

Institution: Leeds Metropolitan University
Unit of Assessment: 36 Culture, Communication and Media: Library and Information Management
Title of case study: Cities of Culture
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Intercultural exchange in multi-ethnic cities is increasingly understood as a source of cultural, social and economic dynamism. This argument is rehearsed by Bianchini in much of his published research and other interventions. His comparative research on Liverpool and other European port cities also highlighted cosmopolitan intercultural exchange central to the cultural characteristics of such cities. His work on port cities was the key source for a chapter of Liverpool's successful bid for the title of 2008 European Capital of Culture which made a major contribution to the city's economic development and regeneration. Subsequent work has been adopted by other cities in similar bidding frameworks, including most recently Matera, Italy, in its bid to become European City of Culture in 2019 for which it reached the Italian shortlist in November 2013.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Bianchini's research on intercultural exchange in multi-ethnic cities is closely linked with his work on urban imaginaries and the cultural characteristics of port cities, which are often shaped by cosmopolitan and intercultural influences. Bianchini conducted this research from 1995-2007 at De Montfort University, Leicester, where he was Reader in Cultural Planning and Policy and, since 2007, at Leeds Metropolitan University, where he is Professor of Cultural Policy and Planning. Intercultural exchange and interculturalism as a force for cultural, social and economic dynamism and innovation are themes shared by Bianchini's research on multi-ethnic cities and on port cities. Bianchini started researching interculturalism in cities in the early 2000s, as part of the 'Intercultural Cities' research project inaugurated by independent research centre Comedia with support from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. His book, <i>Planning for the Intercultural City</i> (2004) co-authored with Jude Bloomfield, maps different policy approaches to managing ethnic diversity in cities. The book makes the case for interculturalism as a more effective model than multiculturalism (the dominant policy framework in the UK). This particular area of research has been an interest since 1999, but it is a continuing strand of his work within the REF period and during his time at Leeds Metropolitan University.</p> <p>The concept of 'Cities on the Edge' (CotE) defines how port cities like Liverpool, Naples and Marseilles share a strong sense of their own cultural identity, shaped by their history as ports, their openness to the sea and the wider world, through the flux of migrants and port activities bringing with them new ideas, musical styles and fashions. Port cities are places of rebelliousness, autonomous cultural traditions, unorthodox political action, and religious and cultural diversity. Simultaneously these cities enjoyed a culturally iconic status abroad. Edginess as a quality had to do with distinctive cultural attributes – which were shared – including distinctive dialects, irreverent humour and a desperate passion for football. The latter expressed a way of winning against national economic, political and media establishments in the UK, France and Italy that often designated Liverpool, Marseilles and Naples as 'losers'. A rebellious streak of anarchic individualism was identified in all three cities, combined with strong communal solidarities, expressing an independent spirit of the city and at the same time an underdog mentality. Allied to these positive attributes, a difficult darker side was also highlighted in job insecurity, unemployment and disorder, illicit pleasures that could blur into addiction and organised crime, problems which appeared endemic and insoluble, but to which the re-evaluation of the positive aspects of cultural edginess perhaps offered a new, more fruitful response. One of the key aims of the CotE project was to create new international cultural linkages which would enhance the openness of the cities taking part in the project. CotE explored the multiple meanings of the concept of 'edge': geographical, political, socio-economic, artistic, and psychological, in relation to the participating cities.</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

CotE resulted directly in sixteen cultural projects involving the six participating cities, 12 of which were directly influenced by Bianchini's work. These included an opera, three international conferences (on serious and organised crime, on intercultural cities and the regeneration of port cities respectively), a series of public lectures (the 'Rebel Lectures'), an anthology of short stories, the publication of three books (an anthology of short stories, a collection of essays about radical urban tactics and a photographic book), two films, an international youth theatre festival, two community arts projects involving different artistic disciplines, a tour of unsigned rock and pop bands, and two visual arts projects (an exhibition and an installation).

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Bianchini, F. "The relationship between cultural resources and tourism policies for cities and regions", chapter in D. Dodd and A. van Hemel (eds.) *Planning Cultural Tourism in Europe* Amsterdam, Boekmanstichting, 1999.

Bloomfield, J. and Bianchini, F. *Planning for the Intercultural City* Bournes Green, Comedia, 2004.

Weiss-Sussex, G. with Bianchini, F. (eds.) *Urban Mindscapes of Europe*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2006. The book includes the chapters 'European urban mindscapes: concepts, cultural representations and policy applications', by Franco Bianchini, and 'Confessions of a place marketer', by Paul Brookes, interviewed by Franco Bianchini.

Bianchini, F. and Bloomfield, J., (2008) 'Foreword' to Hinks, J. (ed.) *ReBerth. Stories from cities on the edge* Manchester, Comma Press, 2008.

Bloomfield, J. and Bianchini, F. (2008) 'Informality and social creativity in four European port cities', chapter in Guidi, E. (ed.) *Urban Makers* Berlin, b_books,. Bianchini, F. 'Photography on the edge', essay in Davies, J. (ed.) *Cities on the Edge* Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2008.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Bianchini's ideas on the 'edgy' qualities of Liverpool and other European port cities formed the basis in 2003 for a chapter of the successful bid by Liverpool Culture Company for the title of European Capital of Culture (ECoC) 2008, for the city of Liverpool. This chapter (focused on the international dimension of the Liverpool 2008 cultural programme) outlined the 'Cities on the Edge' (CotE) concept, described above. In its February 2004 report, the EU Selection Panel for European Capitals of Culture welcomed the CotE concept as important in strengthening the otherwise underdeveloped European dimension of the Liverpool bid. Considering the importance of European cultural co-operation criteria in determining the outcome of ECoC bids, it can be concluded that the CotE proposal made a small but significant contribution to the UK jury's decision to choose Liverpool as ECoC for 2008, and to the EU Panel's ratification of such decision. Liverpool's designation as ECoC had a significant positive impacts for the city. The 2008 ECoC programme attracted 9.7 million additional visits to Liverpool, generating a total of £753.8 million additional direct visitor spend. 85% of Liverpool residents agreed with the claim that "the city was a better place to live than before the ECoC award" (1).

The positive response by the EU Panel was a key factor in Liverpool Culture Company's decision to implement CotE as a project in the Liverpool 2008 cultural programme. Bianchini collaborated with Liverpool Culture Company in the implementation of CotE in an advisory capacity from 2004-2009. We must consider the impacts of the CotE project separately from the wider impact of Liverpool's year as ECoC. Despite funding and management difficulties, the CotE team and its partners were successful in several projects, the definition of which was heavily influenced by Bianchini's work. These included two conferences aimed at academics, policy makers and other

professionals: *Intercultural Cities* and *On the Waterfront; Culture, heritage and regeneration of port cities*. The *Rebel Lectures* programme was CotE's key initiative in the field of dissident thought. The project was only partially implemented, and revealed the need for more lead time, better planning, contextualisation and publicity but achieved a remarkable coup in hosting Roberto Saviano, the anti-Camorra Neapolitan writer, several months before the film of his book, *Gomorra*, came out in the UK. The visual arts projects within CotE were especially successful. They included the production of the edgy, high quality, interdisciplinary and highly cost effective *Urban Makers* book, the well managed and artistically interesting *Cities on the Edge* photography book and exhibition, the under-resourced but imaginative *Interchange* exhibition, and the inspiring and innovative *Terminus* film.

On the Edge of Passion, a film about football supporters in Istanbul, Liverpool and Marseilles succeeded in attracting a wider audience than that normally attending arts events. *For the Likes of Us* was the collective name for arts projects in three of Liverpool's deprived neighbourhoods. All projects within *For the Likes of Us* suffered from underfunding and poor publicity, although they generally achieved a good artistic quality. The key factor for the more successful of these projects, *La Dolce Vita* (in the Kirkdale neighbourhood), was the high quality of research on the artistic concept, and of collaboration and strategic build-up of audience participation. CotE projects had a variety of beneficiaries, ranging from the cultural sector and community organizations in Liverpool, to individual artists and arts audiences in the six participating cities, to the academics, policy makers and other professionals attending the conferences. A total of just over 158,000 people (according to data supplied by the Liverpool Culture Company) attended CotE events (the vast majority of whom – about 120,000 – watched the open air screenings of the *Terminus* film).

Bianchini's co-authored book, *Planning for the Intercultural City* (2004) was a key source of inspiration for the joint Council of Europe/European Commission Intercultural Cities action research project. The project started in 2008 as a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and of the European Commission. Its aim was introduce a new model of governance and policy in multi-ethnic European cities. The project provided examples of good practice, and made recommendations for reforming policies in areas ranging from education to planning and urban design, the arts, housing and economic development. The project also recommended training and research initiatives to strengthen the intercultural skills of local policy-makers. Eleven cities from eleven different European countries were chosen to take part in the project's pilot programme in 2008. Nine additional cities joined the project in 2011. The main beneficiaries were stakeholders working in the fields of cultural diversity, community relations, multiculturalism, interculturalism and anti-racism: local authority officers, politicians, other policy makers, community activists and representatives, journalists and other professionals.

(1) Data from Garcia, B. Melville, R. and Cox, T. (2010) *Creating an Impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture*, Liverpool: Impacts 08, University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

(1) The Selection Panel for the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) 2008, *Report On The Nominations From The UK And Norway For The European Capital Of Culture 2008*, Brussels, February 2004.

(2) Liverpool University's Professor John Belchem recognised that the Cities on the Edge programme owed "much to the work of Franco Bianchini". He described Cities on the Edge as "a unique cultural exploration of six European port cities", which ran throughout Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture, (and) opened up some important comparative perspectives" (in 'Shock City: Sailortown Liverpool', keynote paper at the English Heritage conference *On the*

Waterfront: Culture, Heritage and Regeneration of Port Cities Liverpool, 19th-21st November 2008).

- (3) Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008 *Cities on the Edge* Liverpool, Liverpool Culture Company, 2008. This brochure acknowledges that Franco Bianchini “developed the concept of an ‘edgy’ cities cultural partnership which could form part of Liverpool’s 2008 celebrations” (p. 14).
- (4) Charlotte Hopes ‘Urban regeneration through the arts’, article in *Podium*, the Arts and Humanities Research Council’s magazine, issue 11, spring 2009, p. 7 (<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/Publications/Publications-archive/Documents/Podium/Podium-11-Spring-2009.pdf>; accessed on 22nd July 2013). The article discusses Bianchini’s ‘Photography on the edge’ essay and concludes: “by presenting new ways of seeing the cities concerned, Professor Bianchini and the photographers involved bring to bear new perspectives on issues such as the gentrification of city centres, the displacement of lower-income residents to the city’s periphery or remaining pockets of deprivation in urban centres”.
- (5) The key role of Bianchini’s research in inspiring the ‘Cities on the Edge’ project is recognised in an article in *Le Monde* (7th January 2010) by François Thomazeau (‘Les mal aimées se rebiffent’, translated into English as ‘Cities on the edge stand tall’, see <http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/article/164961-cities-edge-stand-tall>, accessed on 16th May 2013). The article acknowledges Bianchini as one of “two men...behind the scheme”, the other being Sir Bob Scott, International Ambassador for Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008.
- (6) The Council of Europe document *Intercultural Cities. Towards a model for intercultural integration* (Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publishing, 2010; ISBN 978-92-871-6732-3, p. 20) acknowledges the book *Planning for the Intercultural City*, by Jude Bloomfield and Franco Bianchini (2004) as a key source for the “original concept of the intercultural city”.
- (7) Further corroboration concerning the impact of Bianchini’s work on the Council of Europe/European Commission’s Intercultural Cities project can be obtained from named individuals whose details are supplied separately.
- Identifier 1 from the Directorate of Democratic Governance, Culture and Diversity, corroborates the impact of Bianchini’s work for Liverpool as a significant plank of that organisation’s continuing work.
- Identifier 2, formerly an advisor on the Intercultural Cities project corroborates the impact of Bianchini’s inputs on the Council of Europe/European Commission’s Intercultural Cities Project..
- Identifier 3, former international ambassador for the Liverpool Culture Company, can corroborate the impact of Bianchini’s work for that successful bid.
- (8) http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Default_en.asp
- (9) Garcia, B. Melville, R. and Cox, T. (2010) *Creating an Impact: Liverpool’s experience as European Capital of Culture*, Liverpool: Impacts 08, University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University.