

CREATIVITY AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN REGENERATION: RETHINKING CITIES FOR CULTURAL TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

The creative city is a city able to generate economies of innovation, culture, research and artistic production, and strengthen its own identity capital. The most mature experiences of creative cities show us two types of creative clusters: the cultural clusters and the cluster of events. In this respect, the enhancement of urban waterfronts is increasingly becoming a starting point for activating innovative urban redevelopment strategies which involve not only the waterfront but also the whole urban area. Starting from such premises, this paper explores the concept of the creative city, the factors conditioning creativity in cities and how they stimulate urban innovation and local development. Two emblematic examples of creative clusters - both related to urban waterfront regeneration - are illustrated where place identity, sustainability of interventions and involvement of the population are the main elements to be considered both for sustainable urban regeneration and cultural tourism.

KEYWORDS

Creativity; Sustainable Urban Regeneration; Urban Waterfronts; Place Identity; Cultural Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Creative cities are currently working on how to improve the interaction between regeneration building, economic development and social renewal in order to achieve more comprehensive development of the city (Carta, 2004; Florida, 2005). In recent decades, the role of culture has become a major and often driving factor for the process of urban regeneration. The focus on culture as a factor in regional transformation has been particularly extensive in response to competitiveness among cities, but also to the needs of sustainability of the cultural sector (Sepe, 2004). In the same perspective of this approach, culture in its broadest sense assumes a decisive role in constructing a system of interventions where employment, tourism, and social and sustainable development become the product of the integration of places, people, economies and traditions (Scott, 2000). Indeed, there are ever more types of different visitors and relative demands and cities need to provide for new types of cultural uses, suitable for tourists as well as citizens and visitors in general.

Looking at the experiences of creative cities, we can observe that they revolve around the design, promotion and activation of urban areas established because of their particular local characteristics. Such areas become creative clusters as a result of economic and structural innovations, related to the realization of innovator projects achieved with the help of local development strategies based on the economies of excellence, culture and territorial quality. Two main types of clusters may be recognized within the creative city. The first type are the cultural clusters, which are created around activities such as fine arts, music, cinema, architecture and design, and whose start-up is encouraged and planned by local administration. The second is the cluster of events, whose development has its origins in the organization of great events or different kinds of recreational and cultural manifestations (Carta, 2007; Maitland, 2009).

Starting from such premises, the aim of this paper is to investigate the concept of the creative city, what factors condition creativity in cities, and how they stimulate sustainable urban innovation. Two examples of creative clusters – the former in Bilbao and the latter in Zaragoza – are illustrated. These case studies are related to the regeneration of urban waterfronts. These are places which are able to absorb tangible and intangible energies from the water, combine them

with the urban context and transform them into local resources of value to residents and visitors alike. In this regards, it is important not to place too much stress on tourist development where the term "cultural" is an instrument rather than a quality: for sustainable development, a real engine of change, the "cultural" element must offer quality to tourism not vice versa. The more value is given to the local cultural peculiarities – such as cultural heritage and place identity – the more the operation of urban regeneration may be embedded within the local fabric and be attractive for residents and cultural tourists (Evans, 2001; Richards, 1996; Unesco 2006).

CREATIVE CITY AND PLACE IDENTITY

It is generally acknowledged that creative cities are able to generate economies of innovation, culture, research and artistic production, and hence strengthen their own identity capital. It is a question not only of boosting existing culture-based economies but also producing new economies out of cultural capital, understood as an essential element of both tangible and intangible place identity — and creating a system together with other urban capital (Carta, 2007). Indeed, the changes in the contemporary city have contributed to an increasing urban identity crisis, transforming European cities into complex and heterogeneous societies. Recognising the value of place identity as a fundamental component in implementing urban change serves as a reference point both in terms of society's wishes and in safeguarding and constructing the sustainable urban image (Carter et al., 1993; Castells, 1997; Hague and Jenkins, 2005; Neil, 2004; Sepe, 2007). Built *heritage narratives* facilitate the creation and enhancement of national identities by 'denoting particular places as centres of collective cultural consciousness' (Graham, 1998). Cities have to find out how to reduce the risks inherent in the tendency of contemporary urban societies to fall back on their heritage and roots as they face up to an identity crisis. In this respect, innovation in urban space design represents an opportunity to construct an identity of places and give international scope to the urban form of European cities (Gospodini, 2004; Massey and Jess, 1995).

Florida (2002) has observed the relationship between the transformations in the capitalist mode of production – in particular those occurring at the urban scale including the clusters of high-tech firms,

the dissemination of leisure activities and the urban economic networks – and the changes in identities of the actors involved in such transformations. Florida argues that the more cities are able to seem attractive to the creative class of workers and managers in the various sectors of economy such as art, design, fashion and advanced technologies, the greater are the chances that those cities can successfully face up to the challenges of competition among cities imposed by globalization (Landry, 2000).

However, it must be understood that creativity is found not only in the typical characteristics of the entrepreneurial spirit but also in forms such as the dissemination of behaviour favourable to cultural exchange as well as enhancement of lifestyle diversity. The city may be viewed as an organism: all elements are inextricably interwoven and planning is based on how people "feel" the city from an emotional and psychological point of view. Its guiding principle is placemaking rather than urban development (Landry, 2008). In this way, the creative city recognises the complexity and addresses the spatial, physical and land use conditions which help people to think and act with the use of imagination and live the city as a satisfying experience. The creation of an urban environment which encourages the setting up of innovative activities requires, at the local level, the construction of a specialized production system and the establishment of an urban environment which can support the testing of consensual practice of regional government (Scott, 2006).

The creative city is moving from a city where the creative class attracts new economies to cities where the creative class generates new economies, producing new identities and new geographies based on culture, arts, knowledge, communication and cooperation. The objective is to nourish creativity within the city, and produce a creative class from inside rather than attract one from outside. In this framework there is the creative *milieu*, intended as a place, which may correspond to the whole city or to a part thereof and which contains the characteristics necessary for generating a flow of creative ideas and innovations. It is possible to define the milieu as a local system, where its players can operate in open contexts and are capable of global experiences, and where, in turn, spatial interactions create new ideas, products and services, and thus contribute to the regeneration of the city. In the creative milieu, clusters and districts capable of

strengthening the cultural urban structure can be developed (Carta, 2007; Florida, 2005).

CULTURAL RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY

Nowadays there are ever more types of visitors: no longer only typical tourists, but also professionals, congress tourists, etc... who go to a place on business or for other reasons and then want to visit the city. Visitor demands are many and varied, and the task of the city is to create an environment not designed for rapid consumption of culture and place identity. The city has to provide new types of cultural uses - meant in the broadest sense -, where the wishes of residents, visitors and tourists will coincide in some points (Sepe, 2009).

Indeed, the formation of an international creative district must be accompanied by the construction of lines of action to make the factors of development, enabled by the cluster, consistent with identity and sustainable growth of the city (Nijkamp and Perrels, 1994). Creative resources are usually more sustainable than physical ones: monuments and museums are often subjected to degradation, while creative resources are constantly renewable. Furthermore, creativity is more mobile, because it does not depend on concentration of cultural resources and can be produced anywhere (Richards and Wilson, 2006). Furthermore, the development of a creative district has to be considered alongside sustainable development intended in the economic, social and environmental sense (Ferilli and Pedrini, 2007), conditions which are equally important and interdependent for the sustainability of cultural resources.

The *economic sustainability* of culture as a resource depends on a complex system of balances and social actors which may become decoupled as a result of an overly instrumental attitude towards the economic potential of culture (Comunian and Sacco, 2006; Zukin, 1995). Although culture and cultural institutions have benefited from the recognition of its social and economic value, it must be borne in mind that when public policies primarily focus on the potential of developing culture, the result is a gradual loss of attention towards intrinsic motivation of the production and consumption of culture: particular emphasis is laid on its economic benefits. As Comunian and Sacco argue, the risk of this type of operation is to conclude that

'all that is creative is good', relegating to second place the quality of projects and initiatives.

Thus economic sustainability can be defined as “the ability to generate income, profits and work within a system of equal opportunities for all the elements of society, inside a model which enhances and increases land resources, and furthermore does not produce a collapse of the same in quantity or quality”. The characteristics of territory, seen as a complex system where tangible and intangible cultural resources become elements of a chain of added value, assume a key role in developing the local system. In this way the district, starting from the elements of territory and their enhancement and promotion, will be economically sustainable in the long term.

Social sustainability is the “ability to ensure welfare conditions and growth opportunities equitably distributed in society”. Setting up a development model based on enhancing culture fosters social regeneration in the area, generating in people a perception of belonging, an increase in the social capital, the change in place image, and an increase in the level of education. Cultural production and use perform functions of generation and dissemination of creative thinking. Furthermore, this use provides tools for the growth of individual opportunities by creating a process for socially sustainable development.

Finally, with respect to environmental sustainability, the area should be understood in its various historical and cultural values, and in its tangible and intangible capital. Territory is characterized by both types of capital and its identity cannot be considered separately from them. However, even if the consequences of resource depletion on the nature of territory are known, depletion of intangible capital is less evident, albeit just as important. It is therefore necessary to create a close relationship between production systems and central areas, so that companies interact in processes which generate value for the territory.

CREATIVITY IN URBAN REGENERATION

The experiences of creative cities can lead to the promotion of areas of cities which base their competitiveness on local peculiarities related to the value of the “city brand” (Anholt, 2007), and also highlighting the possibility of addressing the evolution of urban systems in the city. These areas become creative clusters as a result of innova-

tive economic and structural initiatives, implemented within appropriate local development strategies based on territorial quality and excellence. The advantages of a concentration of creative clusters are due to the presence of relationships and strong ties (social capital) between the actors and the rapid dissemination of information and knowledge. Also, such clusters find an inexhaustible source of development in the sensitivity of local authorities which, through processes of governance, target the full development and renewal of the metropolitan context. The main elements of these clusters are regional specificity and their strict correlation with the heritage of knowledge as well as new plans and initiatives due to innovative projects. Therefore, crucial for the identification of creative clusters are the different policies and visions which are able to regulate and influence the decisions of local economic actors. In areas where the erosion of identity, the result of massive globalization, has not prevailed, we find cultural resources that are transformed into opportunities for business (Caroli, 2004).

Two main types of clusters may be recognized within the creative city: cultural clusters and event clusters (Carta, 2007). The competitive advantage of the cultural cluster is the use of new technologies and the creation of districts in which to allocate and develop regional excellence. Cultural clusters are created around activities such as fine arts, music, cinema, architecture and design, which are encouraged and planned by local administration. The intangible resources and skills of the actors depend on the local authorities that through local planning aim to recover the whole region. The Ciudad of Valencia, the Guggenheim of Bilbao, and Liverpool's Albert Docks and Tate are examples which, together with their respective Cities of Art, represent cultural districts. Public support for the cultural cluster serves in the start-up phase to give credibility to the project, and allows visibility at the international level. Area policies are devoted to creating the social and economic conditions to develop an urban environment that attracts culturally interested actors.

The second cluster type is that of events which is fuelled by the interconnections of innovative resources in cities. This cluster intercepts new cultural flows and leads to new cultural infrastructures being built. Its origins lie in the organization of great events or different kinds of recreational and cultural activities which are bound together by the importance that the city gains in connection to these events.

The cluster of events includes Expos, the *Biennials of Venezia*, the European Capital of Culture and the Olympic games. The manufacturing and services "machine" which is built around the event is active throughout the year, while the event has a limited duration. To ensure a cluster of urban creativity a system of governance needs to be created to support the network of players who must cooperate so as to generate new resources and enhance those already existing, as well as contribute to embedding the results in the area. The risk of losing the positive long-term effect of such operations at the conclusion of the event is thereby avoided. Thus the function of the cluster should serve to transform the intangible energies connected to culture, art and leisure, into financial, productive and social resources both for the host city and the surrounding area, which in turn are capable of transforming them into structural resources.

The overlap of the cultural cluster with the events cluster (Caves, 2000) is due to the convergence of information processes and new technology. Thus the clusters have expanded opportunities, boosting area development and hence stimulating the economy of cities.

By way of example, two emblematic case studies of creative clusters are illustrated, namely Bilbao in relation to cultural clusters, and Zaragoza contextualized in the cluster of events, which have used waterfront renewal as an opportunity for urban regeneration as well as social, cultural, tourist and economic revitalization.

Substantial urban revitalization is now under way involving sea shores, river banks or banks - mainly for business use - after they have fallen into disuse. Waterfront redevelopment and enhancement is increasingly becoming a starting point for implementing complex urban redevelopment strategies which involve not only the waterfront but also the whole urban area. These places are to take on new cultural features: large-scale projects involving mega-events and/or the creation of new museums, theatres or multifunctional centres, capable of attracting new businesses and cultural tourism (Guala, 2002; Roche, 2000; Smith, 2007).

The case studies which are illustrated below are both located in Spain: the Bilbao project mainly focuses on the regeneration of the Abandoibarra area along the Nervión river, and that of Zaragoza starts from the regeneration of a bend of the Ebro river and then involves the city centre. These projects were chosen because they are based on the attention to place identity, strong involvement of the

population and sustainability of the interventions, which are to be considered key elements for urban and cultural regeneration for both citizens and visitors.

THE ABANDOIBARRA REGENERATION IN BILBAO

The Guggenheim Museum was the starting point of the urban regeneration which has transformed the industrial area of Abandoibarra, allowing the cultural renaissance of Bilbao. Built along the Nervión river, Bilbao is a city of about 900,000 inhabitants and the capital of the Northern Province of Bizcay, whose industrial past has strongly characterized the urban aspect of this city and its citizens. With the urban transformation of this city there has been a significant cultural and political change involving all elements of the local community, which was initially opposed to the initiative because it was still attached to the model of the industrial city and did not believe in the enormous potential of the regeneration programme. The Guggenheim Foundation asked Bilbao municipality to create a unique work of architecture, capable of becoming the symbol of the city. Among the proposals drawn up by international *stararchitects* that of Frank O. Gehry was accepted (Plate 1). The decision to build the new museum is part of a wider project to regenerate the banks of the Nervión river in order to launch economic transformation able to tackle the crisis which was occurring in the Basque Country and Bilbao in the 1970s and 1980s (Bilbao Ria 2000; Guala, 2002).

PLATE 1

Bilbao, Guggenheim museum (Photo: M.Sepe)



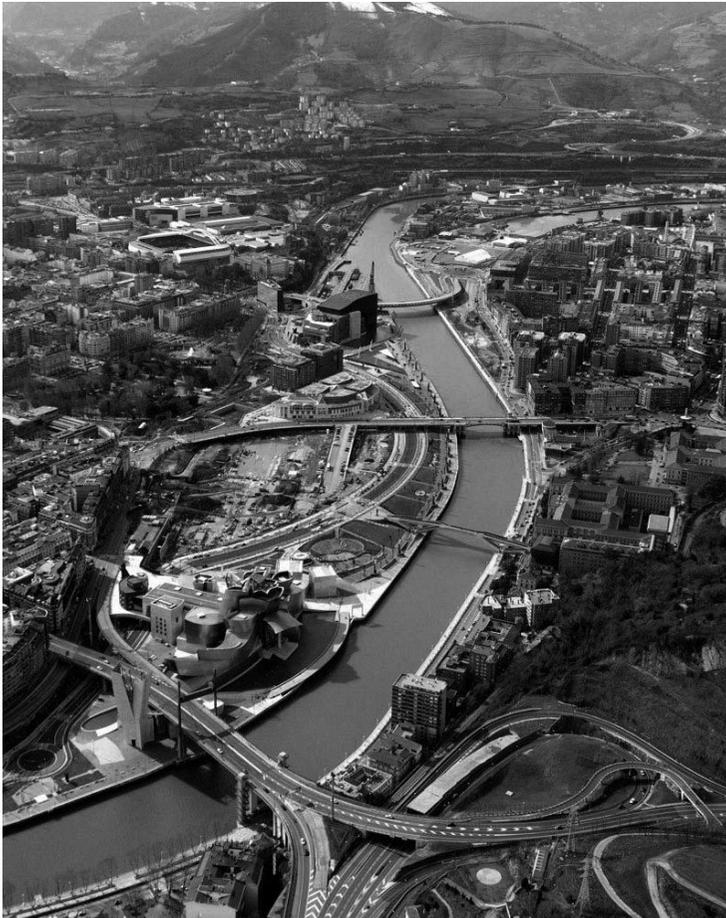
The aim is to transform the former area of Abandoibarra into the new centre of Bilbao, giving an image of innovation, in accordance with its identity, and international competitiveness. The planning tool was the General Urban Plan to regenerate Bilbao, approved in 1994, which proposed the replacement of the industrial function of Abandoibarra with the mixed function, combining tertiary and residential uses, and the creation of a multifunctional area.

César Pelli drew up the Guidelines for Planning for the Recovery of Abandoibarra following an international ideas competition held in 1992. Pelli's plan aims to improve the accessibility of the city, the internal mobility and the urban and environmental quality, and, at the same time, implement a social plan for the community, through interventions that focus on training, higher education and local identity, and with culture as an element of Bilbao's revitalization and repositioning. This idea was realized by creating an area which includes

space for offices, public spaces, commercial buildings, a convention centre, tourist infrastructures, university services, the development of residential areas and the improvement of river infrastructures (Plate 2). To achieve this broad programme of actions, in 1992 the Bilbao Ría 2000 company was founded. Bilbao Ría has the strategic function to reach an agreement between the various institutions participating in the plan.

PLATE 2

**Bilbao, Abandoibarra project area (from:
<http://www.bilbaoria2000.org>)**



It also serves the economic function of selling urbanized areas to private investors and reinvesting the profits in new business. This was especially encouraged by the fact that the presence of projects entrusted to *starchitects* allowed an attractive area to be established which was able to draw in new capital. Finally, it has a function of management coordination to achieve new forms of urban governance by creating institutions for the coordinating of project management, planning and implementation of the project.

The partners in this operation were the Spanish Government, the Basque Government, the Government of the Province of Bizcay, and the Municipality of Bilbao, as well as some public companies (such as RENFE and the port authorities) and Bilbao Metropoli 30.

The operation resulted in the closure of the shipyards of Euskalduna, with the transfer of port activities to the external mouth of the river, the construction of new rail infrastructure able to link the two shores of the river and improve subway mobility and interior access and the enlargement and modernization of the airport.

Santiago Calatrava designed the new airport and a new bridge over the Nervión. New facilities for conferences, sports and leisure by architects such as Robert Stern, Ricardo Legorreta, Soriano y Palacios and Isozaki were built. Norman Foster was called to design and build the metro, with the exits at street level, and the transport system is being improved to the sea front and Basque tourist destinations, walking and cycling trails are being built, and the historic centre is being recovered.

The Plan for the Recovery of Abandoibarra was still not complete at the time of writing. The main economic force behind this regeneration is the Guggenheim Museum which is growing year by year: in 2003 the museum attracted a total of 875,807 visitors; this rose to 909,144 in 2004, and 965,082 in 2005. Thus the museum and its revenue are contributing to maintain about 4,850 jobs. The Guggenheim is now 78% self-funded and generates about 185 million euros to the Basque Country GDP. Furthermore, the tourism industry has switched from business tourism - operating throughout the year except for the summer - to cultural tourism, affecting the months between July and October. Indeed, since 1997 - when the museum opened - Bilbao has become an international city, with the number of foreign visitors increasing by 63% (Lopez, 2006).

The success of the operation is linked to effective public-private partnership, a major investment in human resources, and development of centre for cultural performances, exhibits and other creative activities that constitute neighbourhood bonding (Carta, 2007). In different periods of the year, and in particular during August, the whole population is involved in cultural festivals and events, based on a mix of local traditions and international events. These attract large number of tourists and each event is discussed among the stakeholders in the very broadest sense, i.e. among the people at large, contributing to the embedding of the creative regeneration on the territory.

THE MILLA DIGITAL PROJECT IN ZARAGOZA

Zaragoza's Milla Digital is a creative project, in the context of the cluster of events, which mixes urban design, new cultural facilities and new media technologies with the aim of creating or boosting a successful innovation ecosystem.

The general aim of Milla Digital is to build an innovative environment to become part of the city's identity. This environment, which consists of new digitally-mediated places, will provide a new generation of public facilities able to develop a sustainable network of innovation and creativity. Zaragoza is a city of about 700,000 inhabitants and is the capital of the Aragón Region with a cultural heritage with an old tradition of architecture and urban public spaces. The city has a growing industrial base and very good socio-economic indicators within the Spanish average.

Milla Digital is converting the area between the old El Portillo station and the new Delicias station of Zaragoza into an area of technology parks and development (Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza, 2008). The City Council has collaborated on this project with: a research team from MIT; the University of Zaragoza; a group of experts including W. Mitchell, P. Hall, M.Castells, S. Sassen, D. Frenchman and M.Joroff; companies like Siemens, Samsung and Telefonica. The project's goals aim at achieving strategic urban and economic development: "create a global identity for Zaragoza; assert the city as a regional centre for technological innovation; build local skills in the use and development of information technology; activate urban spaces that are currently underutilized; and express the evolving history and cul-

ture of Zaragoza". In accordance with these goals, these specific actions are identified: create new public spaces which knit the old divided sections of the city; attract new visitors and enhance the daily life of the people in the residential neighbourhoods; engage and educate the local citizenry in the use of information technology; make the city a central location for technology industries and the production of culture; continue the innovations in water use after the Expo's conclusion; use the newest technological accomplishments; and *make Zaragoza synonymous with information technology and the 21st century economy around the globe* (MIT, 2006).

The starting points of the Milla project are the extension of the high-speed train (AVE) network and other projects which include the 2008 Zaragoza Expo and the vast logistic platform of *PlaZa*. In particular the Expo covers an area of 25 hectares near the Ebro river, within an area which falls within the Water Metropolitan Park.

The design themes of the Milla Digital project are based on two kinds of approaches: the "open source approach" and the physical one. The former refers to environments that interact with their users and change to provide for different activities with the aim of both favouring involvement and interaction among citizens and helping them to reveal past and present narratives about the city. The final aim is to create a sense of belonging between citizens and their public realm and facilitate a positive approach to new technologies. The latter is related to the physical features which represent historical and identity elements of Zaragoza. These include: *water*, the *bridges* - old and new - the *towers*, the *walls*, and the *layers* - meant as the different inhabitants of Zaragoza who have lived out their memory over the centuries through a continuity of culture – which will be all used as a tool to create sets of activities, buildings and digital media for different groups (MIT, 2006). The people-scale urban spaces, the mixes of activities and the pedestrian connections, which are characteristics peculiar to Zaragoza, represent the model of a traditional city to both conserve and transform by the project in contemporary fashion.

Three levels of design – physical, socio-cultural, and digital-connectivity – have been identified to achieve all those objectives (Pradas and Arnal, 2008) (Figure 1). At the physical level, 20 per cent of the area will be devoted to the digital economy and creative sector companies, able to develop a dynamic environment seven days a week. The new AVE neighbourhood which is envisaged under the

General Urban Planning Scheme of Zaragoza covers a 1,000,000 m² area allocated to green areas, facilities, housing and other uses, including commercial, tertiary and hotels. With regard to the project for El Portillo old station, the 93,000 m² area is destined for green areas and facilities, new homes and an office block. Furthermore, the space between the two areas will be used for the tertiary sector with the creation of a large number of new jobs. As for the socio-cultural level, the project foresees the Milla Digital Campus, a campus for urban innovation which aims to attract a mix of *creative* people.

The focus points of the Campus are the Art and Technology Centre - a space for research, education, exhibition and design - and the Milla Digital Museum, a museum which comprises several functions, including a mediatheque, an exhibition spaces on current digital developments in Zaragoza and a showroom space for companies.

Finally, the digital-connectivity level, which was developed by experts from MIT and its Media Lab. The objective of this research is to design a city which incorporates both the 'hardware' and 'software' – in other words, “social participation, creativity and the need for a social ‘open source approach’” - of the digital city. The idea is to develop a new generation of digital media for sustainable public spaces aimed at allowing people to use, participate in and interact with the city and its citizens. The object is to broaden public involvement by creating user-friendly places.

FIGURE 1

Zaragoza, Milla Digital project area (from: www.milladigital.es)



At the same time, this digital apparatus has to boost the attractiveness of Zaragoza to many “creative” groups. The proposals for these new places include: the use of water for defining spaces and interactive facades, as in the case of the 2008 Expo Digital Water Pavilion (Plate 3); the creation of paving where pedestrians can leave their footprints and responses to other footprints (a sustainable form of *graffiti*); the use of *ultra-bright LED with a wi-fi connection and powered by photovoltaic energy*, to mark areas and create safe places; the creation of bus shelters, whose design will adapt to the local weather, geographical location, traffic conditions and offer connectivity for cell phones and laptops; and the creation of screens on awnings to display images and video.

The Milla Digital project is in its early stages. Data from the “Zaragoza turismo informe anual 2008” show that the number of tourists increased from 718,031 in 2004 – 11,783 of which were foreign – to 793,972 in 2006 - with 170,877 foreigners – and further to 941,467 in 2008, the year of the Expo, with 199,291 foreigners. Presumably, the above increase is mainly due to the Expo and its 5000 events created around it - many of which have involved citizens in the organization - although data concerning information requested

from the Zaragoza Tourist Office - taken from the same source - show that the main questions were about historical monuments in Zaragoza (37%), followed by questions about the Expo (20%).

PLATE 3

The 2008 Expo Digital Water Pavilion (Photo: M.Sepe)



In any case, there were about 5.5 million visitors to the Expo and it created about 16,000 jobs. Now the aim is to create, through the Milla Digital project and the construction of the digital PlaZa, 12,000 jobs and establish 300 *creative* businesses (Segantini, 2008).

CONCLUSION

This paper illustrated the concept of the creative city in which an important role is played by place identity, cultural sustainability and involvement of the population. Traditional urban renewal policies, mainly based on combating social exclusion and physically building, are changing: there is the increasing realisation that cities are not just buildings and material structures, but also persons, networks and

intangible elements, such as memory, history, social relationships, emotional experiences and cultural identities.

In this regard, we illustrated two emblematic case studies of creative clusters - both related to urban waterfront regenerations - devoted to city residents, as well as cultural tourists and other visitors, namely the Guggenheim museum of Bilbao and the Milla Digital project in Zaragoza. As regards the success of cultural tourism in particular, some further considerations can be made.

In the case of the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, in the framework of cultural clusters, the success of this project in terms of socio-economic and cultural impact is supported by various kinds of data. Now, the efforts to complete the Abandoibarra area should be devoted to producing a brand which does not become just a cultural icon. In accordance with the mainstream literature on these themes, the creation of the brand has to be increasingly linked to integrated strategies which concern all aspects of the city and at all levels. In other words, culture based on mega-structures inserted within a town leads to a revitalization of the city in terms of employment and cultural participation. However, interventions only created on urban development with a vision overly tied to the physical and material aspects - neglecting the social sustainability and the construction of infrastructure based on intangible culture - produce repeatable places, prey to globalization. Interventions of art and culture allow local identities to be supported and elements of distinctiveness to be built in place.

In the case of the Milla Digital project in Zaragoza - in the framework of the clusters of events - the urban transformation offered by Expo 2008 has represented for Zaragoza the driving force for planning and producing a new social, cultural and economic change for the city's image.

To avoid the risk of the direct benefit of the Expo upon Zaragoza being lost at the conclusion of the event, the Expo pavilions are being turned into a business park included in the Water Metropolitan Park. The Exhibition allowed the crystallization of the cultural and technological district as well as the launch of a comprehensive process of creative regeneration of the city for residents and visitors. Although this process is only in its initial phase, data concerning the socio-economic impact of the Expo are encouraging.

In both cases, it is necessary during the period of project completion to ensure that public policies do not only focus on the potential of

developing culture. To achieve the long-term success of urban and cultural regeneration it is important to attain throughout the process the involvement and integration of the local community at all levels, and enhance and consolidate place identity, all in respect of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

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