Cities, creativities and urban creative economies: Re-descriptions and make+shifts from Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract

The aim of this symposium is to examine the situation of the creative economy in cities; specifically, cities of sub-Saharan Africa. In this introduction to the Symposium we set out the case for the need to 're-describe' the (much derided) phenomenon of the creative city. This task requires a clarification of what is understood in academe and policy communities by the term creative economy, the pronounced growth of this sector, particularly in the South; and, its particular urban character. Second, in the face of this evidence of the actually existing, and growing, importance of the urban creative economy. Third, with this ground-clearing achieved, we seek to frame and focus on the emergence of new research on the urban creative economy. We then use the evidence from the symposium contributions to argue for a reformulation of the creative economy within African Sub-Saharan urbanisation.

0. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this symposium is to examine the situation of the creative economy in cities; specifically, cities of sub-Saharan Africa. Readers might recoil at the idea of the 'creative city', rooted in ideas of place branding, and Export-Orientated Industrialisation (EOI) which sits happily with the Washington Consensus; and, which rightly, itself has been heavily criticised by commentators (Simmons and Elkins 2004; Sturgeon 2001). However, it is important to underline that in this Symposium we are not discussing (except in passing) the notion of the 'creative city'/'creative class' as popularised by Richard Florida (2002); instead we explore 'the

urbanization of the creative economy': as will become clear, this later notion is different, and distinct, from that signalled by the former.

We can briefly introduce the topics of the papers that have provided the 'grist' for the arguments that constitute the current symposium lead paper. The papers by Rosenberg and Brent (this issue) remind us how hardware and software dimensions of urban clustering and creative networking stem from creatives' choices and rationales, which are both contingent and relational in their dynamics. Charman and Govender (this issue) demonstrate how tensions and oppositions between (de-)regulation policies, public and domestic spaces, informal and formal venues, legal and illegal places are productively played out and negotiated by ordinary citizens. Through their experiment with migrant tailors in Lisbon, Vilarinho and Christiaans (this issue) stress how producing the conditions for cross-knowledge construction and knowledge creation implies practicing in-context, beyond formal and informal learning principles. Finally, Sitas (this issue), insisting on the disjuncture between how culture is understood theoretically, how it appears in development strategies and how it actually unfolds, introduces the socially and culturally unsettling graffiti practice and the grounded capacity of its organic collective of producers.

In this introduction to the Symposium we thus set out the case for the need to 're-describe' the phenomenon of the creative city in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) contexts. This task requires a clarification of what is understood in academe and policy communities by the term creative economy, the pronounced growth of this sector, particularly in the South; and, its particular urban character. Second, in the face of this evidence of the actually existing, and growing importance of the urban creative economy question, we wonder why this particular topic has been accorded so little attention. Obviously, the 'guilt by association' with the 'creative city' terminology is one reason. Third, with this ground-clearing achieved, we focus on the emergence of new research on the urban creative economy. The contributors to this Symposium offer some indicative case studies of the challenges, and concerns of, research in Sub-Saharan Africa in what we seek to validate as a new sub-field of urban studies. Collectively, they offer a rebuttal of the notion that the 'creative city', and the associated ideas of place branding are simply associated with EOI. However, they take us much further than this and argue in favour of the necessity to understand the role of culture and creativity as active and present processes in contemporary urbanisation. In short, this is the case for not "throwing out the baby (urbanisation of the creative economy) with the (creative city) bathwater".

1. AFRICAN CREATIVE ECONOMY? PLACING CULTURE IN CONTEXT

This section constructs the frame of reference that is required to make sense of the urban creative economy, a topic which otherwise can either be overlooked, or dismissed. In fact, while there are abundant works in African Studies that look into popular cultures within the streets and urban spaces of the continent (Quayson, 2014; Murray and Myers, 2007; Obrist, 2013; Barber, 1987; Weiss, 2009; Bertz, 2015), so far these have not been explicitly articulated in relation to the creative economy. Rare exceptions exist (Grabski, 2017), but mostly within international policy circles. We thus begin with the notion of the creative economy itself which, whilst invisible to broader debates, has a complex 'pre-history'.

The creative economy is not to be read as, or reduced to, the creative industries. The creative industries were defined by a classification of the commercial 'copyright industries' that were lionised as part of the UK government's knowledge economic strategy in the late 1990s (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005; Pratt 2005). The idea of creative industries quickly caught on, and travelled around the globe. As happens with ideas when they travel, they get translated, and change then variously adapt to new local circumstances (Pratt 2009). Certainly, the notion of the creative industries has been broadened and deepened by researchers and policy makers internationally; based on conceptual and theoretical reflection, and through pragmatic policy development. A revealing response by the Latin American Development Bank - no doubt in exasperation with both the baggage that the UK 'creative industries' terminology carried with it, and its conceptual 'lightness' - was the idea (originating in South America) of renaming the sector 'The Orange Economy' (Buitrago Restrepo and Duque Márquez 2013): an innovative and effective act of 're-description'.

The concept of the 'creative economy' was formally adopted by UNESCO (2009) in its Framework for Cultural Statistics. Subsequently, researchers developed a way of disaggregating trade statistics to identify 'cultural trade': the trade in cultural goods and services that are an international measure of activity. The landmark publication of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2008) established, based on this international trade data, that the creative economy was emerging as a significant component of the global economy. Moreover, that the creative economy was growing at a rate beyond the one of most traditional sectors of the economy, and the fastest growth was to be found in economies of the Global South. Finally, it observed that the creative economy was mainly based in cities. Subsequent reports by UNCTAD (2010) – subtitled 'Creative economy: a feasible development option' – and, the UNESCO (2013) subtitled 'Widening local development pathways' – tracked the rising importance of the creative economy to the Global South, as well as the challenges to policy makers and politicians. Of course, it is not just Africa that has been exploring these new opportunities, and there have been significant reports echoing these debates in Latin America,

and South Asia, in particularly in China where the 'cultural industries' have played a major part in Chinese economic policy direction, and hence urban policy, since 2001 (Keane 2007).

The 2008 UNCTAD signal report, which was not simply the production of UNCTAD but a joint effort of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), was launched in Accra, Ghana at the UNCTAD XII conference and highlighted the promise and opportunity of the creative economy in Africa. To be sure, there also, a genealogy can be traced of African policies dealing with culture and creativity: from the Lagos Plan of Action in 1985, to the 1992 Dakar Plan of Action of Cultural Industries; and then the Nairobi Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa adopted by the African Union in 2008. However, the notion of creative economy was explicitly articulated within practitioners' circles in 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya, with the launch of the first African Creative Economy Conference by the Pan-African network of cultural organisations, Arterial Network.

Our concern, which we want to begin to rebalance in the Symposium, is that this huge transformation that many cities around the world are experiencing, particularly in the Global South, is not being documented nor explored in the detail or the nuance that it deserves. Part of the problem, which we argue in this paper, is that urban scholars have only partially engaged with the creative economy and the 'culture of creativity within the city', and have been too quickly dismissed manifestations of the 'creative city', or simply overlooked the growing creative economy generally, and specifically the ways that it is transforming cities. While our attention focuses on Sub-Saharan African realities, this framing of the argument applies both to cities of the North as well as of the South[1].

Richard Florida's arguments were taken up by policy makers across the North, and they found their way into cities of the South too. However, policy transfer never makes a clean or simple transition; this is another strand which we want to touch on below. There is a significant literature on the shortcomings of Florida's ideas as they have been applied (Peck 2005; Pratt 2008), much of it critical, and latterly even echoed by Florida (2017) himself. This has triggered a lively, albeit partial, debate about the other dimensions of culture, creativity and the city. Simply, the charge which we make in this Symposium is that urban scholars have in effect

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[1] It is also important to note that Florida's definition of the creative class is an occupational one, not an industrial one. Moreover, that the creative class is not comprised of the 'creatives' as those who consume 'creativity' and 'culture'. Hence, the place marketing targeted at making this 'class' comfortable in a constructed habitus (and by extension making life difficult for others). The 'creative class' are hypothesised as the magnet that will attract hi-tech external investment, and the EOI gains. This begins to explain why it is often the urban creative economy that is damaged by pro-'creative city'/'creative class' policies.

'thrown out the baby with the bathwater' with respect to what we refer as the 'urban creative economy', i.e. the relationship between cities, culture and creativity. As the findings in the UN reports on the creative economy underline, and more recently, the 'Global Report: Culture Urban Future' (2016) released for HABITAT Conference and uniquely focused on the role of culture in urban sustainable development, this is a potentially dangerous mistake for all cities, but especially cities of the South. Our aim in this Symposium is to rescue the baby - the creative economy - for the African city.

As Pieterse and Simone (2013) note, much urban African scholarship has focused on the structural and economic problems, and the policy failures that sought to address them. This is not to criticise this, and there is more to do, for sure, but what is still lacking is a "well rounded account of the lived urbanisms in African cities"(Pieterse and Simone 2013, 24); even more so in regards to the creative economy. Tellingly they note (p.28) that "[m]ost scholars are overburdened by a priori moral assumptions about what is good, normal and modern, and what is not, and therefore unworthy of study". The unhelpful assumptions that the creative economy is simply about consumption goods, and not about basic needs, obtains as a strange inheritance from Maslow (1943); as do notions that culture, conceived of as 'tradition', holding back modernisation. The field of culture, identity and values is a broad and complex one which we cannot explore fully here and has been extensively explored within the scholarship concerned with popular culture in urban Africa; but, it is important to note that debates about cities seldom have such concerns at the core of their narratives. We hope that by bringing a group of younger scholars together in a Symposium will validate their work, but also act as a signal to others that such research should be supported more widely.

Rather than framing the debate, and 'object of desire', as the creative city we argue instead to direct enquiries towards an understanding of the urban creative economy. This is more than semantics, emergent scholarship of the urban creative economy seeks to avoid simplistic or reductive dualisms represented by the contraposition of urbanisation on one hand and the promise of the creative city on the other hand; instead presenting them as dynamic dualities. These tensions can be enumerated, but not exhausted by the following: heritage-modernisation, endogenous-exogenous growth, formal-informal practices, state controlled-liberal market initiatives, and creative-non creative economies. The conceptualisation implies a porosity between creative practices and the urban field. Researchers of the creative economy favour the organisational analogy of an ecosystem to conceptualise this relationship[2]: an inter-dependent, iterative, heuristic and mostly heterarchic form (Grabher 2001, Pratt 2004, Gregory 2015, Hutton 2015, Oyekunle 2017).

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[2] This is not a reference to the 'urban ecological' tradition of urban studies

Critically, the capabilities to manage and support these tensions are a complex and emergent zone of intermediation: an expanded meso-level of institutions and networks 'in the making' that characterise the actually existing urban creative economy. As the properties of such an ensemble are emergent, they can't be simply 'bolted on' but must develop in a situated and contextual manner, opening up a dialogue with the local resources and capabilities. It is this situated action that we refer to below as 'make+shift' activity.

2. BEYOND 'CREATIVE CITIES'? THE URBAN CREATIVE ECONOMY FOR REAL

This section examines the distinctive feature of the creative economy – its urban dimension in Sub-Saharan African contexts. We thus discuss on the one hand, the urbanisation of the creative economy; and on another hand, we show how the practices and identities of this specific culture (the one of the 'creatives') has been poorly – if at all - accounted within African (urban) policy. Pack and Theodore's (2015) book Fast Policy describes the ways in which Northern urban policies can travel to the South with deleterious effects. This book offers an illustration of the connections and contradictions of the smooth travel, and sticky delivery of policy. Their broad framework points to the structure of a global new-liberal policy structure. However, key findings that they report concerns "a challenge to a variant of diffusion studies, and instead the existence of a continuous and often contradictory processes-cum -practices of translation" (Peck and Theodore, 2015). The process and the dilemmas that they ably describe speak to questions about the creative economy.

A fellow traveller of the creative economy is certainly the idea of the creative city: a model based on Florida's (2002) thesis that the 'creative class' attracts investors seeking 'knowledge workers'. In policy terms the innovative idea was that that City Mayors' should mobilise cities as 'cool' locations for the creative class. There has been a critical debate focusing on the damage that such polces do to cities; encouraging gentrification and prioritizing richer incomes over residents. As critics have pointed out, it's a familiar notion of EOI with the twist that the 'habitus' that is sought to be created appeals to a 'new' elite socio-economic group. It has been criticised within the North, as well as in its passage to the South. Interestingly, Peck and Theordore's research and argumentation leaves open a space to explore translation of idea and policies; how policies change both through communication across space and time, and in the process of implementation. Similarly, Borén and Young (2013, 2017) highlighted neatly how policies that bear the name, often look different in practice. Moreover, the local conditions lead to the policies taking on different forms. Peck and Theodore's book reminds us of this 'failure' which is not unitary, but which in truth is a politics of resistance and transformation. Policies are adopted due to foreign funding or political opportunism; the failure of the policy, or its

redirection is not only due to the contradiction of the idea model and reality, but also to the local politics and processes that concern action, local embedding and how it works.

Simone and Pieterse (2018) have a very insightful take on this process, that people make the best of what local resources they have in order to 'go on'. They use Vasudevan's (2015) notion of the 'make+shift'; subverting the idea of a temporary inferior, to a way of life. In another theoretical register we can also point to Barnett and Bridge's (2016) advocacy of pragmatism as a way of understanding problem formation and response. In our experience, one needs a lively understanding of local conditions to understand the art of the possible. Indeed, local actors, although shaped by political concerns, are seeking to achieve change in an imperfect world and resource. We read Simone and Pieterse as an other expression of what we take to be the same pragmatism which leads them to explore the city as it is, not what it should/ought be. As Pieterse and Simone note, this is not a simple task, it requires intellectual courage, and social power, to challenge normative notions of what is accepted as research and scholarship; and recognise that the conditions of the production of scientific knowledge are quite different in Sub-Saharan Africa from Europe. We acknowledge the pioneering work of Pieterse and Simone on both capacity building, as well as providing such a string framework of 're-describing' and a sensitivity to the 'make+shift' circumstances. It is in this spirit that we have convened this Symposium of voices from Sub-Saharan Africa as part of a process to place the urban creative economy on our agendas.

Creative workers and their urban contexts have already been well and truly 'described'; following a familiar line of making places more attractive for investment by companies external to host economies. In this sense 'creative cities' are but an iteration of the 'beauty pageant' that frames city marketing: cheap land, cheap labour, nice schools and parks, clean and safe streets; and now, hip neighbourhoods. It's not that there is anything intrinsically wrong with all of these things (as long as it represents fair rates for labour, and that land isn't discounted for investors but not locals): all cities should have them. What is problematic is the way that investment policies and budgets are skewed to benefit on external investors and employees whilst at the same time diminishing the opportunities of locally focused projects. Indeed, the paradox of 'place making' (for external consumption), is that it is couple with, or premised on, place abandonment (for locals); also, that however depleted or fragmented a city may be, 'the intrinsic economic value of the creative economy is at the same time about its intrinsic cultural value' (O'Connor and Shaw, 2014: 167).

The challenge for practitioners in the urban creative economy is not only that government mis-identify their aspirations (global, not local), but also often this mis-recognition (or simply the normative lens) causes them to fail to 'see' the creative practices in front of them (heavily

disguised in their 'make+shift' realities). Moreover, where agencies do register the activity they either have little experience, or capability, to interact and understand creative communities; to do so would also require a parallel transformation of their own agencies via a further 'make+shift' manoeuvre: this is precisely the approach advocated by another 'creative city' strategy[3], the development of 'creative bureaucracies' (Landry 2000, 2006). The normative, 'inter-referenced' script (Roy, 2014) employed in the imaginaries of African city planners[4], often fails to distinguish between the 'external city' that is normatively economically-led and focuses on the physical attributes of urban settings to generate a 'creative image' of the city (to external investors/visitors) and that of the 'internal city' that reflects the complex cultural, social and political attribute of the city, and enables the city to achieve home-grown creative images that reflect its genuine identities (Al Rabady, 2012). With the former, as already noted, we can witness urban territories and populations radically carving up according to income, with urban enclaves' occupants being subjected to and governed by regime ruled on market principles (Watson, 2013: 13).

This conflict of concepts and practice in the constant tension with (what is defined by administrators as) 'the informal', and attempts to regulate and control these activities. The challenge is illustrated in Charman and Govender's discussion of the bars in Cape Town, where only 25% are formal and hence regulated (after a fashion); the 75% being outside state control. This does not mean a state of chaos (as might be implied); rather, as the paper elaborates, there exists of a strong internal order that provides its own systems of regulation of excessive drinking and disruption: there has evolved a 'make+shift' order, and 'organic' regulation. As Simone stresses, 'residents elaborate an urban environement whose reverberations of diverse, intersecting matters – agendas, concerns, activities, calculations, affective intensities and compositions – make it difficult for any single set of actors to unilaterally restructure the textures and uses of that environment' (Simone, 2014: 326).

Quite simply, most of the urban creative economy is outside of (state/public) regulatory control; most activities being carried out by (private) freelancers or micro-enterprises that regulate their activities to remain 'below' the radar (where they must make their own order). This has many benefits, but also problems, as it can exclude many activities from state/public support (if it were available) with informal activities remaining outside the normal legal legitimation. The risk of social exclusion on economic terms, and 'top-down initiatives that promote market-led form of governance' (Gunay and Dokmeci, 2012) is a normative reading of

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[3] Landry's work – although it shares the 'creative city' label - clearly has quite a different approach, politically and practically ,to Florida's: the concern is with the use of creativity to do things 'differently'. In this sense it echoes the notion of 'make+shift'.

[4] Whilst our focus here is on Sub-Saharan Africa, clearly our comments could apply to many places in the world, both in the Global North and South.

the urban creative economy, which insists on a consuming culture rather than its production (Pratt, 2009). In other words, the focus is on consumer opportunities and consumer citizenship; it is on property promotion, profit-oriented investment and urban tourist attraction rather than on fostering talent and boosting creative entrepreneurship. Again, this is illustrated both by Charman and Govender's contribution that focuses on illicit venues of consumption and socialisation and extends into the domestic sphere; and Sitas's case study that is neither about commissioned nor for-profit collective of graffiti artists, and whose practices effectively challenge normative cultural planning and so-called public art paradigms in South African contexts.

In this regard, disrupting a public-private partnership approach that is supposed to be concerned with and focused on the urban majority (Miraftab, 2004), we rather suggest that what is needed instead is a rescaling of the debate between organic and planned developments, that is between bottom-up initiatives emerging from an urban community and top-down ones led by whichever (corporate or state) institutions. Such a perspective forces to focus our literacy of urban creativity on collectives of participants active in the political and material place-making of their city and its creative productivity (Fredericks, 2014). Therefore, a striking insight from a review of African situations is the need to move on analytically from the contracted and restrictive gaze of Northern order and rationality, which frames policy discourse and academic labour. This presumption obscures the urban creative economy for real, the cultural practices of its practitioners and overall, the culture of urban creatives. In fact, the regeneration and re-composition of the city through the mobilization and support for culture and creativity is a complex process with ambivalent implications. As Pieterse (2011:6) notes: '[…] the bulk of city building can be attributed to actors outside of the state and formal business sector'.

3. COMMUNITIES OF CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS: RE-DESCRIBING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE, CREATIVITY AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

This section focuses on explicitly bringing the creative economy scholarship within African as well as Southern urban studies. We do so via bottom-up methodologies (of cultural mapping and action research) that shed lights onto these 'communities of creatives' and discusses the ways in which our contributors' case studies articulate with the reformulation of urban experiences outlined above. The message that is communicated through external creative city discourse is that the African city cannot naturally be 'creative' unless 'creative and cultural' forms are imported (from the North). Our Symposium sees things exactly opposite arguing that normative 'Creative city', or 'place branding', policies exacerbate 'the growing distance

between how the urban Africans actually live and normative trajectories of urbanization and public life [that] can constitute new fields of economic action' (Simone, 2004: 428).

In fact, the 'elite, corporate, and urban developer-inspired conceptualization of future cities in Africa [...] is one approach to putting urban Africa on today's global map' (Grant, 2015: 307). In this respect, they cannot and should not be bluntly disqualified, but the leading focus of government planning on these, can and should be critically questioned; there is a vital role for academic research to demonstrate alternatives to help change this mind set. Moreover, we need to take heed of the call for deeper urban understandings' (Owusu and Oteng-Ababio, 2015: 319). This is even more urgent as 'the left-for-dead era of grand blueprint master planning, has seemingly re-emerged across the continent, often displacing or paralleling the more participatory, action-oriented, and sector-focused planning as well as radical alternatives' (Myers, 2015: 329). This begins to open up an oppositional practice of accepting externally, promoted or legitimated, projects but then 'adapting', or even subverting them in practice: they need to be 're-described'.

All contributions to this symposium offer indicative insights into the evolving creative economy of cities and the culture of its creative practitioners in Sub-Saharan Africa. The papers provide important insights into the ways in which the urban creative economy is developing: from tailoring in Maputo and Lisbon, graffiti in the Phakamisa (King Williams Town), to informal drinking venues in Sweet Home Farm (Cape Town) and the digital creatives in Nairobi. In particular, each of our four contributors show us in in variety of ways how it is possible to navigate, and stay with, the processes of 'make+shift' practices that constitute the day to day realities of existing urban creative economies. Of course, these papers are not representative, and they do not present a systematic view, nor an inclusive one: they are indicative. The challenge of researching urban creative economies is the lack of basic research either locally or nationally explicitly linked to this research agenda; this is amplified in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa. The initiative to curate this Symposium was to highlight the need to populate this field of research with respect to the creative economy of cities with insights into the cultural practices of its creatives. Moreover, the field is a new one for many academic researchers in the region; despite the topic becoming of keen interest to policy makers (and cultural practitioners). Consequently, our objective in bringing together these papers is to provide illustrations that point towards this gap between academe and policy, as well as to provide demonstration of how research can begin the challenge of 're-description' of cities and cultural practices that are not referenced against an ideal-type nor a Northern template. This is a starting point, not the destination. Consistent with our framing debate we divide this part of the paper in two parts: 're-descriptions', and 'make+shifts'.

a. Re-descriptions

As the trajectory of Nairobi illustrates, intrinsic cultural value puts the emphasis on approaches that depart from purely market-led models of creative innovation, to embrace notions of 'community based *social innovations* as an alternative vision of a city's creative capabilities' (Krätke, 2011: 207). Rosenberg and Brent's Nairobi case study, illustrates the delicate tapestry of make+shift activities that compensate for otherwise incomplete infrastructure and information that otherwise results in the location of co-working spaces. This resonates with the finely differentiated socialising functions, which Charman and Govender highlight, and that are represented by the various drinking establishments in Cape Town's townships. Similarly, a distinct community of practice emerged in the Eastern Cape example around the Graffiti centre. A building that had no use (despite being designated as a community centre: there was a lack of community to use it) was activated and brought into use by more 'make+shift' activities compensating for social and physical infrastructures that might otherwise be provided by the state, or the market.

In a contrary manoeuvre, we argue for the necessity of a process of 're-description' of the creative city. Such a tactic reveals another 'creativity', that of embodied cultural and creative practices. The paradox here concerns the social distance between the protected spaces and the rest of the community which activates tension between social networks and the built environment; here, the challenge is to bridge the gap to avoid the (re)-creation of an aesthetic environment that puts off (actual/local) creatives. It is this need that requires the 'make+shift' activities that consume so much time and effort. As such, it is important to recognize how the antagonistic relations of cultural production as well as the multiplicity of rhythms, trajectories and inscriptions of the urban creative economy and its practitioners within a city allow us to "feed into" a new knowledge, one which directly confronts the multiple challenges of the "creative/cultural turn" in urban development. It permits moving beyond a universal approach to the urban economy and global development that downplays the role of social, cultural and informal spheres, and beyond the risks associated with importing exogenous practices (of the "global city", "creative city") that do not sustain an informed culture of policy.

The essence of place making are the practices 'making up' that social and cultural environment, and are not reducible to the physical spaces that constitute that environment. Contributors to the Symposium draw attention to the particular communities of practice (Wenger, 2004) that are formed through cultural production activities. Place-making is thus inscribed, and needs to be re-described, through the repeated instances of interaction and the sociality generated. For example, in Maputo this may be a community of tailors, and/or their relationship to their clients, or the apprenticeship system. Likewise, such relations can be broken, as with the

Maputo tailors in Lisbon. It is noteworthy that in Vilarinho and Christiaans's study, a third party was needed to act as intermediary capable of re-activating and maintaining this community of practice: a relationship that is important in sustaining local identities, as well as producing clothes.

b. Make+shift

The make+shift character of the urban creative economy makes it more similar to the actually existing economies of much of Sub-Saharan Africa: it is woven through threads of communities of practice, obligation, and barter that flow in, and across, what are otherwise termed the formal and informal, the for-profit and its other, and the state and civil society. In the city, this is simply, 'as it is'. As Roy points out, this refers to processes that on one hand, involve 'a complex and dynamic story of flows of capital, labour, ideas and visions'; but on the other hand, 'are not simply the domain for governing and transnational elites' (Roy, 2014: 17). To further support and operationalise the emergent urban creative economy will require a move across scales and across the 'worlds' of a city in a necessary relational fashion – the "relational city" (Pieterse, 2008). It concerns a 'field of manoeuvrability, the act of creating spaces where living can be exercised and deployed' (Simone, 2013: 244). To be sure, the manoeuvre of relational engagements between state, civil society and the private sector remains anchored into a spatiality of unequal resource distribution and production, hence distanced from any consensus-building arena (Ernstson *et al.*, 2014; Pieterse, 2008). Moreover, it exists with an inflated imaginary of 'future cities', and a poverty of vision for the 'actually existing cities'.

In this vein, creative practices are processes that shape and characterize a way of life, express values, and may also provide a living (financially and culturally). Significantly, in each contribution to this Symposium, we can see that already existing solutions are being enacted; however, these are not solutions envisaged nor imagined by 'the system': the creative economy works in spite of, not because of, the system. The hyper-normative story behind the creative city theory remains the point of departure from which these scholars propose a necessarily partial and fragmented perspective of urban creativity. This is the 'urban creative economy' within 'the creative city'. The message is that one has to consistently re-centre the debates on the creatives as key intermediaries in complex and manifold cultural ecosystems in order to effectively re-socialize the idea of creativity.

As such, the contributors to this Symposium advocate following everyday cultural and social practices to uncover the grounded and endogenous creativity of African cities. For example, Rosenberg and Brent provide a reflection (this issue) on the choice and rationales of creatives to live in a city, confronting a highly idealized form of urbanism with its particular assumptions

about infrastructure. They must interact with this infrastructure, but based on an alternative set of assumptions of practice. This 'dual -thinking' is common practice for creative workers across the world and explains why they have to become masters of the 'make+shift' to survive, thrive and prosper. Charman and Govender (this issue) show how shebeens permit reconquering visions of the creative and leisure city, through practices that stabilize the production and reproduction of social relations. And both Vilarinho and Christiaans as well as Sitas (this issue) offer examples of distinctive cultural producers and workers, namely African tailors and graffiti artists who, from their unsettling position towards the creative city agenda, act as cultural and social regenerators.

Following Simone, and in regards to the high-tech workers and entrepreneurs in Nairobi, we can see them 'exert a kind of 'there-ness' whose value and potentials are not clear… [and thus] cannot be 'averaged in' to more generalized formulations' (Simone, 2014: 332). In fact, what Rosenberg and Brent remind us is that rather than the physical infrastructure, and thus clustering of businesses, it is the co-presence and active engagement that is necessary to engage in the essential 'make+shift' activity. Similarly, Charman and Govender show how the capacity and tenacity of informal drinking venues to adapt to regulatory pressures presents a range of possibilities for reimagining the night-time leisure economy in ways that are inclusive of the poor and conducive to negotiation. Arguing for the creative economy to be approached from a cultural perspective, Vilarinho and Christiaans demonstrate the role of African tailors in shaping urban experiences – visually incrementing practices – in a way that is fundamental to the comprehension of sartorial culture, whilst alluding to complex intersections between local and global markets. And, finally, Sitas, while situating graffiti as a critical social and spatial practice, challenges normative cultural planning paradigms through her exploration of an alternative approach to cultural development by and for young people usually marginalised by the mainstream practice of culture-led economic development.

In this regard, dichotomic and binary approaches that we have inherited, through quasi-normative policy scripts and traditional concepts of culture, are neither useful nor productive. Indeed, there, 'the configuration of urban solidarity, realized at primarily local, neighbourhood levels, occurred through an interpretation of domains and sectors rather than through the consolidation of citizenship within well-defined and well-managed 'modern' institutions' (Simone, 2008: 15). This sentiment echoes our contributors in recognising the vitality of local communities of cultural practice, in their 'make+shift' realities and working with them, by understanding and enabling their visions.

4. CONDITIONAL CONCLUSIONS: RESOURCES FOR RECONSTRUCTION

The aim of this Symposium has been to re-position the creative economy – and the cultural practices of its practitioners in urban studies, and more specifically to situate the creative economy within Africanist urban scholarship. As such, we have noted that the notion of the urban creative economy has been marginalised or dismissed due to its association with the idea of the 'creative city/class'. It is an uncomfortable truth that there is little academic research on the urban creative economy as such in the Global South, and there is a particular dearth in African contexts – despite an abundance of studies in history, geography and anthropology across the continent dealing with everyday/popular African cultures. Accordingly, there is a minimal academic, or policy, library to consult in order to build a systematic or complete picture. The absence of researchers, and research is only part of the problem; its co-equal companion is the lack of 'space' that the cultural economy has been afforded in urban research. Through conducting and researching this Symposium we hope that we have been able to point to a lack, as well as help to build resources for it to be filled in the future.

We also need to petition urban researchers in Southern contexts to take culture more seriously: not simply as social and cultural diversity, or as critique of EOI, but as through a full engagement with the details and expanse of urban creative practices. Creative work is valid and important work: culture provides jobs, and a sense of meaning and worth, as well as cultivating explorations of identity and community. Faced with such a challenge, vital capacity building has to take place in academe, as well as policy and political worlds. Such a practical intervention takes seriously the project being undertaken by other African urban researchers of uncovering 'the emergence of new social formations in the midst of informalization, which often work under the radar and create communities of practice between residents, civic leaders and civil servants that incrementally change institutional life in the city' (Ernstson et al., 2014: 1565). However, as far as processes related to the urban creative economy in African contexts are concerned, a rich body of informed knowledge is still yet to be developed.

Accordingly, the case studies represented in this Symposium are a tantalising glimpse of how citizens are not 'done to', but 'doing' in an international urban context, "worlding" (Roy, 2014) their everyday creative practices. Critically, we found that dichotomous categories of cultural/creative or not, public or private, hard and soft infrastructures dissolved into an active, and hybrid, present of practice, which produces and reproduces social infrastructures and relations, in a regenerative process beyond linear and normative approaches. The challenge faced by academics and policy makers is then to interrogate this process, to make it visible, and not to ignore it, or consider it irrelevant, or a failure. In this respect, the articles comprised in this Symposium demonstrate the multiple ways in which concepts and analysis of the urban creative economy foreground a practical adaptation, translation, through contextual and

culturally sensitive experiences. The papers do not represent a definitive map, but offer an insight and an inspiration.

As Simone warns us 'if the experiences of cities and urban regions across a diffuse and often conceptually murky global south are to exert a critical effect on urban theory in general, a wide range of seemingly 'missing' people, spaces and practices must be considered' (Simone, 2014: 322). Our aim in this Symposium has been to recover the urban creative economy in African contexts from its 'missing' status. Endogenous academic analysis and knowledge production still have not yet achieved what Diouf has referred as a 'geography of possible developments outside the conventional images of success' (2003: 5): a geography that moves beyond a universal approach to urban economy and global development, and ultimately fosters local capacity building and local capability recognition, where the human infrastructure animating the urban creative economy may be a domain of governing and transnational elites, but also critically of popular, rogue, informal and less visible worlds. We hope that our paper, as this Symposium, will inspire others to follow such a route.

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