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# Urban entrepreneurship through art-based interventions: unveiling a translation process

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the conditions under which urban entrepreneurship can develop through art-based interventions. Drawing on two contrasting case studies (Civic City in France, Fieris Féeries in Belgium) and taking actor-network theory (ANT) as a starting analytical point, we outline the tensions involved in the implementation process of such interventions. We focus on the capacity of urban entrepreneurs to engage different relevant stakeholders (artists, local government and citizens), establish connections between disconnected worlds that are likely to challenge existing institutional structures and eventually create novelty. We identify these actors as 'translators'. The paper shows that when urban entrepreneurs play an active translation role consistently over time, art-based interventions can have a substantial impact on urban regeneration.

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## Introduction

In most Western countries, deindustrialization is viewed as the cause of emerging urban and regional deprivation. The life-and-death issue for the future of older industrial cities is to find new ways of development. Numerous cities face dramatic challenges that also represent a wide array of opportunities offering new hopes for a sustainable future. To cope with the damage resulting from deindustrialization in urban areas, art-based entrepreneurship and innovation have emerged as the driving force behind the surge in urban regeneration, even though opportunity-motivated entrepreneurship appears to be more appropriate in urban contexts with high levels of economic growth and diversity (Bosma and Sternberg 2014). The concepts of urban regeneration and urban renewal are often used interchangeably in the literature, but in fact, there are some differences between them. Urban renewal refers to the upgrading of physical aspects, through a set of plans or activities, of neighbourhoods and suburbs that are in state of distress or decay, while urban regeneration is a wider ranging, more holistic policy intervention that incorporates physical, social and environmental regeneration (Lang 2005).

An abundance of literature is devoted to culture-led urban regeneration projects and to the conflicts and resistance they may generate. This literature emphasizes the need for urban entrepreneurs to engage various stakeholders involved in the management of such projects. We, however, explore the complex processes by which urban entrepreneurs support stakeholder participation over time through art-based interventions that can eventually reshape traditional urban planning programmes and methods.

Following the proposals of Hoskisson et al. (2011) in their meta-analysis of entrepreneurship research, we think that more attention should be paid to the transformational role of entrepreneurs through multi-level research efforts that connect the micro- and macro-foundations of entrepreneurship and explore the question of how particular adaptive processes and capabilities contribute to transforming urban policy agendas.

Therefore, our paper aims to understand how urban entrepreneurs can influence urban planning programmes through art-based interventions, extending a discussion on the transformational potential of entrepreneurship initiatives vis-à-vis existing institutions in the social and cultural fields already engaged in this journal by Friedman and Desivilya (2010) and Greenman (2013). In other words, we want to decipher the conditions under which art may support the participation of multiple actors in the long term, bring politics closer to citizens and eventually renew traditional urban planning methods.

Our paper is structured as follows. We first position our research question by considering three main dimensions of art-based urban entrepreneurship and by drawing on actor-network theory (ANT) in order to grasp the dynamics emerging through art-based interventions. We then clarify our methodological choices and present two contrasting case studies in cities experiencing similar economic declines as a result of deindustrialization (Civic City (CC) in France, Fieris Fééries (FF) in Belgium). Finally, we discuss our main findings, emphasizing the translation process through which art-based urban entrepreneurs may influence the process of urban regeneration and how the space can be 'lived' (Lefebvre 1991) and made sense of via such artistic interventions.

## From culture-led urban regeneration to stakeholder participation

Culture-led urban regeneration has long been associated with initiatives and activities emanating from the creative class (Florida 2002). This classical approach has been challenged by many authors emphasizing the necessity of a well-balanced culture-based production system (Sasaki 2010). However, as Evans (2005) noted, it is not easy to measure the actual contribution of arts and culture to urban regeneration despite the growing focus on methodological approaches likely to provide convincing empirical evidence. According to Campbell and Cox (2017), the main critiques of such attempts refer to the use of short-term data and the lack of longitudinal studies, the marginal role played by arts and culture in most urban regeneration projects, the temptation to switch from balanced evaluations to advocacy (Lees and Melhuish 2015), the difficulty of capturing indirect effects, the over-emphasis of economic outcomes in response to political expectations, etc.

A key topic in many studies devoted to culture-led urban regeneration is the ability of promoters to create and support stakeholder participation over time. Many authors have opposed elitist (top-down) and community-based (bottom-up) approaches to urban regeneration, the latter being more often associated with long-term engagement of citizens and increased resilience than the former (Heath, Rabinovich, and Barreto 2017; Zebracki 2017). A considerable part of the literature emphasizes, in a somewhat instrumental way, the necessity of identifying the main stakeholders involved in urban regeneration projects and evaluating their respective influence (Yang 2014; Le Feuvre et al. 2016). Other studies with a more militant orientation consider that increased social inclusion is needed via paying continual attention to all stakeholders (Sharp, Pollock, and Paddison 2005; Nakagawa 2010; Jung et al. 2015; Ferilli et al. 2017). Stakeholder participation in urban planning unavoidably leads not only to conflicting views and disputes (Dinardi 2015) but also to adaptation and mutual learning processes (Shin and Stevens 2013). However, we still lack a refined understanding of the complex processes by which stakeholder participation can be supported over time and eventually influence urban planning programmes.

Entrepreneurs are often referred to as playing the key role in supporting stakeholder participation, but we may wonder which kinds of entrepreneurs can play this role. These entrepreneurs are typically given different names in the literature. For Munoz and Cohen (2016), *social entrepreneurs* are external actors who scan, evaluate and make judgements about the conditions of their

surrounding social and natural environments and then elaborate solutions, accordingly. Social entrepreneurs pursue opportunities for positive social impact, which are more likely to occur where important socioeconomic, cultural and environmental problems must be solved. In a similar vein, *cultural* entrepreneurs are defined as individuals who add to the menus from which others choose (Mokyr 2013). Cultural entrepreneurs build on existing but diffuse notions and formulate them into a defined set of propositions or beliefs that serve as a focal point for their contemporaries. In this sense, cultural entrepreneurs create something new. They also build on deeper, pre-existing pressures that cause people's views to change from those they were socialized to hold, possibly because there is a dissonance between those views and certain aspects of the social or physical reality as people perceive it. Beyond similarities in the entrepreneurial process among private and public actors (Klein et al. 2010), *public entrepreneurs* are viewed as social actors able to create new forms of sociality in the public (Hjorth 2013): 'Sociality is then understood not simply as new possibilities of life and for living (...) but as a collective engagement (affective relation) that generates a belonging (project, company) of citizen-entrepreneurs' (p.45).

### **Three main dimensions of culture-led urban entrepreneurship**

These various definitions often overlap, and their main common trends can help us to build an ideal-type of culture-led urban entrepreneurship.

Moving away from classical forms of public-private partnerships and building on emerging streams such as collaborative public management (McGuire 2006) and collaborative governance (Kapucu, Yuldashev, and Bakiev 2009), the most recent research on urban entrepreneurship emphasizes the role of multiple actors in managing local governance. As suggested by Cohen and Muñoz (2015) and Munoz and Cohen (2016), such entrepreneurs are purpose-driven and develop a 4-P (public-private-people partnerships) strategy, thus transforming city problems into collective opportunities. Urban entrepreneurship focuses on improving the well-being of local citizens through the collective development of social and territorially embedded businesses. As such, the success of these urban ventures essentially depends on their ability to engage and collaborate with other actors and entities (Freire-Gibb and Nielsen 2014). A first key dimension in the process of urban regeneration is thus related to the *capacity to obtain commitments to collective purposes from multiple stakeholders and to maintain their engagement over time*. A urban area is not considered to be a simple 'receptacle of activities' (Veltz 2005); it holds potential resources that can be used efficiently by urban entrepreneurs if they are able to build cooperation in a shared project, as shown by Karaman (2014) in his comparison of grassroots resistance to urban regeneration initiatives in Istanbul.

A second shared dimension of the abovementioned definitions is the role of urban entrepreneurs as boundary spanners: *they tend to create collaboration between typically disconnected spheres* (Munoz and Cohen 2016). This form of entrepreneurship uses the city as a living laboratory in which collaborative solutions are developed and tested. In other words, while traditional (i.e. economic) entrepreneurs respond to perceived opportunities based merely on market needs, urban entrepreneurs focus on solving issues experienced in daily living at the intersection of social, economic and cultural spheres. Urban entrepreneurs reconnect the individual and the geo-social space in which he or she is embedded. By developing social networks, activating social capital and potentially reshaping inter-group relationships, they unavoidably challenge existing institutional structures, as shown by Friedman and Desivilya (2010). This approach implies flexible organizational forms 'that can accommodate the sufficient informality and flexibility required for a mixed funding and income strategy that primarily relies on membership or donations from both public and private actors or from crowdfunding' (Munoz and Cohen 2016, 19).

A third important component of any urban entrepreneurship process is *the quest for novelty*. The growth of urban areas requires an unseen investment in hard and soft devices and in improving extant systems of welfare provision. Even though urban entrepreneurship creates opportunities for

traditional entrepreneurs to open new businesses that improve the well-being of citizens, unusual practices emerge over time, particularly in the field of art. This perspective in which arts and popular culture become emblematic of a transformative 'spirit of place' is now well documented within 'celebratory' texts on the city and in more critical and academic literature (Peck and Emmerich 1992; O'Connor and Wynne 1996; Wynne and O'Connor 1998; Ward 2003; Peck and Ward 2002; Haslam 2005). The underlying idea is that arts can be not only a contributor but also an antidote to the conflict that unavoidably surrounds urban regeneration. The development of activities in the cultural sector thus produces symbolic goods and services that are crucial for improving the area's productivity, quality of life and external and internal attractiveness (Soldo and Moustier 2010). Such an approach is based on the assumption that cultural projects create positive externalities for individuals, businesses and, ultimately, regions (Heilbrun and Gray 2001). Hjorth (2013) underlined an important similarity between entrepreneurship and arts: the creation of the new. Both challenge extant sensible distribution, creating affect and thus potentializing a body's capacity for action and creation, which may impact regional development through the consideration of stakeholders' concerns and conflict engagement (Friedman and Desivilya 2010).

### **Arts in urban spaces**

The mobilization of arts in urban spaces has been largely influenced by artistic movements such as Dada, Fluxus, conceptual art and the Situationist International (SI) (Manta 2016; Schrijver 2011). This mobilization stems from the counter-culture context of the 1960s and 1970s, which aimed to produce new forms of expression (drawing, vocalizing, acting, performing).<sup>1</sup> In these movements, there was a shift from the medium to the process, bringing dialectical and relational aspects into the artwork. The problem is no longer expanding the limits of art but testing its resilience within social, political and economic spheres. The idea is no longer to react to a given context but to transform the relationship of artworks with their environment. Therefore, since the end of the 1960s, new places of artistic creation have appeared in the streets outside galleries and museums in some cities in Northern Europe and the United States. Non-conventional spaces such as industrial wastelands have become temporary museums and grounds for artistic inspiration.

In the literature, some differences can be found between art- and design-based interventions: initial constraints, objects and creation processes are not the same (Mejlhede 2015). In product design, there is a specific issue to solve via the conception, prototyping and testing phases. Design relates to the deliberate process of form-giving with both physical and aesthetic aspects and has produced structured methods of problem solving (Garrette, Phelps, and Sibony 2018). In the arts, artists are less interested in solving problems than in finding them. Problem finding and framing are essential components of the artistic process but are often rushed or overlooked (Gause and Weinberg 1990). However, these differences become less clear when the design of artefacts takes place in urban spaces, meaning that contextualization and *in situ* artwork are part of the design process. Design is therefore very often considered to be an artistic practice, and cooperation between artists and designers is frequent in culture-led regeneration projects; thus, conceptual distinctions have become increasingly negligible.

### **Opening the black box of culture-led urban entrepreneurship processes**

Our paper represents an attempt to understand the process by which urban entrepreneurs can use art-based interventions to influence traditional urban planning programmes via the engagement of multiple stakeholders, the reconnection of separated spheres (politics, arts, everyday life) and the creation of novelty.

In a critical review of current research on smart cities – which can be viewed as a particular case of urban entrepreneurship supported by technical innovation – Kitchin (2015) emphasized some typical shortcomings in this field: 'the use of canonical examples and one-size fits all narratives, an

absence of in-depth empirical case studies of specific smart city initiatives and comparative research that contrasts smart city developments in different locales and weak collaborative engagement with various stakeholders' (p.132). We must admit that similar shortcomings are present in many studies on culture-led urban entrepreneurship.

In an attempt to fill these gaps, our contribution compares art-based initiatives with contrasting urban entrepreneurship processes. The three basic components of urban entrepreneurship discussed earlier (managing the engagement of stakeholders with collective purposes, creating collaboration between disconnected worlds through specific organizational forms and pursuing novelty) necessarily generate questions regarding existing power structures, leading us to draw on ANT (Callon 1980, 1986; Latour 1987; Akrich, Callon, and Latour 2002). ANT is a theoretical framework that is particularly relevant for the study of innovation processes through the progressive engagement of different stakeholders and the construction of unexpected alliances.

According to ANT, any innovation is the result of a translation process necessary to stabilize the network of 'actants' and make the innovation meaningful for them. The term 'actant' refers to any human being or object that may be part of the change. The translation process can be defined as a set of negotiations, calculations and persuasion tactics (Callon 1986; Akrich, Callon, and Latour 2002), and it can be decomposed into four main steps. The first step is problematization, linked to the nature of the problem to be solved. At this point, controversy and tension appear in the solution set because of the involvement of multiple actors and their divergent interests. The intersement step corresponds to the actions whereby specific actors – who assume the role of translators – try to overcome controversies by forming unusual alliances. In this phase, translators tend to take into account the interests of the various involved stakeholders and their potential gains and losses from the project. The third step – embodiment – happens when intersement has succeeded. Embodiment corresponds to the allocation and coordination of roles around concrete artefacts or quasi-objects (Callon 1986). In this stage, any stakeholder has the capacity to be influential in the change process; it is a necessary condition for maintaining his or her own involvement. However, quasi-objects lead the various stakeholders to share the same language and create greater convergence among them; quasi-objects are thus considered to be obligatory passage points. Finally, the mobilization step enables network expansion through the socialization of a growing number of allies around quasi-objects. In short, through these four key phases, the network is stabilized and becomes understandable for external actors.

We therefore focus on the interactions between various stakeholders and try to identify urban entrepreneurs among them who are likely to play the role of 'translators' of the different interests concerned – beyond just 'cultural entrepreneurs' (Spilling 1991; Mokyr 2013) – via the creation and stabilization of a powerful network of actors around an artistic intervention that could effectively influence urban regeneration.

## Methodology

### *Strategies for data collection*

According to Eisenhardt (1989), case studies are particularly well suited to new research areas. In general, a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident (Yin 2003). Case studies enable in-depth analysis, and participant observation allows the identification of patterns in order to build theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967). One of the most compelling attractions of this strategy is that it helps in exploring the apparent inconsistency between what people say and what they do in a way that avoids the traditional constraints of qualitative research (Thomson 2007).

We undertook two case studies of art-based interventions: CC in Marseille, France and FF in Seraing, Belgium. These interventions were selected because the cities in which they were

developed have suffered from economic decline as a result of deindustrialization. In both contexts, local authorities have invested in improving the city image and promoting urban regeneration programmes. While art is a key component in both cases, in line with the counter-culture movements from the 1960s and 1970s, artists played different roles in the two cases. In one case, artists worked with designers to explore new possibilities for urban spaces; in the other case, they were called to work with urban activists to provide professional support for a street parade and to foster stakeholder participation. Following Yin (2003), our research is thus based on a multiple and holistic case study design.

In addition to the usual criticisms of qualitative methods regarding external validity (Roy 2009), two main limitations must be mentioned. First, our selection of cases may be questioned. At first glance, CC appears to be a design project, while FF appears to be related to a street performance. However, as stated above, the distinction fades when the design process takes place in urban spaces and includes *in situ* artwork. Moreover, both interventions are interested in solving problems, which enables their comparison. A second limitation concerns the relative newness of the two case studies, impeding any serious evaluation of their long-term impact. We must highlight that our paper is not focused on outcomes but rather on the conditions under which art-based interventions may influence urban regeneration. We have thus studied 'things being done', which is consistent with our theoretical framework, ANT, which is considered an interactionist approach (Chiapello and Gilbert 2013).

For each case, data were collected through a combination of primary and secondary sources and were triangulated. Primary sources included in-depth semi-structured interviews with key actors: 12 in CC (designers, artists and urban planners) and 13 in FF (urban activists, members of non-profit associations, urban planners, representatives of public authorities and artists), with an average duration of 2 h. The interviews mainly focused on the description of initial urban contexts, the emergence of art-based initiatives, the conditions of their development, the evolution of stakeholders' perceptions over time and the potential impacts of art-based interventions on urban planning. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The interviews were complemented with direct observation (2 × 3 days in October and December 2014 for CC; 1 day in November 2013 and 1 day in November 2015 for FF) to better capture how artwork can influence urban regeneration processes, i.e. by focusing on the level of stakeholder participation and the extent to which stakeholder concerns are taken into account by urban planners. Secondary sources included different types of documents such as videos from artistic interventions and institutional reports. CC was mainly studied by one of the coauthors, and FF was studied by the two other authors.

### ***Strategies for analysing the data and presenting the results***

The research strategy for data analysis was based on process theories (Langley 1999; Pettigrew, Woodman, and Cameron 2001; Van de Ven and Poole 2005). The analysis of process data requires capturing events and detecting patterns among them. As suggested by Van de Ven and Poole (2005), these patterns may take a variety of forms, the most common being the linear sequence of 'phases' that occur over time to yield a determinate outcome.

Unlike the data collection, the data analysis was performed by all the coauthors in order to reinforce its robustness. For each case, we coded the relevant information concerning the context, the way the project was designed, the key stakeholders involved, and the artistic approaches. According to our theoretical framework (ANT), we classified the information regarding the different phases of any innovation process (problematization, interessement, embodiment and mobilization). We considered the impact of art-based interventions on urban regeneration by looking at stakeholder participation (interessement phase) and at the extent to which the proposed changes were considered by urban planners (mobilization phase). It is important to note that we coded in a moderated inductive way. This means we first established a list of descriptive codes that followed

our case outline and research questions. After developing a broad picture of each case, a short story was written in a narrative format (Langley 1999).

The relevant information from the abovementioned phases for both cases is presented here and is supported by key excerpts from our interviews. We also provide a timeline for each case.

## Main findings

### Case 1: Civic City (CC)

In Marseille, nearly 30% of the territory is identified as a priority area relating to urban zones marked by social and urban exclusions. Since the 1960s, Marseille has experienced fundamental economic and social transformations, except for the popular classes. Apart from the problems of de-industrialization and unemployment, the city faces post-war urbanistic planning problems, especially in the northern districts.

The Marseille Provence Creative District initiative was launched in 2012 as part of the EU programme 'Marseille, European Capital of Culture 2013'. Within this context, the objective was to create a dialogue between arts and urban transformation by proposing artist residencies in diverse areas (plastic arts, performances, architecture, writing, landscape, design and visual arts). Beyond the stated objective, a key challenge was to experience other ways of 'doing culture' and reinvent the city by giving another meaning to urbanity in 'sensitive' districts.

In this context, the designer Ruedi Baur was invited to be an artist in residence in the Aygalades district. The participants in the project included designers, students and teachers from the Civic Design institute, residents, urban planning directors and artists from the Cité des Arts de la Rue (Apcar, FAI, AR, Lezarap'ART, Generik Vapeur and Ateliers du Sud). The aim of the intervention was to analyse the democratic value of prototyping and to question the role of design as a source of proposals between users and institutions in order to develop and manage the urban space. 'It was necessary to rethink how design could contribute, to think about the place of designers in urban matters' (*Designer, CC*). The intervention was developed through two workshop sessions (in 2011–2012 and in 2012–2013). See [figure 1](#) (civic city timeline).

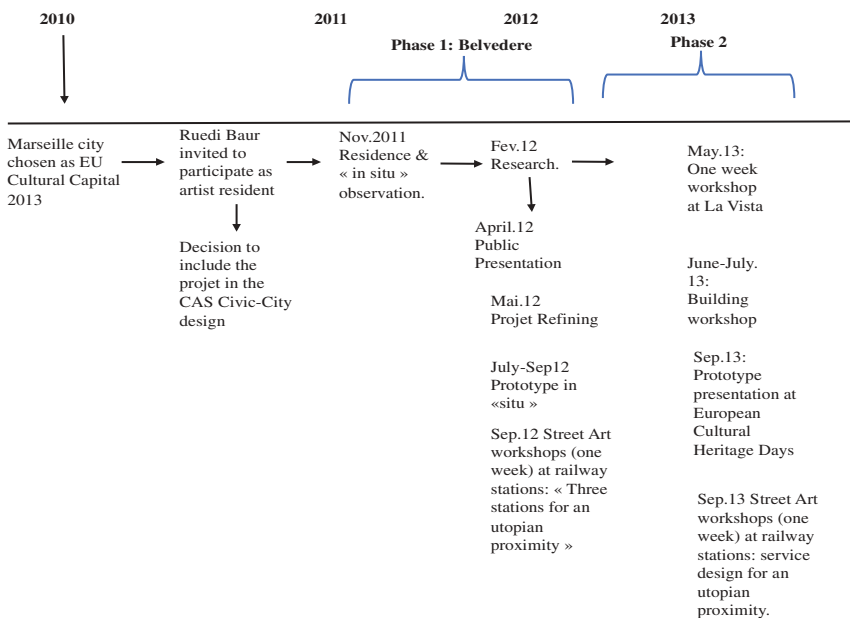


Figure 1. Civic City timeline.



The project started in late 2011 with a series of questions regarding the concepts of dialogue and participation: how to start a dialogue, how to collectively design a set of proposals that made sense for the purpose of jointly producing an urban project, and how to think about a utopia of proximity and realize it at least partially.

This research phase led to the development of a series of prototypes prefiguring new spatial arrangements. These art installations aimed to raise awareness among inhabitants about the potentialities of their living place and stimulate decisions from public authorities in charge of urban planning.

Once the main questions were defined, work *in situ* took place during three consecutive years. Graphic designers, architects, planners, photographers and artists walked around to discover the space and feel the atmosphere to understand the situation in which the project would develop. As observed, bystanders were asked, 'How can this place be made a dream?'. The students' interdisciplinary background paved the way for using diverse approaches. Over time, the students were able to establish anchor points in the urban space in order to carry out their research. The time needed to understand the issues was perceived as long (2 years to accomplish a project that made sense), but the participants also claimed this time was essential to analyse the field, obtain a return from the experience and understand the crux of the matter.

In the first workshop (2011–2012) conducted by CC, the reflections spontaneously focused on barrier issues and the difficulties of crossing borders. The prototype created during the first year concerned a lookout area. This was a way to tackle the elevation issue and to discuss a common future. The map and the prototype represented the idea of looking beneath and beyond the districts. The second series of prototypes (2012–2013) revolved around the utopia of proximity. According to our respondents, the most conclusive prototype was built in the Saint Antoine train station during the second workshop. In 3 weeks, the designers managed to show the potential for transforming this place.

During all stages of the project, the artists not only supported the technical realization of the prototypes but also helped to address the research problem. Over time, however, the relationship between the artists and designers degraded. The artistic director said, 'I am very critical about Civic City. That is to say that during the first year, I was very excited to be part of the project; during the second year, I was bored. Initially, I had the impression of being part of the heart rhythm, everyone had his/her place, we were doing research. Progressively, I got the impression of being there in order to support a project. To go fast'.

The prototypes were exposed during limited periods of time (2 to 3 weeks) and were mainly intended to question the current orientations of urban planning policies and raise awareness about the potentialities of urban space in order to force alternative decisions from public authorities. The main objective was not to respond to social needs but to produce useful knowledge for the CC institution, as explained by the project manager: 'We were not in the social, it was more a Civic City approach; we had a fixed budget defined, and we needed to do what we could in two years'.

Once the prototypes were installed, the students and artists were on site to share with the locals and observe their reactions. The residents showed curiosity and interest during the two series of workshops. Their reactions were diverse in nature, but it was generally agreed that with limited investments, the area could be transformed and offer new opportunities. As mentioned by one designer, 'The most obvious example was the station of Saint-Louis Aygaldes, a virtually closed station, where the proposed action was to highlight the lack of access to the sea, even if it was the most direct route to go'. The representations created by the meta-forms were not maps or images but logs or exemplification tools that mediated between the abstract and the concrete in an urban situation. The prototypes thus represented signs of possible and impossible actions in the past, present or future.

Throughout the artistic process, Ruedy Baur had to convince elected officials and public authorities to support his proposal, and he had to align his own interests with those of regional planners. The challenge was to stimulate such an exploration of the urban space and make it available to the citizens who lived there. The work undertaken in a lookout area also drew the

attention of public authorities. The initial CC proposal had a good reception because the team was convincing regarding its capacity to manage the project implementation. The prototypes were somewhat provocative but showed it was possible to design light and inexpensive new infrastructure. The approach was multiform and offered many opportunities without excessive stress, as noted by the public directors.

For the designers, being commissioned by the Marseille Provence 2013 organizing committee was an incredible opportunity. To succeed, the designers needed not only to be funded but also to achieve a good balance between the three members of the triad (designers, political authorities and citizens). However, the designers mentioned the difficulty in playing a dual role: a problem arose from the designers being paid while simultaneously soliciting the urban public planning department. Additionally, having a figure who was well-known and recognized for his/her ability to execute new projects was essential but required subtle political strategizing. This type of project is not about 'art in the public space' or social work but about a strategic hypothesis that seeks to work constructively with the indeterminate without producing just another blueprint.

In terms of impact on urban regeneration, despite a few visits from local representatives of the public authorities and a serious interest expressed in building a new lookout area, it must be said that decision makers were not truly engaged in the process: 3 years after the second series of workshops, with the arrival of new political majority on the Municipal Council, none of the proposed infrastructures was implemented, mainly due to administrative constraints. Moreover, the limited duration of the student design internships did not favour students' long-term engagement with the projects. Finally, growing tensions were observed between the designers and artists, as the latter felt they were mainly viewed as pure executors by the former; their working methods and objectives increasingly diverged. According to one of the artists, 'During the second workshop, it was more structured and organized, we felt that the designers were selling a concept (. . .); we were exploited'.

### Case 2: Fieris Féeries (FF)

For more than a century, the Belgian town of Seraing was a major industrial centre thanks to the development of iron and steel activities. However, since the 1970s, the decline of these industries has had dramatic consequences for the city and its inhabitants, who mostly worked in that sector.

In 2000, the local public authorities initiated a feasibility study on the urban regeneration of this industrial area. A Master Plan was proposed in 2005 by city planners and architects who linked urban renewal with erasing the scars of the city's industrial past. See figure 2 Fieris Féeries timeline.

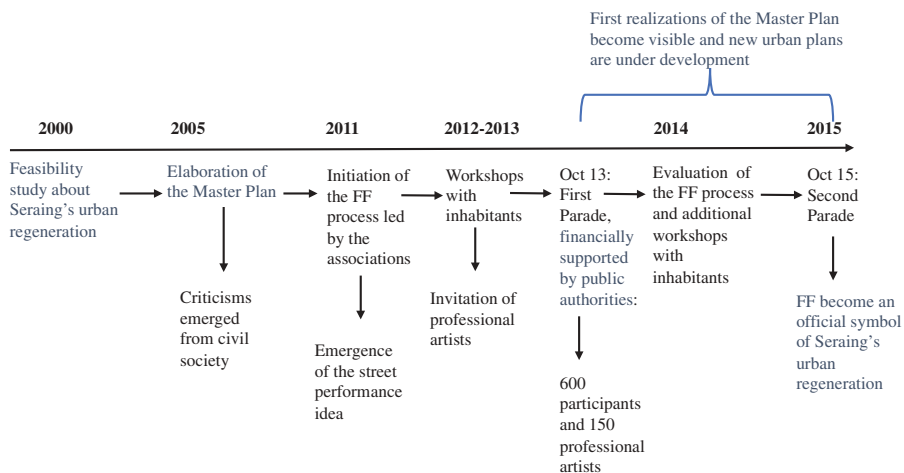


Figure 2. Fieris Féeries timeline.

Resistance rapidly emerged in civil society. One of our interviewees, a member of a non-profit association, declared, 'The Master Plan disseminated an elitist vision of the city, with a bio-organic market, etc. All this was far away from the daily life of inhabitants'. Moreover, some neighbourhoods were excluded from the Master Plan and therefore from the city renewal. In this context, active associations in poor districts of Seraing reacted, particularly a sociopolitical association called CAL, which was involved in promoting the philosophical values of secularism, democracy and critical thinking. These urban activists, who were associated with the local Cultural Center, wanted to reintegrate the neighbourhoods excluded from the urban renewal plan and, at the same time, highlight the skills and potential of their inhabitants. However, it was necessary for residents agree to participate in the project and have confidence in their capacity to do so. Thus, the associations decided to focus their actions on the pride of people living in poor areas.

To meet these objectives, the idea of a street performance emerged. This cultural event would be an opportunity to mobilize the population and aid in changing people's perceptions about themselves and their city. As summarized by the project leader, 'Yes, it looks like a street parade, but it is much more than that'. In addition, this kind of event could change the external image of Seraing. However, some representatives of cultural milieus – particularly well-known theatre companies – strongly denounced the project. According to the director of a local theatre company, 'The Fieris are nothing more than bread and circuses offered to impoverished populations'.

Despite these criticisms, the artistic process began in early 2012. The CAL association organized meetings and workshops with residents to understand their perceptions of the city, as they were expected to be at the heart of the performance. At that moment, the neologism 'Fieris' emerged (in French, 'fier' means being proud of something; a reference may also be found in the English word 'fiery'). Four domains were considered as sources of pride among the inhabitants: the river, nature (one-third of the area is covered by woods), crystal (a local company with a worldwide reputation) and industry (steel and iron), resulting in four 'Fieris', a series of giant mobile puppets for the parade. This stage was not easy, and its results were largely unpredictable. The associations had to convince the residents that they had something to add to the project and that their hidden competences might be very helpful. Many of the residents did not feel ready to parade in the streets. At the same time, professional artists were invited to design the parade and offer specific performances (fire-eaters, jugglers, comedians and acrobats). Once again, the task was difficult for the members of CAL because they had to convince the artists to support the residents rather than imposing their own views. Considerable effort was made to assign roles in the performance to the greatest number of people possible. All existing skills needed to be valued: sewing, dancing, painting, playing music, etc. The main idea in the preparation of the parade was to start from the residents' capabilities, and this was an additional constraint for the artists designing the show. By contrast, the requirements of a quasi-professional performance were well perceived by the population, as they were already aware of similar initiatives in Belgium. In October 2013, the parade took place for the first time. Political authorities, who were initially a bit sceptical, provided financial support for the project. The parade included 600 residents accompanied by 150 professional artists, and several thousand people watched the parade. Beyond the number of participants, nearly a thousand people from Seraing worked on the show. The parade was considered a success, and the quality of the performance was emphasized by all media. One of our respondents, a member of a non-profit association, said, 'Now politicians understand that Fieris Féeries gives them visibility and an image of success'.

The parade was intended to be held more than once, as the initial idea was to develop an ongoing process. After the first parade, CAL and the Cultural Center decided to conduct an evaluation. Although the success of the parade was undeniable, the initial objective of including residents from poor districts in the urban regeneration process was not fully achieved. Thus, CAL and the Cultural Center decided to organize new meetings with residents and contact artists earlier in the preparation phase for the second parade, which was scheduled for two years later. The implications for the different stakeholders were more intense because all of

them knew of the success of the first parade. Creative workshops were organized to develop people's skills and to consolidate existing social networks. Local politicians were also more involved, and they directly supported the preparation of the second parade and included it in the official activities of the city.

During this period, new urban plans were developed, and some districts that were excluded from the initial version of the Master Plan were integrated into the urban regeneration process. This change may be viewed as a direct consequence of the popular success of FF. In parallel, the first elements of the Master Plan became tangible: a new City Hall was built, new roads were opened, old landmarks from the steel era were demolished, etc.

After the second parade, which took place in October 2015, FF became part of the folklore of Seraing: the four 'Fieris' are now presented by local authorities as an official emblem of the city. However, such acknowledgements have created questions among urban entrepreneurs concerning the scope of future parades and the roles they must play in urban regeneration. Will the parade be able to maintain enough critical distance vis-à-vis existing urban regeneration programmes? Do the parades unintentionally contribute to justifying the current choices of the public authorities?

### Transversal analysis: art-based interventions in urban spaces as innovation processes

By comparing these two cases of art-based interventions (see [table 1](#)), we can easily understand that the process by which they were undertaken is of primary importance. Our analytical framework, based on ANT, allows us to highlight the contrasting strategies deployed by urban entrepreneurs in order to influence urban regeneration through art-based interventions. In both cases, the initiatives took place in contexts characterized by the social and geographical exclusion of disqualified neighbourhoods.

#### Culture-centric vs. socio-centric problematization

The problematization phase is a critical step in any innovation process (Leca et al. 2006). In CC, the local authority in charge of urban regeneration wanted to launch a cultural programme called 'Creative Neighbourhoods', which was to take place as part of the 'Marseille, European Cultural

**Table 1.** A synthetic view on CC and FF as innovations processes.

INNOVATION STEPS	CIVIC CITIES	FIERIS FEERIES
Problematization	Culture-centric: how to design prototypes likely to stimulate social transformation?	Socio-centric: how to help citizens to recover a sense of dignity and pride according to their cultural diversity?
Interessement	Open works provided by artists and designers	Sociopolitical intentions with polyphonic strategies taking into account the various interests involved
Embodiment	Strong emphasis on concepts, with ephemeral prototypes (weak material dimension) Inhabitants invited to express their reactions, some visits of public authorities, many administrative constraints	Combined investment in symbolic and material dimensions Parade organized every 2 years, Fieris chosen as official emblems of the City Role allocated to inhabitants according to their skills, massive public participation, demand of local authorities to inaugurate the first parade at the City Hall
Mobilization and impact	No implementation of the proposals suggested by prototypes, low effective participation of public authorities and citizens, growing criticism vis-à-vis the designers, growing tensions between artists and designers, no concrete engagement of the new political majority	Second edition with more participation of inhabitants, strong support from public authorities, inclusion of disqualified neighbourhoods in the Master plan due to the popular success of the first edition

Capital' initiative in order to cope with problems of social and geographic exclusion in the northern area of Marseille. For the designers, headed by Ruedi Baur, this represented an opportunity to propose a design project based on the utopia of proximity despite the paradox of carrying out innovative social work while responding to a public call for tenders. The starting point of the art-based intervention was the following: How can prototypes likely to support social transformation be designed? What is the democratic potential of prototyping? How can designers propose alternatives for urban regeneration? How can prototypes become tools for dialogue? We can thus consider that the initial problem was defined in culture-centric terms, with a strong emphasis on the ability of artists and designers to change the urban context through utopian artefacts. In FF, urban activists from the non-profit sector (CAL and a Cultural Center), claimed that the Master Plan designed by urban planners had excluded some neighbourhoods and, more generally, had neglected the human and cultural diversity of the city. These urban entrepreneurs problematized their project in the following terms: How can we help excluded citizens recover a sense of dignity and pride according to their cultural diversity? How can excluded citizens be considered a central part of the urban regeneration process? How can extant cultural diversity be taken into account in urban planning? The project of an urban parade was clearly presented as an alternative method and a pretext for answering these questions, as suggested by Rannila and Loivaranta (2015), who proposed using drama in deliberative planning to express the plurality of voices among various stakeholders. The art-based intervention was essentially subordinated to social and political aims, which is why we consider that it was defined in socio-centric terms. As we will see, such opposite starting points have a strong influence on the whole process of innovation.

### ***Polyphonic interessement***

Another crucial step is the way in which the interests of different stakeholders are taken into account in designing art-based interventions. Here, we propose the concept of polyphony, originally presented by Bakhtin (1984) and frequently associated with the concept of dialogism, to identify an otherness or a plurality in the narrative (Sitri 2004). Polyphony refers to the simultaneity of voices or points of view that are independent but combined into an event without merging (Bakhtin 1984, 208). According to Baxter (2007), the dialogic approach contributes to highlighting the interplay of different discourses or voices in a meaning-making process. The approach is mobilized to study 'the ways in which subjects of social science research become constructed in research narratives, and the ethical and political implications of these representations' (Belova, King, and Sliwa 2008, 494). In transposing this concept to the management field, Hazen (1993) argued for understanding the intersubjective dynamics in any change process. Sullivan and McCarthy (2008) stressed the way each discourse is anchored in lived experiences, reflecting changing identities, particularly in the context of major changes. Under these conditions, polyphony implies permanent dialogue and even confrontation between different categories of discourse.

The capacity of art-based interventions to transform the extant reality appears to be strongly dependent on the ability of urban entrepreneurs to open a 'polyphonic' dialogue. If we consider CC, different languages seemed to be spoken by each stakeholder. Vis-à-vis public authorities, Ruedi Baur proposed light and inexpensive new developments while relying on his own reputation as a designer. Such small-scale multifaceted proposals did not pose substantial financial constraints for decision makers and could give them an aura of symbolic involvement. Design students were given the opportunity to join a multidisciplinary project that would be a valued part of their training path, and artists were invited to be full partners in a social innovation project led by a prestigious designer. However, we cannot say that residents were truly asked to voice their concerns. The design team mainly focused on the possibility of accessing the field via communication with locals. The members of the design team spent considerable time in field immersions, walking around to explore the landscape and understand the situation in which the project would

develop, but residents were asked only to express their views and react to art-based proposals (the prototypes). Thus, residents' engagement in the project was limited. Paradoxically, the prototypes may be viewed as 'open works' (Eco 1989), offering utopian polysemy: they provided an ideal vision of the space without establishing any explicit interpretation. However, how they were designed remained in the purview of the artists and designers and cannot be considered as polyphonic.

By contrast, in FF, residents were invited to recover their dignity and express their perceptions and hopes. In other words, residents were clearly placed in a central position and considered to be full partners in the project. The four 'Fieris' emerged directly from intensive participative workshops. Due to the previous relations of CAL with local associations, numerous partnerships were established through which the skills of inhabitants could be reinforced. Moreover, strong communication efforts were developed vis-à-vis public authorities in order to raise their awareness about the political implications of the parade. The message delivered was that arts and culture are a necessary component of any urban regeneration project. Public authorities quickly understand that showing support for the project could be politically beneficial. The dialogue with artists was somewhat more complex. Local artists from well-known theatre companies disdained the project and considered it to be a superficial appeasement of social problems. Professional artists engaged in the project were reminded that street performance must be inclusive and that its final forms must result from continuous dialogue with residents. The artists' professional expertise was needed to support the artistic choices that were made in collaboration with residents (co-production), not to guide them, due to an ongoing concern to avoid the gentrification typically observed in art-based interventions (McLean 2014). Polyphonic openness was much more important in FF than in CC, with the usual uncertainties associated with participative design. However, polysemy was much less present in the FF case: the artistic dimension of the parade was clearly subordinated to the sociopolitical objectives pursued by urban activists.

### ***Pragmatic embodiment***

Embodiment can be seen as the allocation of specific roles to each stakeholder in order to secure their engagement in the transformation process. Involved stakeholders often pass through concrete devices, tokens, quasi-objects or artefacts, creating more convergence among them. Callon (1986) suggested speaking in terms of 'obligatory passage points' that enable the various actors to satisfy their interests through the roles assigned to them by the focal actor. Greenwood, Suddaby, and Hinings (2002) added a more discursive dimension by referring to the theorization work supporting any innovation process. Such embodiment must be pragmatic and tailored to the contextual characteristics of each situation and the existing power relationships.

In CC, important discursive work was undertaken by Ruedi Baur and his team: Civic City was the name given to his Institute for Critical Research in Design, and it became the nickname for the various initiatives launched in Marseille. The direct reference in the name of the research institute expressed a willingness to use a theoretical framework through which the utopia of proximity could be conceptualized and diffused widely. This effort of theorization was reinforced by more concrete actions: the walking tours undertaken by designers and artists through communication with locals may be viewed as an attempt to meet residents and understand their concerns in a dialogic way, as highlighted by Pinder (2008) in his study of the PLATFORM project in London. However, prototypes were developed over a limited period of time (2–3 weeks). The residents could visit the prototypes, express their curiosity, raise questions, provide comments, recall memories from the past, etc. However, residents remained spectators of installations developed by others (artists, designers). A similar observation can be made with respect to the public authorities. Despite the lobbying actions undertaken by Ruedi Baur, only a few officials attended the presentation of the prototypes and welcomed the artistic experience. The prototypes were subject to strong administrative constraints (security of installations, safety of visitors, etc.). The

prototypes were intended to suggest new infrastructures that could improve the current situation (linking two neighbourhoods, opening a view, etc.), but their ephemeral nature did not truly play the role of an obligatory passage point. In this case, the primacy of theorization on material dimensions did not contribute to the embodiment phase.

In FF, the outreach work undertaken by CAL and the Cultural Center involved assigning specific roles to pupils in schools, members of sport clubs and cultural associations, etc. Each participant was asked to paint, to sew or to build a component of a float or to contribute to preliminary events. Due to its flexible organizational structure, CAL was also able to obtain important financial support from public authorities (from the European to the local level) and from private partners (mainly from the non-profit sector, not yet from companies). After 2 years of preparation, the first parade was considered a success: more than 600 inhabitants participated, while 150 professional artists gave specific performances in support. Several thousand people (locals and external visitors) attended the event due to intensive communication efforts and strong mobilization of the media via key concepts such as being proud and recovering dignity. Here, we can speak in terms of an obligatory passage point: a new parade date was announced for 2 years later; thus, the participative dynamics could be re-launched just after the first parade, creating new expectations. Moreover, the local authorities chose the four Fieris as official emblems of the City. The Fieris themselves may thus be viewed as an 'actant' in the innovation process, combining symbolic and material dimensions.

Embodiment in FF was mainly pragmatic according to the strengths and weaknesses of each stakeholder. Some inhabitants did not want to participate in the parade and wanted only to prepare costumes and floats; others were proud to show themselves and reveal what they could do. In the beginning, local authorities were not truly convinced by the project; after a few months, they wanted to organize the official inauguration of the parade at City Hall. Urban entrepreneurs must thus accept permanent compromises if they want to achieve their objectives, i.e. shed light on and raise awareness about the cultural dimensions of urban regeneration programmes.

### **Political mobilization**

Mobilization refers to a series of actions focused on enlarging the initial network of stakeholders and building new alliances in order to stabilize the innovation project. Through mobilization, we enter the institutionalization phase. Greenwood, Suddaby, and Hinings (2002) spoke in terms of 'increasing objectification' – with a growing role played by tokens and artefacts – as part of the diffusion stage in a process of innovation. This phase needs strong political skills from urban entrepreneurs in order to guarantee the achievement of the initial problematization phase and avoid any hijacking.

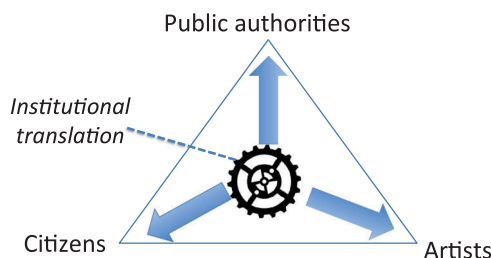
The second round of CC workshops presented many similarities with the first round. Once again, field immersions were organized with the support of the same local organizations, and residents were invited to react and express their views about art installations through surveys. Difficulty was encountered in establishing a collective dialogue that lasted over time. Political authorities seemed interested in supporting a cultural event but were not ready to overcome existing administrative constraints and follow the suggestions provided by designers and artists in terms of urban regeneration. Building a new lookout area was still on the agenda, but the difficulty in effectively engaging decision makers prevented any concrete engagement after the arrival of a new political majority on the Municipal Council. Growing criticisms arose vis-à-vis the design students, whose visions appeared to be too distant from the daily life of the residents. In addition, tensions increasingly appeared between the artists and designers due to their different working methods and objectives. Due to their ephemeral nature, the prototypes did not lead to concrete changes in urban planning policies; in other words, they did not contribute to 'increasing objectification' (Greenwood, Suddaby, and Hinings 2002).

Conversely, the second FF parade was organized so that inhabitants would play a more important role in the early stages. After the success of the first parade, residents were more likely to become involved in the second parade. Fewer professional artists were engaged to provide more latitude for locals, and public authorities provided strong support for the parade through their own communication efforts. The neighbourhoods initially ignored by urban planners were integrated into the Master Plan, emphasizing the concrete influence of FF on urban regeneration. Meanwhile, the first concrete signs of urban renewal became visible: new roads, new City Hall, new shops, etc. Many inhabitants expressed pride in being part of this process. Some questions arose among the urban activists, however, concerning their role in the urban regeneration process. The two successful parades may be considered to represent ‘increasing objectification’ (Greenwood, Suddaby, and Hinings 2002), but are organizers still in a position to challenge current urban planning policies? Are organizers too engaged in an institutionalization process through which the parade has become a sort of cultural showcase? How can the organizers convince business companies to join their socio-cultural project? <sup>2</sup> Such questions beg future action in terms of translation.

## Discussion

After comparing two urban entrepreneurship processes based on artistic interventions, some key results may be highlighted. Overall, in line with Munoz and Cohen (2016), we observe that the matter of urban regeneration is a social process necessarily supported by a triad of actors (here: artists, public authorities, citizens) involved in a medium- to long-term partnership. Within this triad, we propose the concept of *urban translators*, directly referring to ANT, in order to highlight the crucial importance of urban entrepreneurs who play a ‘mediating’ role in all stages of the innovation process (see figure 3) and thus help various actors perceive an area as a space in which art-based practices may be developed. We thus highlight the complex interrelations between conflicting institutional logics and entrepreneurial actions in the cultural field, as suggested by Greenman (2013).

Important differences are observable in the modalities of this translation process. For CC, the authorities released a call for proposals about inserting cultural and arts in sensitive neighbourhoods as a means of promoting social inclusion. The initiative was launched by local authorities who explicitly invited a designer to prepare a proposal presenting art and design as a key contribution to urban regeneration. By contrast, for FF, the first effort was made by urban activists from the non-profit sector; their motivation was to fight social exclusion and challenge public urban planners. In their project, art was supposed to support social struggles. The activists acted as translators and paid continual attention to the relations among public authorities, inhabitants and artists. We highlighted the very different positions occupied by artists in both cases: in CC, they played the role of initiators, while in FF, they were invited by urban activists and submitted their specifications.



**Figure 3.** The mediating role of institutional translators in art-based interventions.



The starting point unavoidably influences subsequent stages of the innovation process. In CC, the designers saw a professional opportunity to develop an action research project that not only responded to the call for tenders extended by local authorities but also highlighted design as a discipline. The problematization step was thus mainly shaped in cultural terms (culture-centric approach). Here, urban space was considered a case study for artists, researchers and designers. In FF, problematization was clearly defined by social purposes. The artistic dimension was explicitly subordinated to sociopolitical aims (socio-centric approach) through a flexible organizational form that allowed the development of a mixed funding strategy. Urban space was therefore considered to be a living place to improve.

The capacity of the arts to provide relevant solutions for the social problems of residents in disadvantaged areas seems to be strongly influenced by how the participation of citizens is envisaged. In CC, resident participation was limited to gathering residents' reactions to prototypes – presented as 'open' utopias – and asking them to share their perceptions in order to support the work of designers and artists. Residents were just consulted and were not truly *interested* in the innovation process. In FF, the direct participation of citizens was the main purpose of the project, and the artistic performance was simply a pretext for accomplishing that goal. Participation became a corporal experience, leading to the embodiment phase in a literal sense. Such a polyphonic strategy of *interessement*, including public authorities, may diminish the critical dimension of the project but allow the pursuit of clear social objectives. In short, the polysemy of open works (CC) appears less polyphonic than the pursuit of sociopolitical aims through artistic performances (FF).

If we examine the embodiment phases in the two cases, they strongly differ in their temporal and aesthetic dimensions. In CC, the intervention can be described as limited in time and aims. The conceptual work undertaken by designers was intended to stimulate a dialogue about the urban space and its shortcomings and not about the identity of the inhabitants. The prototypes did not directly address the sensitivities of the residents or their emotions, bodies and senses to reach a common understanding beyond the designers' own practices. Moreover, the ephemeral nature of the prototypes did not pave the way to long-term investment from public authorities: the authorities perceived the cultural events as just an opportunity to carry out their own political agenda, communicate about themselves and, to a certain extent, promote some light infrastructure with few financial constraints. In FF, the translation process was continuous over time (2 years before each parade). During this period, multiple social links were created in order to work on the identity of marginalized populations according to their strengths and weaknesses via symbolic and material actions. The long-term translation work undertaken by CAL convinced public authorities to become involved, even though they were somewhat sceptical in the beginning; they finally understand that it was in their interest to be visible and thus proposed officially launching the parade at City Hall.

The mobilization step was clearly reached by FF. The parade has become a political event every 2 years, and it is widely covered by the media, creating an irreversible trend in the new urban landscape. The impact of the parade is tangible since neighbourhoods initially excluded from the urban regeneration process are now fully considered, and the first elements of the Master Plan have become visible. By contrast, 3 years after the last series of workshops for CC, none of the various proposed infrastructures has been implemented.

In both cases, a mutual learning process among the three components of the triad (artists, citizens, public authorities) was stimulated by art-based interventions, but that process did not necessarily lead to a transformation of individual and collective identities and spaces. Such a transformation directly results from the translation role of urban entrepreneurs. Here, we refer to the 'terceisation' function likely to be played by third-party actors (Xhaufclair and Pichault 2012). This concept refers to the ability to place various stakeholders in a position in which they are able to experience art-based interventions through time and space and extend beyond their daily routines and defensive strategies in order to cooperate and co-design unusual solutions. This

process, through which local cultural elements, shared symbols and meanings are no longer considered as impediments but rather as critical resources that can be creatively recombined for urban regeneration, is a key component of the activity of urban entrepreneurs. Kang (2017) defined this process as an 'ideational bricolage' in which entrepreneurs use neglected resources that are not tangible but are defined as cultural to produce new values serving new functions. A parallel can be made with the role of the *middleground* presented by Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon (2010) in creative cities, which is likely to act as an intermediate body between the *upperground* (formal institutions, public authorities) and the *underground* (civil society, individual creators).

Returning to our generic definition of urban entrepreneurship presented at the beginning of this paper, urban translators pay constant attention to the engagement of various stakeholders in art-based interventions (first dimension).<sup>3</sup> To stimulate collaboration between disconnected worlds (second dimension), urban translators adopt a socio-centric approach through which the direct engagement of citizens and public authorities is pursued (polyphony) rather than a purely culture-centric approach based on polysemy. As proposed by Munoz and Cohen (2016), urban translators use flexible organizational forms that allow them to combine different income flows in order to achieve their objectives despite initial resistance from existing institutions. Urban translators are also able to maintain the continuity of the translation process over time, which eventually leads to providing tangible novelty in the urban space (third dimension).

Two opposite views on the approach of urban transformation through art are thus confronted. Some authors, elaborating on Deleuze's ontology, argue for 'an assemblage approach (that) privileges "relations of exteriority", elements of symbiotic connection between components which may be otherwise quite unrelated, and which maintain their singularity and (to some degree) their causal autonomy' (Mar and Anderson 2010, 37). In a similar vein, Hjorth (2013, 48) considers that entrepreneurial creation 'primarily uses stories of what may come, improvising and convincing resonance to articulate images of new potentialities. This "as if"-mode demonstrates the need for relationally constituted ethics to be part of creations of sociality, for it is in the open, in the indeterminate and in undecidability that the new receives its chance as an event that enables time to start anew'. Such an approach to art-based interventions, privileging episodic and dispersed dynamics without building overarching partnerships, seems to characterize the approach to innovation in the case of CC.

Conversely, the urban translation approach, based on socio-centric (or grassroots) problematization, polyphonic strategies of interestment, pragmatic embodiment and political mobilization tactics, aims to stimulate the long-term engagement of actors with a clear transformational agenda. This second approach – enriching traditional views on culture-led urban entrepreneurship – is closer to what we observed for FF. Our comparative analysis leads us to suggest a new research proposal. Given that the urban landscape is a social space (Lefebvre 1991), composed of power relations of control and domination, any urban entrepreneurship process unavoidably disturbs the interests of the various involved stakeholders. In both cases, we may observe tensions and conflicts around urban planning programmes. In FF, grass-root associations denounced the elitist vision underlying the Master Plan and the exclusion of some disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Urban activists (CAL and the Cultural Center) were able to reverse this trend and include other concerns while continuing to manage the complex relations with artists and non-profit associations. In CC, few explicit tensions were observed at the beginning of the project: the physical borders between the different districts or the closure of local stations were mostly considered to be matters of fact by the residents. We could expect the development of conflicting relations with local authorities given the ambivalent position of Ruedi Baur, as he was being commissioned by the Marseille Provence 2013 organizing committee on the one hand while designing provocative prototypes in opposition to current urban planning policies on the other hand. However, these issues mainly generated indifference, while tensions eventually arose between the designers and artists, as the latter group considered that they were just supporting the political project of the former group. The team of designers was neither able to manage these internal tensions nor capable of eliciting

reactions among local policy makers. Political skills therefore appear to be a key component of any culture-led urban entrepreneurship initiative.

Thus, the urban translation approach in artistic interventions, paying constant attention to stakeholder participation and conflict management, will probably have a more substantial impact on urban regeneration than the assemblage approach.

However, such an impact may be contingent on the position occupied by artists vis-à-vis other stakeholders in the long term. Artistic interventions may indeed become institutionalized over time, which raises questions about the potential instrumentalization of art when serving public urban policies: art could lose its anti-establishment and critical power. Foucault applied the term 'heterotopias' to spaces that are 'utterly different from all the emplacements that they reflect or refer to...a kind of contestation both mythical and real of the space in which we live' (1998, 178–179). From our analysis, it seems that neither of the two art-based interventions we studied was able to entirely escape from the hegemony of dominant social spaces so that people could think and act in new and provocative ways consistently over time.

Our results suggest that targeting sociopolitical aims through artistic performances (FF) helps art-based interventions achieve polyphony to the detriment of the polysemy of open works (CC). Therefore, one could question the nature of artwork produced through urban regeneration projects. The risk for FF is that the festivities emphasize 'the image' (Quinn 2005; Waitt 2003) while failing to engage with the multiple and conflicting meanings that reside beneath/beside/behind urban spaces and representations.

## Conclusion

Our paper provides a fine-grained description of two different approaches to art-based intervention, with a special focus on the translation processes involved and their effects. Beyond the various normative proposals presented in the literature on culture-led urban regeneration, we have developed an original ideal-type of art-based urban entrepreneurship with three main dimensions: engaging multiple stakeholders with a collective purpose over time; creating unusual bridges between the disconnected spheres of art, policy-making and daily life; and introducing novelty in urban regeneration plans through art-based interventions. Drawing on ANT, we explored the different steps by which urban entrepreneurs may engage various stakeholders involved in urban regeneration via artistic interventions: problematization, interessement, embodiment and mobilization. Our findings highlight the translation role played by urban entrepreneurs in culture-led urban regeneration, and this is why we ultimately call them urban translators. Our paper therefore contributes to the ongoing debate about the role of art in urban regeneration projects through a renewed definition of urban entrepreneurship. We show that what matters in art-based interventions is the translation process by which urban entrepreneurs operate and the extent to which they achieve embodiment and mobilization: the key question is how to address the dimension of human relations and how to engage the various stakeholders in the final artwork. Through their translation activities, art-based urban entrepreneurs can materialize the issues relating to urban spaces and reach the feelings, bodies and emotions of citizens.

Our study contributes to a better understanding of how space may not only be conceived (for an instrumental use) but also 'lived' (Lefebvre 1991) and made sense of (Taylor and Spicer 2007; van Marrewijk 2011) through artistic interventions. We support Lefebvre, Kofman and Lebas's idea (1996) that putting art at the service of the city does not mean prettifying urban spaces with artwork. This parody of the possible can indeed decrease social inclusion and lead to a caricature (Zebracki 2017). Rather, this approach means that urban time-space becomes artwork and that art reconsiders itself as a source and model of appropriation of urban time and space. However, this is not a spontaneous process: our paper shows that culture-led urban translators are needed to manage this transformation and the multiple conflicts it typically entails. The notion of culture-led urban translators offers an interesting perspective to face the institutional challenges often

associated with entrepreneurial actions, as already shown in this journal (Friedman and Desivilya 2010; Greenman 2013). It also feeds the ongoing discussion on the conditions under which entrepreneurial actions may create sociality (Hjorth 2013) through a process of bricolage giving cultural value and new purposes to neglected resources (Kang 2017) in a context of urban deprivation. Furthermore, our research contributes to providing a dynamic understanding of how urban space is 'perceived' (Lefebvre 1991) and how various actors can practice transformation through artistic interventions.

Beyond its theoretical and empirical contributions, our study presents some limitations. First, the number of cases analysed is small: more empirical work is needed on art-based urban regeneration in different institutional contexts in order to establish the validity of our findings. Moreover, a different approach that reconciles cultural and sociopolitical aims could shed light on a new type of urban translator who plays a more subversive role in urban regeneration and resists commodification via radical forms of cultural and creative entrepreneurship (Pinder 2008). The idea to create emotionally moving situations to activate the reflexive attitude of citizens towards everyday **urban** settings was proposed by **SI** and was applied by Bureau (2013) to entrepreneurship: destruction, an essential component of the creation process, can indeed be managed via subversive techniques. Future studies could also use alternative methods (art-based, ethnographic) to provide a deeper understanding of the subjective aspects (e.g. feelings, emotions) linked to artistic interventions and thus pave the way for new measurements of their impact on urban regeneration programmes.

## Notes

1. We must add that several authors have suggested unexpected connections between situationism and the entrepreneurship process (Bureau 2013; Bureau and Zander 2014).
2. An extension of the network has been attempted vis-à-vis local companies, which until now have not been engaged despite the implicit role they play in urban regeneration. However, these companies have maintained a distance from FF, as they do not see that they have a direct interest in being involved.
3. We must, however, note that this is a never-ending process: in the case of FF, local companies are not yet truly engaged in the urban regeneration process.

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