

Creative city practices in the Lusophone space the case of São Paulo and Lisbon

Kata Murányi

PhD Candidate

Faculty of Earth Sciences

University of Pécs, Hungary

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the creative city, and thus urban creativity in the Portuguese-speaking world, through eight in-depth interviews with leading figures of creative city practices in São Paulo and Lisbon. Both cities share a common language, similarities in history and culture, and in recent years they have been facing serious economic, political and social problems. Over the last few decades, various initiatives have been created with aims of involving and collaborating with locals in order to directly influence the quality of urban life. This research explores how changes in power and political and economic circumstances influence both the city and the lives of locals. I examine how specific bottom-up initiatives address various problems in society; I assess the best practices of urban creativity and how current problems and solutions arise in a contemporary metropolis. The research is based on study trips to São Paulo and Lisbon in 2016 where a number of interviews were conducted with representatives active in innovative creative economy organizations, routinely providing solutions to the needs of people in urban public spaces.

Keywords: Creative City, Urban Creativity, Lusophone, São Paulo, Lisbon

1. The Portuguese-speaking world

The Portuguese-speaking world, also known as the Lusophone world, can only be understood within the complexity of the Portuguese Empire and its colonial system. Over centuries, Portugal's global empire used and distributed the natural and human resources of the colonies, and functioned as a melting pot of diverse lusophonic territories and cultures. As Cunha refers (2012, pp. 215) "it is worth recalling that the former Portuguese Empire spanned four main areas: the mainland and its adjacent islands (Europe), Africa (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique), Brazil and Asia (Portuguese India, Macau and Timor)."

This colonial system had ensured the supply of natural and material resources flowing to the motherland, and it was a cause of the inflow and mixing of other cultures in Portugal. This process had long functioned by the time the country became one of the richest provinces of the Roman Empire as well as Islamic territory (Birmingham, 1993). The geographic and geopolitical history of the country, the age-old authoritarian empire-building rhetoric, the civilizational

mission and exceptionalism are all prime examples of how Portugal's lusophone, European and tropical character appears as a symbolic and unique unit; other European entities never reached similar symbiosis (Szilágyi, 2013). Over the decades it was an issue for the motherland to strengthen the notion of a "Lusophone space", which was greatly formed by the press, "thus allowing it to attain greater vividness than through language and culture alone, it also created the conditions for the eventual independence of colonial territories, such as Brazil (1822)." (Cunha, 2012: 215).

After Brazil's declaration of independence (1822), the mainland's aim was to consolidate its areas in Africa and to keep its territories of Portuguese India and East Timor in Asia. By the shadow of the financial crisis in the late 1920s, a new policy emerged which was later also essential for Salazar: Portugal should maintain control over its overseas areas. In 1930, the Colonial Act declared that colonies were not separable from the mother country. (Szilágyi, 2015: 56).

The foreign policy of the New State (*Estado Novo*) is determined by colonial objectives. In 1933, the Constitution declared African colonies as overseas territories, considered the internal markets of the mother country. As such, Portugal is not a colonial, but rather a multi-continental empire (Szilágyi, 2015). After the Second World War, despite the international integration, Portugal did not want to give up its colonial empire, although a more loose federation image had appeared when words *colony* and *empire* were taken out of the 1951 Constitution (Szilágyi, 2013). In the 1960s colonial wars began to consume a huge number of human and material resources (particularly in comparison to the size of the country) which the system could not handle (Salgó, 1990, p. 215). The war eroded almost half of the GDP, and subsequently 1.5 million people emigrated from Portugal between 1958 and 1974 mainly from rural areas (in 1973 alone 123,000 people left Portugal) (Tóth, 2004). On April 25, 1974, the Captains movement overthrew the dictatorial regime (Salgó, 1990). After that, with the independence of the colonies and the new left-liberal political system, the previous international isolation began to dissolve. Portugal opened to European and Atlantic countries, and started to form strong partnerships with the former colonial countries based on common interests and values as well as language and cultural heritage. In 1996, this shift led to the formation of CPLP, the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa) (Szilágyi, 2013). This cooperation is also contributing to the *lusophone cosmopolitanism*, which allows the free flow of people, goods and cultures within the Portuguese speaking territories (Cunha, 2012). During the conquests the civilizational, cultural and religious heroic mission was emphasized, where between continents not only the flow of trade, but also of the arts, education and languages were provided by Portugal. The economic and cultural exchanges had become internationalized, which contributed to the establishment of a state where culture is born outside the country's borders (Saraiva, 2000).

Brazil experienced a dictatorial regime between 1937 to 1945: the New State (*Estado Novo*) and later a military regime from 1965 on over 20 years. In regard to broadcasting media as a source of culture, language, interest and knowledge, Cunha states that the organization of the Portuguese-speaking world “was founded on cultural, historical, political, economic and human ties and includes a potential market

of 300 million consumers and producers of media” (Cunha, 2012: 216). According to Cunha (2012), the Lusophone world is a virtual territory of mobility based on common interests and affinities, which are shaped by language, culture and media consumption.

2. Creative economy and the city

The theory of creative economy and the creative industries are a relatively new field of science, with extremely diverse approaches and explanations. Despite its novelty, creative economies and industries give regions a competitive advantage due to the effects of globalization and increased accumulation of knowledge; as a result, concentrations of information and innovation can be found.

The theory of creativity in economics emerged in the 1980s in the works of Törnqvist (1983) and Andersson (1985). With the decline of industry and the development of the information society and information technology, not only the structure of society has been transformed but also the world of work. In addition to the emergence of multinational corporations, local experiences can mean significant competitive advantage (Farkas, 2002). As thus, there is greater emphasis on local knowledge base and informal relationships, and atypical forms of work become more widely accepted work (e.g., flexible working hours, coworking offices, incubator houses). The dynamics of innovation development, the lower transaction costs, the role of institutions that are providing specialized environmental and competitive advantages of social capital (e.g., universities) are factors that show the importance of local advantages (Lengyel, 2003). These aspects are concentrated in cities, where the expression of knowledge society is completed with creativity, increasing the utility and value of knowledge (Kao, 1999). Especially after the global economic crisis, creativity in economy was valued as a given response to the uncertain situation. 2009 was the official year of creativity and innovation of the European Union. According to the United Nations, creativity from the point of view of economy can be derived from human resources. These appearances are developed in the areas of arts, science and economics (United Nations, 2008). Individual creativity itself is an attribute that we can interpret in large measure. This appears in the system of creative industries and creative economy as the basic property of being human, as an activity of economy that creates value, as the background of culture and arts (Ságvári, 2005).

One of the approaches of creativity states that without social recognition and without space, creative production cannot exist. According to this concept, Howkins's (2002) claim that using the creative adjective for a person creating something new should be added to Csikszentmihályi's (2008) explanation. He goes further, arguing that any kind of individual production must be a creation. A product or service is considered to be creative, whether it will be accepted by the field and the domain. Social experts determine (i.e., influential institutions and/or people) what the individual idea may be in the cultural environment. This means that the individual should be immersed in the symbolic range of the cultural environment in order to fill it with new content, which can pass through the filter of social domain experts. In this respect, the creativity of someone's production is a common product determined by the cultural environment and social actors.

According to Kao (1999) individual creativity is a factor that increases the usefulness of knowledge. The expression of cultural economy is necessary for the expression of creative economy (Scott, 1997) and cultural services and products are pieces of cultural economy. Cultural services are services that have been maintained by the state such as education, public education and arts services.

To summarize, the characteristics of the creative industries:

- include among others the cultural industries,
- have a creative value and include the arts, in addition to economic ability,
- create and distribute products and services produced and consumed by society,
- begin (first input) as creativity and intellectual capital.

3. The place and the creative class

Because of the criteria mentioned above (e.g., information, innovation, networks, concentrations of informal relations and knowledge), the ideal place for creative economic activities are large cities (Florida, 2002). Florida (2002) argues that the real competitive advantage for cities lies in the creative society that uses information and knowledge as tools, and in which creative industries stand in the cross-section. In his book *The rise of the creative class* (2002) Florida points out that the driving force of creativity is knowledge and

information, and, as thus, innovation can be produced. He argues that local values have been reevaluated, and the success lies beyond the realization of creative cities, whose cornerstones are the 3 T's: namely *technology*, *talent* and *tolerance*. *Technology* refers to economic-technological development, *talent* stands for the quality of available human resources, and *tolerance* signifies the inclusive socio-cultural environment (Florida, 2002). The economic importance of cultural and creative activities and their relation toward the level of urban development and competitiveness are some of the aspects where urban creativity can be examined (Costa et al., 2009).

In the context of the international project *Accommodating Creative Knowledge* (ACRE), between 2006 and 2010 in 13 European large cities the factors of establishment of creative activities were investigated (Musterd et al., 2007).

The factors are as follows:

Dependence of the road: to understand the current economic situation, we must investigate the development roads in this explicit area of the city. From the point of view of the creative industries, it is favorable if the site has international recognition of cultural history and education and training (Boschma and Martin 2007), if it has decision making political-economical functions, if there are economic activities that need high qualification, and if services are more important than heavy industry (Eckert et al., 2010).

Agglomerate theory: One of the characteristics of the creative industries is the grouping of companies and workers, which is related to regional development (Scott, 2000). Clusters are important because of competitiveness (Porter, 2000).

Theories of localization: existence of raw materials, availability of adequate labor, infrastructure, capital, institutions, regulation (Lengyel and Rechnitzer, 2004).

Configuration function factors such as human resources, knowledge society, networks, environment, quality of life, tolerance, quality and diversity of cultural life are complemented by the physical function factors, such as land, labor, and capital. What is essential is that with the emergence of atypical work, individual

creativity and these incentive stimuli are appreciated.

Individual factors: social networks, experiences, organizational links (Bontje et al., 2011).

According to the ACRE project the creative economy can be divided into sectors. The parties to this are the creative and cultural industries, and industries with an intensive knowledge base, which has relatively strong content, such as infocommunications, finance, law, business services, research and development, and higher education. The recent study assumes that the above mentioned elements are essential for the creation of a creative city like Lisbon or São Paulo.

4. Methodology

The fieldwork was carried out in São Paulo and Lisbon in 2016. Interviews were held with leading figures from projects from both cities. The semi-structured interviews were led in English and/or Portuguese languages. In total, twenty-four exploratory interviews were completed, twelve in each city. The interviews were recorded and processed. In this paper four interviews from each city were selected and analysed (see Table 1). This selection was made according to the relevance of the Lisbon Street Art & Urban Creativity International Conference 2017 and along the call *Intangible heritage and knowledge transfer*.

In the research the urban creativity aspects of the Portuguese-speaking countries are investigated and questioned to explore whether, in addition to the common language, there exists a common Lusophone identity and if so, whether it can be seen in urban creativity methods and added to the creation of the *creative city* model. As such, the study also researches city and governmental policies and the tolerance factor, which could be crucial for dynamics in the city (Florida, 2002), as well as the identity of a common language as background. Following the structure and analysis of the conducted interviews, the aim of the research is to make an empirical comparative structure between the selected cities in the Lusophone world, and map innovative and creative spaces and the characteristics of each city.

The field research employs semi-structured interviews, focusing on companies, organisations, actors, policy

makers (of models of creative economy and creative city), and incentives and venues (which currently or operated or operated at some point in one of the cities). Field researchers also collected and researched the literature of the field (situation of creative economy and creative industries; regulations and examples to enhance variety of urban creativity; population and characteristics of the city). Through the interviews the aim is to answer the following questions:

- Does historical background influence the tolerance and urban creativity development in the city?
- What is the role of the political decision makers in urban creativity development?
- How can urban creativity be boosted?
- Does something like a common Lusophone identity exist? If so, what does it mean and in which ways does it occur? Does this identity impact urban creativity? How does this identity appear in creative economy? How does Lusophone identity appear in gentrified areas and reclaimed buildings with new functions?
- Are there measures/steps from organizations of Lusophone identity (e.g., CPLP), which could influence urban creativity?
- If historical, Lusophone background can strengthen the tolerance factor of Florida's 3T's, and whether it helps the settlement of a creative class, affecting urban creativity?
- What is the city image? If and how urban creativity appears in this?
- What kind of influence does urban creativity have on economy, tourism, and international relations?

5. Urban creativity in Lisbon

After the world economic crisis in 2008, many urban creativity initiatives were started in Lisbon. Examples are projects in the scale of street art, when city hall started to renovate downtown's Bairro Alto area, and thus, providing street artists with legal walls to paint. This project was organized

Table 1. List of interviewees

City	Name	Organization/position
São Paulo	Carlos Augusto Machado Calil	Professor at Department of Cinema, Radio and Television, Universidade de São Paulo; former Secretary of Culture of São Paulo; Founder of Project Virada Cultural
	Baixo Ribeiro	Choque Cultural Street and Urban Art Gallery; founder
	Ricardo Ruiz	Laboratory of Cidades Sensitivas; leader
	Alex Romano	Graffiti artist
Lisbon	Catarina Mendonca Ferreira	Time Out Market/Time Out Magazine; journalist, curator
	Joana Branco Gomes	LX Factory/ Mainside Investment; PR, Communication, Project Management
	Luís Pousinho	Galeria de Arte Urbana, Lisbon City Hall; event producer
	Vasco T. Rodrigues	Street Art Lisbon - The real street art tour; journalist and tour guide

Source: The author, 2016

by Galeria de Arte Urbana, an agency operating within the frames of Lisbon City Hall. Other examples are initiatives of start-up culture and transformation of old warehouses, factories into creative and cultural hubs, recreation of old spaces, and adapting them to current day demands and needs (see Table 2). Many of these projects were born with the help of local policy makers (e.g., city hall, government). In 2013, the Department for Innovation and Economy of Lisbon City Hall published a comprehensive study of the city's creative industry, in which strategic directions are determined until 2020. In the study, creative operators and related economic development and tourism dynamism are detailed, emphasizing that Lisbon is a multicultural, inclusive and tolerant city, where in addition to well-trained and talented manpower, the appropriate technological background is also provided.

All initiatives that bring a new flavour to the urban space build urban creativity, and started to flourish towards the end of the 2000s:

I believe Portuguese people are creative. I think Lisbon 20 years ago was not the same as today. Now is about creativity, innovation, and people who live here can feel it, that is a creative hub and they can participate. Before it was more like a village. (Joana Gomes)

All the interviewees mention that the support of city hall was important in urban development and in their own projects, and these spurred a spin-off effect for other initiatives. Urban creativity plays an important role when we talk about a growing economy or tourism. There is a huge investment in start-ups and co-working places and Lisbon is a European leader in urban creativity, which results in recreating parts of the city. Like LX Factory in Alcântara, which has a big influence in tourism, on social relations:

Alcântara is an old neighbourhood and did not have any investments. But after the opening of LX Factory in 2008, many tourists are coming here to

visit us. Also outside the Factory, shops, restaurants started to open up, young people started to move here. (Joana Gomes)

Another example of urban creativity and tourism is the street art project in Quinta do Mocho run by Loures City Hall (see Figure 1), which is a result of Lisbon's City Hall initiative Galeria de Arte Urbana. These street art initiatives from different City Halls are reflections on the importance of how political decision makers are promoting street art, as well as using urban creativity as a tool for restructuring neighbourhoods and involving communities. There is a significant presence of Portugal's historical colonizing background especially in urban art, as evidenced in the Amilcar Cabral painting in Quinta do Mocho or *40 anos 40 murais* project. Urban and street art is no longer considered vandalism, but an artistic movement supported by the authorities.

Two years ago, there was no reason to visit Quinta do Mocho, people went there only to buy drugs. Now people visit that neighbourhood because there was an artistic rehabilitation of the place. There was the artistic creation, the change of the scenario. It didn't solve the problems of the people who live there, but something has started. In Quinta do Mocho there is a buzz now. Coffee shops and restaurants are beginning to open. Nothing like that existed before. Now you have 65-80 walls painted by street artists, of course people want to see them. (Vasco Rodrigues)

All the interviewees agree that their projects have an influence on urban development in the city. These are considered as pilot projects or role models in Lisbon's urban scene and they are often renowned as examples of best practices in the international context as well.

About Time Out Market, people from abroad came here and studied the case as a good example, were interested how it was done. At the beginning it was a Portuguese company, was independent and paid royalties to London. But when the market was opened, the international Time Out magazine bought it. They saw this could be a good and best example, so it will be replicated in other cities like London, New York, Berlin. (Catarina Ferreira)

There is no competition, but rather cooperation among the actors from the same field in urban creativity. Often, after seeing the success of the pilot project the project owners are recognised and asked to fulfil other projects in different areas in the city:

In the beginning we just managed this building, we were isolated. Then the city hall understood our ability to make projects happen, they invited us to do more projects, like the renovation of Cais de Sodré. Now we are working on a project in Intendente. (Joana Gomes)

All of the interviewees agree that their organizations influence the image of the city in a positive way. As mentioned above, all these projects are held as models and best practices, and reinforce its creative city image upheld by higher decision makers while maintaining the genuineness of the city.

Table 2. Urban Creativity examples in Lisbon reported by the interviewees

Big scale urban development investments by political decision makers	Street art initiatives	Recreated places as creative hubs
EXPO - Parque das Nações, City Hall Initiatives in immigrant neighbourhood like Intendente or Mouraria, CCB, FabLabs	Galeria de Arte Urbana, Lara Seixo Rodrigues organizer of Muraliza/ Wool festival/Lata65, Vhils (artist), Underdogs Gallery, Os Gémeos piece, Blue wall, Quinta do Mocho	LX Factory, Time Out Market, Fabrica do Tijolo, Co-working places

Source: The author, 2016

We used to say this is the best of the city under one roof. Here tourists have a good idea of the city. (Catarina Ferreira)

I think we have done a great job and put Lisbon on the map of urban creativity, to have great urban art. Now our focus is to work with the community. (Luís Pousinho)

We influence the creative city image a lot, if you want to show creative Lisbon, you come to LX Factory. (Joana Gomes)

If they pass near a monument I can explain what the monument is, so I am giving them the same tour what the tour bus would give them but my point of interest is to show them the artistic creativity.

So I am giving them an extra positive view of the city. Obviously from the feedback I know that they leave Lisbon with a different perspective and they definitely understand why Lisbon is on the top cities for creative art, for urban creativity.

(Vasco Rodrigues)

6. Urban creativity in São Paulo

In the city of São Paulo, marginalized communities have a strong demand for urbanism and urbanization. The desire for urbanism has a great influence on urban culture, for instance guerilla planting (see Figure 2). There exists a lack of canalization and green space and a large demand for community spaces for locals to congregate. In most cases implementation is hindered by bureaucracy and



Fig. 1. Mural in Quinta do Mocho, Source: The author, 2016

politics. Another barrier is the mixture of different nations and cultures, where a homogenous group demanding their shared needs and values be met does not exist.

On the other hand, urbanism is brutal in São Paulo, like the aggressively protected private property (e.g., barbed-wire fence, high walls), density of population, extremely high number of cars, low quality of public transportation, gross and narrow pavements, and problems of distinguishing between public and private property.

In this environment, urban activism is becoming wide spread, where a group of people (both specialists and non-specialists) are seeking new forms of occupying public space, executing micro-transformation on the street scale and macro-transformation on the scale of public policies.

Urban creativity is to create and explore freely in the city. The aim is to create a tolerant territory and to understand how to deal with conflicts. According to the interviewees, examples of creativity practices in São Paulo include cultural institutes, large-scale urban development projects, transformation of special neighbourhoods, street festivals and activities as well as educational programs (see Table 3).

The interviewees explain the environment and the case of urban creativity in the city, as well the issue of identity in São Paulo:

I lived in São Paulo during the 1990s. It was shocking for me, I was not used to that, I was from a forest. It was violent, everyone was for themselves, you could be killed easily. It was the creativity for surviving, selling drugs, robbing cars. Often there



Fig. 2. Urban creativity in front of Gallery Choque Cultural, neighbourhood Vila Madalena, São Paulo; Source: The author, 2016

was an issue with the police. São Paulo police is the most violent one. What is urban creativity to survive? Skating for instance, but if you made any graffiti, it was a crime. So for me urban creativity has a strong relation with crime. (Ricardo Ruiz)

São Paulo does not have an identity. All my efforts about the center to restore the identity were lost. There was a strong movement to look for identity in Avenida Paulista, later in Faria Lima, then this process was moving away from the center. Mooca has an Italian identity, but now it has the process of mobilization. Mapping the identities, as public policies can value them. Culture today passes through urbanism, which some fifteen years ago did not happen. (Carlos Calil)

Authorities do not fulfil the needs or finance initiatives of urban interventions. There is no significant pilot project in terms of urban creativity financed by public authorities. As the interviewees underline, there is a lack of common ideology and network required in order to articulate needs to political decision makers.

We are restricted to ideological issues. For example the Park of Rua Augusta. Praça Roosevelt. There is a lack of common sense and ideology. (Carlos Calil)

Society needs to be better organized into groups and networks, to discuss certain public policies, and to create articulations for these epic policies. (Baixo Ribeiro)

Since there is a deep crisis in the political issues (i.e., impeachment) there is a lack of leading figures who serve the public and stand for the locals' needs. On the other hand, the project Cidade Limpa in 2006 was a new law, which forbids outdoor ads in the city. This allowed for massive creativity in street art:

The recent mayor was an important figure and supporter of urban art, he got his own spray can and made his own piece. The state has the duty to support financially the project, but they don't do it. That is why many private initiatives came out. Some months ago I gave classes of street art for elderly people, which was financed by Toyota. I am afraid of the new major, who is a real business man." (Alex Romano)

Romano's prediction came true. In 2017 the new mayor had street art works erased and urban creativity is not promoted any longer.

On the other hand, some argue for the importance of change

Table 3. Urban Creativity examples in São Paulo reported by the interviewees

Educational projects	Street festivals and activities	Cultural Institutes	Parts of the city, big scale urban development
Seminarium of question of city in the night, Escola a cidade, cidade a escola education program	Virada Cultural, Largo da Batata, Minhocão	Praça das Artes Institute, Biblioteca Tiradentes, Abandoned buildings in the service of the community like Vila Itororó, Choque Cultural Gallery, SESC Pompeia, Tomie Ohtake Institute, Sala São Paulo	Vale de Anhangabaú, Largo da Batata, Minhocão, Abandoned buildings in the service of the community like Vila Itororó, Vila Madalena, Parque Ibirapuera, Mooca

Source: The author, 2016

in political attitudes:

The political system has changed a lot recently in the ideology and invest into the public sectors. Now communities are supported and fostered to get trained, and establish themselves economical actors. (Ricardo Ruiz)

Urban creativity is connected to values like redistribution and revalorization, which can serve the locals and work to their benefit:

Redistribution of the wealth is cruel. If you get people think creatively, critically, using the city as a medium, that kind of experiment is a possibility to change the oligopolies and provide access to the more. There are also good examples like start-ups or a shop in entire Brazil, called Magazine Luisa, which provides products for the poor. This is a shop all around Brazil, good products for poor people. (Ricardo Ruiz)

Urban creativity means revalorization, repositioning, gentrification of certain areas. There are big differences between areas of the city – for instance Jardins in downtown are rich, outskirts are poor. But in both areas nights are dangerous. Urban creativity brings a new hint in revalorization of abandoned and old buildings. (Carlos Calil)

Interviewees have different ideas on the influence of urban creativity on economy or tourism:

About tourism, foreign tourists want to see the new things of urbanism, they are curious about the real São Paulo. Locals want to take foreigners to malls, but it does not make sense, someone from the US can buy things cheaper there than here. Another strange and bizarre example is Sala São Paulo in Cracolândia...The Virada Festival happens in an area which was forgotten for many years. Now it brings visibility and tourism, there is nothing like this, not even in Rio de Janeiro. It doesn't exclude the periferias, is neither elitist nor discriminative. For instance, on the day of the festival public transportation is free, thus people from periferias can come to the downtown, otherwise this would be hardly possible. (Carlos Calil)

Although the city is strong in street art and gives space to internationally renowned artists like Os Gemeos, “the city is still not exploited for tourism, but there are graffiti tours.” (Alex Romano)

There are areas of the city, like Vila Madalena, which have recently become popular due to the visibility of “creativity”, and are going through a strong gentrification process.

The neighbourhood Vila Madalena is a good example of recent gentrification and relatively strong tourism. Also city center provides a great scale of different activities, cultural experiences, galleries, schools, spaces of culture. (Baixo Ribeiro)

In terms of international relations, there are examples from Germany or England--even the British Council made a project in the city. According to Carlos Calil “we can make exchanges, we can talk, but it won't bring solutions. For example, High Line is great but not the same as Minhocão.” (Carlos Calil)

While the interviewees argue if São Paulo can be considered a creative city, they all agree that the city has very strong energies, “Architecture, artists, periferia movements are strong initiatives.” (Carlos Calil)

I do not consider São Paulo that creative, because the industrial culture killed the focus on traditional culture. For instance, people consider Mooca district Italian, but that has a fake tradition of Italy. We have some indie or black community, but they are whitening (branciado). Capitalism in the 1950s-1970s got the globalized idea as a pattern, and happened very well here. (Ricardo Ruiz)

In my opinion São Paulo is a creative city with intense energy, includes also violent and strong fights. The city has many problems, that is why we are in a war of transformation, which means many deaths and political violence. We use creativity in a strong way. (Baixo Ribeiro)

For me this city is very much creative and incredible from a certain point of view: the poorer areas you go the more creativity you find. In most cases it

means innovation and recycling. Brazil was the first country where muralists used wall paints instead of sprays, because that was cheaper. How ghettos, shanty towns came out, it was a very brutal colonisation of exploitation. Brazil came up with a big violent culture, racism, graffiti was a screen for the poor neighbourhood, poor people went up on the buildings and write their names. It is very depressive, to get out of poverty. (Alex Romano)

7. Conclusion

The Lusophone space is mostly described as a virtual territory shaped by common language and culture. As language and culture are prior “soft power” elements to maintain common interests and affinities, and identity, the question is if there are recognizable traces in urban creativity which reflect on the common Lusophone history or cultural details and if there are any common strategies in promoting urban creativity in the examined cities. Although both cities are able to fulfil different criteria towards the establishment of a creative class and creative city, such as Florida’s 3Ts (talent, tolerance, technology) or ACRE factors (dependence of the road, clusters, localization, configuration and individual factors), there are strong differences in the ways of promoting and dealing with urban creativity.

With the world economic crisis, urban creativity activities have started to flourish in Lisbon, mainly due to the fact that political decision makers saw the potential of a boom within a creative city. Since then, start-up and urban art culture is significant, as is transformation of old warehouses and factories into creative and cultural hubs and big scale urban development investment. Indeed, urban art is no longer considered vandalism in Lisbon, and is often used as a medium to reflect on colonial history.

In the case of São Paulo, such a visible starting point is undetectable. Here graffiti still works as a medium of the periphery and resistance, and as a tool of social projects in the communities. On the other hand, since the ban of outdoor advertisements there is more space for graffiti artists to create. In São Paulo creativity derives from a very strong need and desire for a better quality of life, for more friendly environments, and for urbanism in general. This brutal urbanism (e.g., the lack of legislation, high criminal incidences) give a solid base from which urban activism

can grow. Urban creativity includes cultural institutes, large-scale urban development projects, transformation of special neighbourhoods, street festivals and activities as well as educational programs.

In Lisbon, urban creativity projects are strongly supported by the city hall, which is a much wider political issue in Portugal, promoting the “tolerant” city and relationships with ex-colonies (e.g., CPLP). In São Paulo, instead of public policies, urban creativity projects are based on private organizations and locals gathered in communities. This is a rather bottom-up process, and urban creativity is more related to urban development because of the needs of the locals. In Lisbon, it is a more centralized, top-down process. City Hall in Lisbon sees urban creativity as part of its development strategy, in São Paulo there are some projects (like FabLab) run by city hall, but there is no comprehensive strategy.

Urban creativity in Lisbon has a strong spin off effect, and significant influence on the economy and tourism, as well as recreation and gentrification of formerly disadvantaged city areas (immigrants, social, industrial neighbourhoods). In São Paulo, there are certain areas which were recently gentrified, although these attempts often fail (see Sala São Paulo in Cracolândia) and redistribution of wealth is still problematic. The city is still not exploited for tourism, but there are attempts to realize it.

In interviews in Lisbon it was common for agents of creative projects to use the space in a new and creative way, which is acknowledged by the locals, tourists and the political leaders. It seems that many believe these kinds of projects shape the image of a creative city in a positive way. In São Paulo the opinions regarding a creative city image is more fragmented, likely due to a strong urban energy need.

A future aim of the research is to extend the interviews to other Portuguese speaking countries, and establish a comparative study of the different methods, examples, and financing systems of urban creativity in order to better describe and understand the Lusophone space and its characteristics.

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