th March 2016	24'

12	Augusto Palermo FienilArte Social Art Gallery	29th March 2016	42'
13	Barbara Paci Galleria d'arte Barbara Paci	7th April 2016	24'
14	Elisa Giannini (Teresa Cinque) Artist	20th April 2016	49'
			460'

APPENDIX B

Coding list

Family	Codes
Introduction	Presentation Link with Tuscany Opening gallery: new Opening gallery: relocated
Agglomeration Economies	Proximity to competitors Proximity to customers Proximity to suppliers Proximity to other industries
Urban Amenities	Quality of life Building stock for cultural venues Museums and cultural activities Presence of talented, open-minded people
Social Dimension	Kind and level of interactions Knowledge spillovers: access to information Collaboration and/or competition Trust Imitation of competitors Relevance attributed to the network Interaction outside the district Interaction with public institutions
Cultural Dimension	Relevance of cultural heritage, C Relevance of artistic heritage, A Relevance of environmental heritage, E Experimentation in cultural production Role of public institutions
Gentrification or regeneration	Regeneration of declining areas Displacement of local community and commercial activities Increased prices Loss of social diversity Loss of authenticity of the place
Emerged	City image Seasonality + galleries, - quality