

CAN CULTURAL DISTRICTS BE PLANNED?

How do the dynamics of agglomeration work in Manifattura delle Arti in Bologna?

Student Name: Liola Urso

Student Number: 514538

Supervisor: Valeria Morea

Second Reader:

Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

Throughout history, culture and creativity have always been substantial for the city. Cities have constantly required the creativity and inventiveness of a large concentration of entrepreneurs, artists, intellectuals, students, policymakers, and financiers to function as marketplaces, commercial, and productive centres (Bianchini & Landry, 1995).

In his book “Cities in Civilization”, Peter Hall (1998) argues that between 1980 and 1990 many European cities become aware that cultural industries could act as the foundation for economic growth. Indeed, the author foresaw that culture would have taken over the space left by abandoned industries and warehouses, creating a novel city model.

As a result of globalization and digitization, a new age with the purposeful use of creativity for a city has gained popularity (Hospers, 2003). Indeed, today, many cities around the world are facing a period of change and transformation. Crime and security, handling globalization and rapid information, and enhancing the standard of living in daily life are only a few of the new issues and challenges that have emerged. Policymakers and urban planners must employ regional, creative, and innovative elements to foster a positive environment that benefits residents, enterprises, and tourists. The focus shifted from the physical and urban planning side of the city to implementing the experience of the urban milieu. In particular, the concept of creative milieu coined by Tornqvist indicates that cultural and local ferment that gives rise to *collective creativity* and knowledge, showing that conditions of plurality, diversity, and open interchange of ideas are ideal for innovation (Tornqvist, 2004).

According to Throsby (2010), arts and culture contribute to urban life and economic growth in a variety of ways. For instance, a single cultural centre or institution can stimulate urban economic growth on its own. Consider the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, which is frequently cited as an example of a cultural investment that resulted in the revitalization of a poor metropolitan region (Throsby, 2010). The cultural identity of a city may also be strengthened via the staging of artistic and festival events, as the so-called eventful cities (Palmer & Richards, 2010). Urban cultural policies have become increasingly important in the contemporary context, as cities around the world gaining a fundamental role as 'catalysts for civic identity and public sociability' (Bianchini, 1993, p.3). In this regard, many city branding and regeneration strategies are implemented, such as the designation of European Capitals of Culture or the listing in the UNESCO Creative Cities network.

In addition, the cultural sectors might profit from the network and agglomeration externalities present in urban environments (Throsby, 2010). The expansion of "creative clusters" in many cultural industries, such as fashion in Milan, theatre in London, and film in Hollywood, demonstrates the financial advantages of agglomeration (Throsby, 2010).

One of the key strategies for urban development that many cities have adopted is the planning of cultural clusters. Over time, cultural clusters have emerged spontaneously, without a local government's intervention or a policy's incentive. According to Lavanga (2020): "most of the districts develop slowly. Cultural districts develop in an organic and spontaneous way (almost as a creative commons)". Indeed, cultural organisations demonstrated a natural predisposition to localize together, particularly in cities in which they may engage with professionals from other fields and share expertise and knowledge, boosting creativity and increasing competition (Scott, 2001). However, currently, the city government frequently establishes clusters as they serve as a beneficial political tool for the urban growth of cities and are employed to increase innovation in the city. The nature of cultural clusters shows a dichotomy, with some involving little engagement from the public sector (bottom-up) and others established by policymakers with the intention of advancing economic and other policy goals (top-down) (Mommaas 2009; Evans, 2009a).

Planned districts are often implemented as catalysts for the regeneration of certain disadvantaged and decaying areas. However, policymakers frequently overlook understanding the harmful effects of these regeneration policies. According to Florida (2004), the creative class can exacerbate inequalities and lead to gentrification and displacement of low-income residents.

1.2 Research question and aim of the thesis

This thesis seeks to contribute to the discourse of cultural districts and urban regeneration. In addition, urban and cultural policy issues are addressed, with the intention of providing useful information for policymakers on how to intervene and be involved in cultural-led regeneration initiatives. Indeed, as mentioned in the first part of this chapter, cultural districts are often used as tools for the regeneration of some areas and to foster urban growth. However, policymakers and urban planners struggle to discover the proper formula for implementing cultural-led urban regeneration interventions, frequently focusing on desired results but seldom considering how the policy process may affect them (Lidegaard et al. 2017).

In this regard, within the framework of cultural planning, the following research also delves into the dilemma of “explicit top-down and “implicit bottom-up policies” (Fromhold-Eisebith and Eisebith, 2005), wondering whether it is actually possible to plan something that by nature arises spontaneously. Specifically, the following research will focus on the case of the planned district “Manifattura delle Arti” (Factory of the Arts) in Bologna in order to answer the following research question:

Can a cultural cluster be planned? How did the dynamics of agglomeration work in Manifattura delle Arti in Bologna?

To answer the research question, a qualitative approach has been adopted. In particular, 12 interviews have been conducted with key actors working in the cluster, such as directors and cultural employees in the founding organisations and institutions of the district and other stakeholders involved in the governance of the area and of the municipality.

The context of Bologna is suitable for investigating the top-down bottom-up dilemma, as the city on the one hand has a high density of associations and bottom-up initiatives, indeed there are 1.06 non-profit organisations for every 10,000 people (Morea, 2023). On the other hand, the municipality shows great interest in cultural and urban regeneration policies, demonstrated by high spending on cultural initiatives and by the high position in the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor ranking, with a score of 29,7 (Montalto et. al, 2019). In general, in Bologna cultural activities are viewed as crucial in supporting socialization and the development of human and urban skills (Morea, 2023). In addition, the case study is adequately developed to make an analysis, as the district was implemented in the early 2000s, contextually to the planning for Bologna 2000 - European Capital of Culture (Zan et. al, 2011). On the social level, the research aims to better grasp what are the most efficient practices and policies concerning cultural clusters and urban

regeneration. This is considered to be socially relevant especially because there are plans to invest most of the funds from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan in the creation of a larger district called The District of Creativity connecting the Manifattura delle Arti and the adjacent area “Ex Scalo al Ravone”. Therefore, understanding what has been done positively during the 20 years of Manifattura delle Arti and what works, and what does not, is essential in the perspective of this future project.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The following research is structured into six chapters. After the introduction, the second chapter delves into the theoretical framework on which the research is built. This section is developed through a review of the main literature and previous empirical research on planned cultural districts. Afterwards, the methodology is presented in the third chapter, detailing the research's methodology, design, and approach as well as any possible challenges and limitations. An overview of the case study will be provided in chapter four. The following key chapter concerns the main findings of the research and the answers to the research question. The major implications and research limitations are then discussed in the last part when conclusions are formed.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 THE CULTURAL DISTRICT

The emphasis on creativity within local policy has begun to develop, particularly since Richard Florida (2002, 2005) emphasized the necessity of creative individuals for a city's economic development. One of the key strategies that many cities have adopted is the creation of cultural clusters (Cinti, 2008). Clusters have evolved into a notion of urban cultural development that may be seen in many city policies (Mommaas, 2004). However, Florida also acknowledges that the creative class can exacerbate inequalities and lead to gentrification and displacement of low-income residents. Therefore, he emphasizes the need for policies and programs that support affordable housing, inclusivity, and community engagement in the development of creative clusters and networks. In the following section of the literature review, it will be discussed the main agglomeration theories behind clustering, the differences between spontaneous clusters and planned clusters such as the one in our case study, and finally the gentrification effect.

2.1.2 Cluster Theories and agglomeration economies

Marshall (1890) was the first to draw attention to localized industries. In his *Principle of Economics*, he defined the industrial district as an area where a strong concentration of firms developed. Marshall's analysis of industrial districts typically relies on external economies of agglomeration.

From a production point of view, agglomeration brings many benefits, which can be summarised in the three Marshallian micro-foundations of sharing, matching, and learning. As a concern, the sharing of production factors, the high density of firms specialised in the same sector located in a specific area stimulates the emergence of firms specialising in the provision of intermediate goods and services. As regards the labour market, the concentration of similar companies attracts specialised labour, reducing search costs for both workers and companies, and helping to improve the match between the specific managerial and technical skills required by companies and those offered by workers. Finally, the geographic proximity between similar enterprises facilitates the local dissemination of knowledge and production know-how, either through imitative processes or direct communication, thus promoting innovation and improvement of production processes. When it comes to consumption, Marshall (1890) notes that people would go to distant places to get what they want if they can do so cheaply and quickly. Industrial districts, thanks to the importance of agglomeration economies, are acknowledged as sites where average

costs of production and commerce are falling.

In the framework of agglomeration economies, this research is willing to investigate how the dynamics of agglomeration work in the context of a planned cluster and possible benefits derived from that, such as network creation, knowledge spillover, and resource sharing. Potentially, there could be several reasons and advantages for clustering, especially for the cultural industries, which often suffer from limited financial resources. Another fundamental contribution to defining the theory and concept of clusters comes from Michael Porter (2000). Based on the Marshallian definition, Porter has developed the idea of clusters as “a geographically proximate group of interconnected companies and associated institutions in a particular field, linked by commonalities and complementarities”. Moreover, Porter’s theory is strictly connected with the competition theory, supporting the idea that local rivalry is a powerful motivator. According to Porter, clusters play a central role in the company's innovation potential.

2.2.1 The cultural district as a Catalyst for urban regeneration

Cluster theories have become increasingly important in both cultural and economic development policies, as policymakers seek to encourage the growth of specific industries and promote regional economic development. Understanding the dynamics of cluster formation and the factors that contribute to their success can help policymakers design effective strategies to support these important economic drivers. From the perspective of policy, the question of whether creative or cultural clustering happens naturally or if it may be started or at least supported by state action emerges. There are many examples of cultural clusters that have developed spontaneously, so there are undoubtedly incentives for private and public businesses to pursue the benefits of co-location.

Santagata (2004) theorizes four possible models of cultural districts. First, there is the Industrial Cultural District, a cultural district that follows the same logic and dynamics as the 'traditional' district model. Then, the Institutional Cultural District, the model that most interests the following analysis. Indeed, in order to conserve collective culture and foster economic progress, the government may need to act at times, such as through the distribution of property rights and brands to acknowledge the idiosyncrasies of a given area's output that is not repeatable elsewhere. Third, the Museum Cultural District, is established around a museum network in important art towns that are rich in historical landmarks and art assets. Also in this case, the government's intervention and regulation are required to achieve the appropriate size of the district, which maintains productive efficiency and service quality while limiting touristic congestion at the site. Finally, the Metropolitan Cultural District is established to revitalize areas that were experiencing an economic and industrial decline. Cities in this category do not have an abundance of historic and cultural legacy, but they do proviant de a fertile ground for artistic development as a result of the policies

implemented.

2.2.2 Participatory governance or market-led planning?

In the current debate, as previously mentioned, there has been a shift from the attention to physical and urban planning, to implementing civic identity and community involvement. Bianchini (1999, p.10; p37) defines the 1960s and 1980s as the "age of participation", indicating the beginning of the use of culture as a catalyst for regeneration, with an emphasis on social rather than economic reasons. Cultural policies emphasized culture as a vehicle for community formation, and the city centre became the geographical epicentre of civic identity and public sociability. Thinking about how individuals participate and what it means for state cultural policy is becoming increasingly important (Pawley, 2008; Jancovic & Bianchini, 2013). One main explanation for this is the development of governance models, with greater expectations for participation from increasingly engaged individuals (Elkin & Soltan, 1999). This tendency interacts with the emergence and development of later notions of cultural democracy, cultural development, and cultural diversity (Bonet & Négrier, 2011). Indeed, the notion behind cultural democracy is that allowing all social groups access to cultural life may raise people's awareness of injustice and inequality, prompting independent processes of social change (Bonet & Négrier, 2018).

However, lately, there has been a growing emphasis on the synergistic connection between culture and the economy, the development of more supply-side-oriented creative economy policies (Garnham 2005), and the emergence of a politics of the commons that challenges the traditional role of government in defending and leading the public interest. Thus, according to Bianchini (1999) by the mid-1980s, the attention on cultural policy as a way to boost community development and foster social involvement had been gradually replaced by a focus on cultural policy's potential as a tool for urban economic and physical revitalization. This turn was caused by several factors, including, a considerable increase in public-private collaborations to solve urban concerns, such as "developers, banks, and corporations of national and worldwide prominence" (Kong, 2000, p. 7). For these reasons Bianchini (1999, p. 38) referred to this time as the "age of city marketing". Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, neo-liberal policies encouraged a reduction in financial resources and government spending as well as a move toward deregulation, laissez-faire, and market-driven planning.

The transformation of urban marketing into a comprehensive strategy for city branding has profound ramifications for how culture is used. Indeed, the holistic city branding approach suggests "wholesale city repositioning and place-making (Ward, 1998 cited in Evans, 2003, p. 420) which "attempts to reconcile leisure, business and community demands and aspirations, in a competitive environment" (Evans, 2003, p. 428). The development of cultural infrastructure has shown to be an

effective method for propelling large and rising cities out of the outmoded industrial economies on which they relied. Top-down investments in landmark cultural facilities and headline events have been essential to breathing fresh life into blighted communities, as we already mentioned in the famous case of Bilbao.

This topic is very relevant for the following analysis that will investigate an example of a planned cluster, thus derived from a series of top-down operations. In particular, as discussed in the next section of the literature review, in cultural district development it is crucial to consider the impact on existing residents and businesses and the importance of community engagement.

2.2.3 Regeneration or gentrification?

As stated by Klunzman: “Each story of regeneration begins with poetry and ends with real estate” (Evans, 2005). Urban renewal and its implementation are intertwined in a complex debate that is closely related to the concept of gentrification. In particular, top-down policies frequently indicate a worsening of the current conditions of uneven growth. For example, various regeneration initiatives, particularly at the local level, have favoured urban growth at the expense of certain target populations, leading to gentrification. Florida (2004) also acknowledges that the creative class can exacerbate inequalities and lead to gentrification and displacement of low-income residents.

At the same time, gentrification is related to the government's strong role in supporting a 'positive' kind of gentrification aimed at revitalizing abandoned urban areas. The government has frequently interfered to encourage business redevelopment. As a result, because of its renewing effect, politicians and the media have embraced gentrification in many situations (Zukin et al., 2009).

Researchers and policymakers have mostly disagreed over whether gentrification has a beneficial or detrimental impact on the city. The following research will investigate the role of the planned cluster on the community, paying particular attention to a possible gentrification effect.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Strategy

In the previous chapter, the main theoretical underpinnings have been addressed. In particular, the main theories on spontaneous clusters and agglomeration economies were discussed, as well as the planned cultural district as a catalyst for urban regeneration and the possible gentrification effect caused by regeneration policies. This theoretical framework provides the foundation for investigating the case study. The following research will focus on the case of the planned district Manifattura delle Arti (Factory of the Arts) in Bologna in order to answer the following research question:

Can a cultural cluster be planned? How did the dynamics of agglomeration work in Manifattura delle Arti in Bologna?

A case study strategy was selected because it allows an in-depth analysis of a place such as a community or organisation (Brayman, 2012). Considering the intrinsic connection of clusters with the territory and the community, allows us to investigate the possible effects of clustering within the urban environment. The district of Manifattura delle Arti is a significant case of planned cluster and is adequately developed to make an analysis, as the district was implemented in the early 2000s. Moreover, the context of Bologna is suitable for investigating the top-down bottom-up dilemma, as the city shows a strong emphasis on culture both from the bottom and from the top. On the one hand has a high density of associations and bottom-up initiatives, indeed there are 1.06 non-profit organisations for every 10,000 people (Morea, 2023). On the other hand, the municipality shows great interest in cultural and urban regeneration policies, demonstrated by high spending on cultural initiatives. Overall, the city is connoted by high creativity, with a score of 29,7 according to the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor ranking (Montalto et. al, 2019). Moreover, Bologna cultural activities are viewed as crucial in supporting socialization and the development of human and urban skills (Morea, 2023). However, within the case study framework, it may be challenging to establish cause-and-effect links between the data collected and findings are not always generalizable (Rutteford, 2012).

To understand how the dynamics of agglomeration act within Manifattura delle Arti, a qualitative approach will be adopted. Interviews have been conducted with key actors working in the cluster, such as directors and cultural employees in the main organisations and institutions of the

district and other stakeholders involved in the governance of the area and of the municipality. Indeed, through qualitative research interviews, it is possible to capture the respondents' perspective on their lives, as perceived by them, thus enabling researchers to grasp their experiences, their feelings and their social sphere (Fossey et. al, 2002). In particular, I conducted semi-structured interviews, which employ an interview outline to allow for a more concentrated examination of a certain topic and guarantee the “sensitivity to participants’ language and privileging their knowledge” (Fossey et. al, 2002).

3.2 Data Sample

Assessment of the population considered relevant for the study constitutes the initial stage of the sampling procedure. In particular, since this is qualitative research, a purposive sampling approach was adopted. Indeed, with direct relation to the research questions being answered, this sort of sampling essentially involves the selection of a unit (Brayman, 2012). In this case, the sample is consisting mostly of cultural workers within the organisations located in the district. Moreover, other stakeholders involved in the governance of the cluster and of the municipality were identified as relevant respondents. A snowball sample approach was also employed. Indeed, some participants identified other people with direct knowledge relevant to the current investigation, allowing the researcher to familiarise with the district and gather a larger sample of organisations and perspectives.

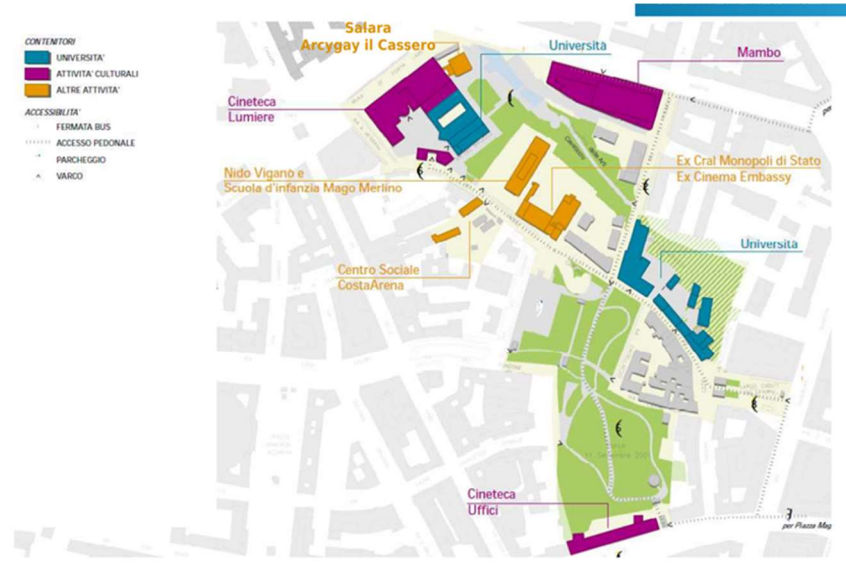
3.3 Data Collection

- Interviews transcribed in the original language (italian) and then analysed trough Atlas.ti
- Three steps of coding:
 - open coding
 - selective coding
 - conceptualization

3.4 Limitations

4. CASE STUDY: Manifattura delle Arti

Figure 1: District conformation



Manifattura delle Arti (Factory of the Arts), is a cultural district located in Bologna, in the centre-north of Italy. The district is home to organisations with very different natures, both in terms of artistic and cultural content and in terms of legal status. Manifattura delle Arti was implemented in the early 2000s, contextually to the planning for Bologna 2000 - European Capital of Culture (Zan et. al, 2011). The strategy entailed converting a former trade fair into a cultural district by bringing together various cultural institutions that were previously dispersed. These institutions included GAM (Modern Art Gallery), Cineteca (Film Archive), Lumière Art Film Theater, Film Commission, Communication Studies Department, and Film Studies Department of the University of Bologna (Zan et. al, 2011).

5. RESULTS

5.1 The planned district incites a spontaneous order and a subcluster

Most respondents, especially among the founding organisations of the district, do not recognise the actual existence and functioning of the district. As stated by interviewee 2: “It was conceived, it was created, it was much communicated, but it was never actually implemented”. This perspective is in line with the perception of many other respondents. Indeed, according to the officer of the neighbourhood Porto-Saragozza: “the absence of a common network in Manifattura delle Arti means that the organisations are closed enclaves”. Moreover, respondent 5 added, “we are talking about territorially about something quite unique, but it is not interpreted as a district, it is not told as a district, and it does not work as a district, the individual organisations that are part of this territorial neighbourhood are left to their own initiative to build things”. In general, the lack of a governance model to coordinate the various organisations and strengthen synergy was complained of. Indeed, as claimed by interviewee 7: “There is a lack of governance tools for this network, i.e. a model of collaboration between the various actors that makes this system work, so I probably don't know whether it is necessary to have centralised coordination of Manifattura or whether it would be better to try to find a governance model that also redistributes responsibilities between the various actors so they can actually work in synergy with each other”. In addition, respondent 3 stated: “It was never possible to create a real network between the spaces. Partly because the resources were not there, in the sense that there was perhaps a lack of a higher element that could coordinate it both conceptually and economically”. The perception from many interviewees is that the district was planned from above, but dropped without detail and without successful interventions that would foster synergy between the actors. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, policymakers all across the world have attempted to construct cultural districts from the top down (Lavanga,2020). Nevertheless, most districts grow slowly, and cultural clusters emerge organically and spontaneously. Aligned with this perspective, it has been observed that the main attempts at networking and collaboration were made from the bottom up, “between those who were talking to each other” (interviewee 3). Indeed, it could be said that a kind of spontaneous sub-cluster has emerged from the planned district. In particular “this convergence of cultural institutions, especially interested in contemporary languages, has attracted other initiatives that are both private, commercial and cultural associations, as well as non-profit spaces run by artists or collectives that over time have populated neighbouring spaces for periods or even on a more permanent basis. **There is a real district of private galleries**” (interviewee 8). As testified by the owner of one of the galleries located in the cluster: “I wanted to open my gallery precisely to be close to the museum (MAMbo) and to be close to the realities with which I absolutely speak the same language. Of

course, it was a choice that was strongly wanted and thought out". In this case, the spontaneous sub-cluster developed from the institutional one seems to follow the dynamics of agglomeration economies. Indeed, in this cluster of contemporary galleries, it is possible to recognize the importance of proximity, strong collaboration, and knowledge spillover (Lavanga, 2020). As stated by respondent 8: "Working together with other institutions allows you to increase your audiences and thus also mix professional knowledge, so that is only a good thing". This finding shows that it is advantageous for art galleries to locate themselves in close proximity to other galleries and in general in a space with a high cultural density. According to Schuetz and Green (2014), new art galleries tend to position themselves close to existing established galleries since this strategy ensures the activity's survival.

The director of another contemporary art gallery in the cluster stated: "The first was Davide Rosi who opened CARDRDE, then came the guys from P420, it was only a year later I was the third private commercial reality to open in the area the intentions were to act as a corollary to the museum of contemporary art in Bologna, later there were two or three other non-profit spaces that opened in this area we have really made a difference in terms of the very scene of contemporary research in the city over the last 10 years". This result also recalls another aspect mentioned in the literature review, regarding the innovative character of clusters. Indeed, according to Porter (2000), clusters play a central role in the innovation potential of the company and of the field. Indeed, this cluster of contemporary galleries has a strong predisposition for innovation and is home to some of the most experimental contemporary galleries in Italy, such as P420. As stressed by Lidegaard (2017) implicit (bottom-up) tactics are governed by a laissez-faire attitude and frequently evolve and raise fairly spontaneously, allowing for 'self-grown' and experimenting.

Another respondent, a curator of an independent exhibition space, added: "When they (the other galleries) first moved to where they are today, they were clearly in dialogue with us, then forming what was called the MAMbo zone. The average tour that a visitor to Bolognese art was doing was Galleriapiù, CARDRDE, locale due and then P420". The galleries together managed to create a real spill over of publics benefiting from their proximity. As the officer of the neighbourhood Porto-Saragozza stated: "There is a resonance effect. I mean, if you carry out an initiative within that area, it's an area that has its own name and prestige". In this sense, it can be said that the subcluster of galleries was stimulated by the originally planned district, as a high-density cultural reality was created from above, attracting other cultural businesses to the area. This can be seen as a success of cultural planning, which provided an opportunity to foster spontaneity and innovation.

Among the reasons for the lack of interaction between the district's founding organisations

emerged the issue of architectural barriers. Indeed, 5 respondents mentioned a disconnection among the organisations due to the physical disposition of spaces. Interviewee 8 argued: “The district itself on an architectural level was also designed and conceived as a bit of a barrier, it is a small ghetto”. In particular, many interviewees complained about the situation of Cavaticcio Park. The park which all the institutions overlook and that should act as a link between them, but which in fact acts as a dividing element. As claimed by the director of one of the main organisations in the district: “ From an architectural point of view, however, it can be said that the Manifattura delle Arti is a bit of an unfinished project because this bridge, which was supposed to connect the two banks of the Cavaticcio and thus directly link Mambo and the Cineteca to Damslab, was never built, and this certainly causes a bit of a disconnect because although there is this physical proximity of the institutions, they all look outside the Manifattura delle Arti, not so much inside”. This perception is aligned with another consideration elaborated by interviewee 7: “A first consideration that has to do with urban planning, when the restructuring was considered, the park was not considered as a connecting element of passage and exchange. So, this is an initial point that has to do with urban planning and how much urban planning also conditions the use of spaces”. Indeed, according to Jacobs (1961), a creative environment necessitates infrastructure that provides for permeability and accessibility, whereas the former refers to good internal and exterior possibilities for personal transit and communication (Andersson, 1985).

5.2 The relations in the districts and the implications of cultural planning

In the previous section of findings, the difference between the two souls of the district, such as the one composed of the founding institutions and the spontaneous cluster of galleries and private organisations, emerged. This dichotomy is reflected in a different degree of relationship and synergies between these two levels. Indeed, as we have already seen in the first part of this chapter, the identity of the planned district is not very perceived. The main organisations with which the district was conceived argue that there is a lack of synergy among them, due to the lack of a top element of coordination. This result can be compared with the consideration of Miles (2013): the creative city seems stratified, even if the two systems, hegemonic and grassroots, must unavoidably inform and influence each other while retaining two distinct features of the same, although disjointed, economic sphere (Morea, 2023).

5.2.1 Relations between the founding institutions: “They all look outside Manifattura delle Arti, not inside”.

- E diciamo ci sono ogni tanto dei fili che vengono tesi lungo le istituzioni per fare delle cose insieme, però non c'è una politica congiunta non c'è un tavolo tuttora, non esiste un tavolo a cui si incontrano regolarmente le realtà della cosiddetta manifattura delle Arti... secondo me a un certo punto il Comune di Bologna semplicemente ha fatto un passo indietro e ha deciso che non gli interessava più mettere questa gente a parlarsi a tutti i costi
- Così le varie istituzioni sono un po' sempre abbandonate se stesse. Cioè ti dicono sei dentro manifattura delle Arti. Mi raccomando lavorate insieme, fate i bravi, però poi in realtà non esiste un progetto specifico.
- Allora se lasci a queste istituzioni, a queste realtà il compito di auto organizzarsi, non lo faranno da sole, non hanno nessun motivo per mettersi a creare un tavolo permanente di scambio di confronto, forse non ne vedono l'utilità.

5.2.2 The subcluster and the spontaneous order, relations “between those who are talking to each other”

The director of one of the main galleries in the district affirmed: “Certainly the relations between us private businesspeople are very good, we have a continuous dialogue. What I actually feel on my skin is a bit of the detachment and non-functioning of these plans that are so forced from above”.

- **Top-down vs bottom-up**

- “Cioè è un tentativo dal basso di provare a creare effettivamente una rete all'interno della manifattura pur non coinvolgendo direttamente i principali attori della manifattura stessa”.
- Ad esempio le gallerie organizzano come succede in molte città delle aperture congiunte, quindi non so se due o tre volte all'anno tutta questo hummus tutta questo sistema che ti ho nominato si attiva con delle aperture condivise delle performance in strada eccetera, però ci sono anche delle occasioni, appunto più pubbliche come possono essere Open Tour che questo festival legato all'accademia di belle arti in cui le gallerie e gli spazi indipendenti sono chiamati a ospitare delle mosse di giovani artisti dell'Accademia e anche il museo è coinvolto.
- Almeno una o due volte all'anno riusciamo ad aprire in maniera sinergica, sabato scorso c'è stata una bellissima festa manifattura delle Arti, abbiamo aperto le tre gallerie che siamo veramente attigue più o meno 150 metri c'è stata anche una performance sempre di un di uno spazio di un'associazione culturale molto attivo in città che ha deciso di fare una sorta di operazione di arte pubblica

5.3 Relations with the territory and perception of gentrification.

- In realtà questo era un quartiere Popolare, quindi cioè i primi periodi. Non fu tanto ben visto questo piano di riqualificazione perché in base aumentò un casino gli affitti. Ci furono dei pro perché magari chi era proprietario, tutto ok. Sono alcune situazioni che si sono viste anche espropriare alcuni parti di terreni per via della per via del rifacimento del Cavaticcio.
- Siamo passati da una disintegrazione pacifica, cioè dove diversi soggetti coabitavano il territorio pur non parlando, ad un momento in cui sotto il cappello del dialogo è avvenuta un'esclusione di alcuni soggetti.
- non credo che la regolamentazione e il modello culturale importato, cioè preso è messo lì possa funzionare, credo che bisognerebbe dare più valore o cercare di mettere in dialogo le persone e quel territorio lo abitano davvero.
- questo ovviamente ha anche portato a un cambiamento economico importante perché ovviamente gli immobili residenziali che sussistono. Insomma, nell'area limitrofe ovviamente hanno avuto un incremento del loro valore.
- Ok, cioè, quindi abbiamo restituito all'uso dei cittadini una parte della città che non era nell'uso dei cittadini, non so se questo si può chiamare rigenerazione urbana di certo tutta questa area qui è più bella e quindi ovviamente c'è una questione di possiamo chiamarla gentrificazione, ma non è neanche gentrificazione perché ripeto siamo già in centro. Siamo in una in un punto della città in cui c'è poco da gentrificare

- Era uno spazio dove c'erano molti tossici perché siamo vicino alla stazione e c'era anche un centro per le tossicodipendenze proprio qua; quindi, c'è stato un cambiamento radicale della percezione di questo quartiere che adesso appunto è la manifattura delle Arti, il Mambo ci sono i turisti che vengono a vedere il Museo Morandi e questo ha cambiato molto insomma, anche il costo degli appartamenti qua vicino è cambiato. Se si è innalzato moltissimo.
- Solo da un certo punto, mi verrebbe da dire tra il 17 e il 18, quando l'interesse di certe istituzioni sul quartiere è diventato di diverso segno c'è stato comunque un imborghesimento.

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, this thesis has aimed to contribute to the ongoing discourse on cultural districts and urban regeneration, while also addressing important urban and cultural policy issues. By exploring the case study of the planned district "Manifattura delle Arti" in Bologna, the research has sought to shed light on the dynamics of agglomeration and the possibility of planning a cultural cluster.

Through a qualitative approach and interviews with key actors and stakeholders, the study has provided valuable insights into the experiences and challenges faced in the district.

The context of Bologna, with its vibrant association culture and strong municipal support for cultural and urban regeneration initiatives, has provided an ideal setting for investigating the top-down and bottom-up dilemma. The findings of this research have implications for both policymakers and urban planners, as they navigate the complexities of cultural-led regeneration interventions. Understanding the efficient practices and policies that have emerged from the 20 years of Manifattura delle Arti is crucial, especially in light of future projects such as The District of Creativity that the municipality of Bologna is planning.

The main finding highlighted by the research is that a spontaneous sub-cluster of contemporary art galleries and exhibition spaces arose from the institutional district. On the one hand, the results confirmed the theory, according to which implicit (bottom-up) strategies are governed by a laissez-faire attitude and frequently evolve and raise fairly spontaneously, allowing for 'self-grown' and experimenting (Lidegaard, 2017). It can be said that the subcluster of galleries was stimulated by the originally planned district, as a high-density cultural reality was created from above, attracting other cultural businesses to the area. This can be seen as a success of cultural planning, which provided an opportunity to foster spontaneity and innovation. At the same time, the lack of a governance model to coordinate the various organisations and strengthen synergy was complained of. Overall, a balance between bottom-up and top-down approaches result more desirable.

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