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Port City Cultures, Values, or Maritime Mindsets Part 2: Studying and Shaping Cultures in Port City Territories

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PORT CITY CULTURES, VALUES, OR MARITIME MINDSETS, PART 2: STUDYING AND SHAPING CULTURES IN PORT CITY TERRITORIES

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Paul van de Laar

Baciu, Baptist, Buslacchi, Chouairi,
Colclough, Cuevas Valenzuela, Dai, Gan,
Harteveld, Hein, Luning, Mulder, Seoghe,
Sennema, Sivo, Usai, van den Brink, van de
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Maria Pina Usai
Maurice Harteveld
Maya Vinai
Tianchen Dai
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Rachel Seoighe
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EDITORIAL

Innovative Methods for Studying and Shaping Cultures in Port City Territories

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Following part 1 of *Port City Cultures, Values, and Maritime Mindsets*, this issue explores how cultures of port city territories are put into words, visualized, and can even be shaped. Continuing the argument that port city territories merit particular attention due to their location at the border of sea and land and the presence of global and local interests and stakeholders of differing sizes, this issue emphasizes once more the role that culture, values, and mindsets can play in understanding the historical relations and socio-spatial features of port cities, their socio-cultural construction, and their future design. The issue emphasizes the value of considering ways of perceiving, defining, and classifying port cities in relation to social context and powerful processes of meaning-making in academia and in the wider society.

The articles in this second volume of the special issue take inspiration from the first volume. Acknowledging the influence of time and place-bound

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(cultural) conventions for academic framing pushes scholars to develop new methods, to lay bare implicit assumptions, and to explore tacit values undergirding studies of port city life worlds. The first four articles demonstrate how new and diverse methods make it possible to address bias in current ways of academic knowing, perceiving, and valuing port cities in both their external and internal socio-spatial relations. The articles show that methodological breaks from conventional practice – with alternative choices of historical sources, wording, and critique of standard perceptions of port city spaces – yield much-needed multivocality in narrations and plurality in perceptions. The last two articles of the special issue propose follow-up steps to link analysis to cultural activism and design.

Awareness that values and cultural conventions are created in tangible social practices implies that academics may contribute to processes of reshaping value orientations and cultural meanings. Contributors to this special issue propose ways of opening new thinking-space with which to tackle the contemporary challenges of port city regions. Such thinking-space helps alternative future pathways to emerge. Several contributors take this step further by straddling lines between academic, design, and activist work. They analyze how they co-create cultural events to engage with new forms of maritime mindsets, discussed in this volume as “a shared mindset of port city actors formed through the location and century-old investments,” the “presence—or absence—” of which “shapes future development in port-city-regions”.¹ The contributions to this second volume of the special issue describe port city cultures in the (re)making, so to speak.² Methodological innovations and academics as ‘cultural agents’ are key elements of this special issue, the first part of which emphasizes (re)making academic models and the second the (re) shaping of port city cultures, values, and futures.

The first two contributions in the first section show the importance of scrutinizing how histories of port cities are narrated. Maya Vinai uses works of fiction for memorializing port city cultures as an alternative and additional source of knowledge for narrating port city histories. Tianchen Dai, Carola Hein, and Dan Baciu use textual analysis to explore how port city heritage is described on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website. Both contributions argue that verbalizations—genres in writing and

1 Tianchen Dai, Carola Hein, Dan Baciu, “Heritage Words: Exploring Port City Terms,” *The European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes* 4, no. 2 (2021): 36-59.

2 Robert J. Foster, “Making National Cultures in the Global Ecumene,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20, no. 1 (1991): 235–60, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.an.20.100191.001315>; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Ton Otto and Poul Pedersen, “Disentangling Traditions: Culture, Agency and Power,” in *Tradition and Agency: Tracing Cultural Continuity and Invention*, ed. Ton Otto and Poul Pedersen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2005), 11–49; Orlando Patterson, “Making Sense of Culture,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 40, no. 1 (July 30, 2014): 1–30, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071913-043123>; Malte Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean: Urban Culture in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108769716>.

choices of words—are cultural expressions which matter. Words can shape and change the world.

The next two contributions move from verbal to visual methods by showing how images of port cities matter. Maurice Hartevelde presents a creative way to identify blind spots in ways of “seeing port cities.” He experiments with mental mapping to redress visual gaps in portraying port-city relations and improve collaboration in the field of port city governance. Rachel Seoighe and Hernán Cuevas address the politics of visual culture by studying how photographs of slum neighborhoods and abandoned, deindustrialized harbor areas beautify decay to serve the gaze of tourists. Their analysis also points to blind spots in visual narration that excludes experiences of poverty and inequalities.

The authors contributing to the second section combine their analysis with explicit attempts to translate academic knowledge into future-making and societal interventions. Carola Hein, Ingrid Mulder, and Hilde Sennema propose methods for enhancing what they call “value literacy”. The authors propose that stakeholders deliberate values purposefully to aid the future planning and design of port cities. In the final contribution, Maria Elena Buslacchi and Maria Pina Usai analyze their own academic/interventionist engagement in organizing cultural festivals as part of the Zones Portuaires Genova experience. Their “research in action” seeks to enhance cultural appreciation of port-city connections through festivals and art.

All contributors engage critically with key debates concerning major characteristics of port cities (which are discussed also in the introduction to part 1 of this special issue). Several authors contribute to rethinking historic socio-spatial dynamics and propose how the re-conceptualization and (re)making of maritime cultures may help redress the effects of the disconnect that has developed between ports and cities.

Section 1: Innovative Methods for Studying Portcity Cultures: Verbalization, Visualization

As nodes in world histories of trade and colonial expansion, port cities continue to bring together a wide range of international actors with very different identities and power positions. This heterogeneity has led scholars to describe port cities as cosmopolitan. However, this gloss has been criticized as too general³ and too restricted in its representation of social

3 Henk Driessen, “Mediterranean Port Cities: Cosmopolitanism Reconsidered,” *History and Anthropology* 16, no. 1 (March 2005): 129–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0275720042000316669>.

differentiation.⁴ In the first part of this special issue, Didem Yerli⁵ argued that class is not sufficiently foregrounded in descriptions of ‘cosmopolitan’ port cities. The author of the first article to appear in this issue, Maya Vinai, also tackles the cosmopolitan model by showing how representations of port cities have been biased as a result of the selection of historical sources: often the sources have been written by relative outsiders engaged in colonial domination. Using mainly Portuguese sources for detailing the political and trade interactions in South Indian ports of Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore since the early fifteenth century has led scholars to portray this region as a cosmopolitan, open world. They attributed the openness to the docility and open-mindedness of the local rulers, who barely resisted new powerholders. By bringing historical sources into conversation with works of fiction, Vinai proposes a very different reading of these port city histories. She reveals diverse approaches to identity politics, ranging from cosmopolitanism to far more exclusionary claims of belonging. By using fictional works as a source of memory, we gain access to alternative images of political entanglements. The contribution is important to the topic of port city cultures because of its methodology and because it shows how cultural expressions such as novels are important entry points for conceptualizing port cities and for (re)valuing maritime mindsets.

Tianchen Dai, Carola Hein, and Dan Baciú pair methodological innovation with a network approach to port cities. Their article assesses UNESCO’s framework of recognizing port cities for Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and for listing them as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The methodological innovation consists of applying textual tools to over 1100 abstracts of World Heritage Sites published on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website. They examine groups of words describing the typology of buildings and structures associated with port functions and activities. The analysis shows several biases resulting from Eurocentrism, but also from limited object-based definitions and a binary conception of ‘nature’ and ‘culture’. The authors argue that a networked approach to port cities is needed to do justice to global connections in the histories of maritime trade and articulations of nature-culture in processes of shaping port cities on the land-sea continuum. Heritage sites are key elements of culture and we need a close-reading of them as the “micropolitics of architectural space”.⁶ Words matter for the ways in which we can value port cities, their material characteristics, their cultural practices, and their embeddedness in world history. Significantly, the analysis shows how in current abstracts

4 Su Lin Lewis, *Cities in Motion: Urban Life and Cosmopolitanism in Southeast Asia, 1920–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316257937>.

5 Didem Yerli, “What Kind of ‘Cosmopolitics’?: Studying the Eastern Mediterranean Port Cities between East and West,” *The European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes* 4, no. 1 (2021): 21–39.

6 Sandy Prita Meier, *Swahili Port Cities: The Architecture of Elsewhere* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 22.

certain material structures related to maritime trade, defense, and colonial practices are highlighted, whereas more daily and cultural practices with relevance for wider groups in society—such as housing, leisure, and religion—are rarely mentioned. Similar to the contribution by Vinai, this article shows how (geo)political inequalities may (still) inform frames for describing and analyzing port cities, and provides alternatives with more encompassing and pluralistic perspectives and value orientations. The work of Dai, Hein, and Baciu can further UNESCO’s attempts to re-value port city heritage in wider socio-spatial perspectives—already taken up in the Historic Urban Landscape approach (HUL)—and in relational rather than essentialist approaches to culture.

Maurice Hartevelde’s methodological contribution is concerned with the port city of Rotterdam and the effects of recent shifts in port-city relations due to containerization in the 1970s. This shift resulted in spatial distancing between the city and the port infrastructure and social disconnections in collaborations between port and city authorities. Hartevelde argues that these disconnects have been further reinforced in visual practices of designers and planners. Innovative exercises in mental mapping of port cities—e.g., with design students—can help identify and remedy visual gaps and voids. Mental mapping is a participatory and creative methodology with which design students can improve their professional practice. By foregrounding port-city connections—as territorial and infrastructural networks—it is hoped that governing practices can become more encompassing and harmonized.

In a strong political analysis, Rachel Seoighe and Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela describe the socio-economic trajectory of the Chilean port city Valparaíso from a period of global importance to deindustrialization and decline as a result of both authoritarianism and neoliberalism. Meanwhile, derelict port areas have gained aesthetic appeal for tourists. The authors analyze the tensions between, on the one hand, the hardships and dispossession of residents of slum areas in this port city and, on the other, the commodification of ruined urban landscapes by heritagization and constructs of ‘authentic’ local culture produced mainly for outsiders. Particular attention is given to the role of photographic representations in the ‘culturalization’ of decaying port city sites. The authors take a critical stance to the re-purposing, rebranding, and marketing of abandoned sites of port infrastructure. The article contributes to a wider literature on what is sometimes called “ruin porn”⁷ or “poverty tourism”⁸ that overlooks

7 Kaitlin Blanchard, “On Being Intimate with Ruin: Reading Decay in Middlesex,” *The Goose* 17, no. 1 (2018): 53; Andrew Emil Gansky, “Ruin Porn’ and the Ambivalence of Decline: Andrew Moore’s Photographs of Detroit,” *Photography and Culture* 7, no. 2 (2014): 119–39, <https://doi.org/10.2752/175145214X13999922103084>; Siobhan Lyons, ed., *Ruin Porn and the Obsession with Decay* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93390-0>.

8 Manfred Rolfes, “Poverty Tourism: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Findings Regarding an Extraordinary Form of Tourism,” *GeoJournal* 75, no. 5 (2010): 421–42, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-009-9311-8>.

the slow violence⁹ taking place in these port city areas. The article clearly shows the potential downsides of “making culture and values” and invites critical reflection on future transformations.

Section 2: Culture and Values as Driving Force for Future Making

The last two articles in this special issue point to how co-creation of values and culture can be turned into driving forces for more inclusive future design and novel types of intervention, connecting research to design. Hein, Mulder, and Sennema first analyze the different meanings of value. Stakeholders may often have explicit disagreements about value—e.g., in their weighing of ‘economic’ and ‘ecological’ value—but values are also often implicit. Value literacy, defined as understanding one’s own tacit values and the ability to identify and phrase these values in a conversation, can play an important role in decision-making processes. Value-based and value-driven techniques can enhance value deliberations in planning, policy, business, heritage, and education. Based on experiences and experiments in two interdisciplinary programs (Delft Design for Values and PortCityFutures), the article proposes systematic steps toward developing value-based processes in port cities.

Buslacchi and Pina Usai write about how in Genova they intervened to improve the functioning of the port-city relationship. Developments in Genova have been marked by a decrease in use and value of traditional port spaces, but the abandoned areas have subsequently become the stage of culturalization initiatives. However, the authors argue, the attempts at waterfront revitalization¹⁰ did not explicitly question or attempt to redress the spatial, cultural, and political border between the port and the city. In contrast, the authors were involved in cultural events in the so-called Zones Portuaires, which embraced a political and interventionist agenda. The authors analyze how co-organizing a film festival was extended into an interdisciplinary project incorporating both academic and activist approaches. The authors describe a creative methodology combining research, art, and politics that not only promotes a new port city culture but also alternative governance strategies that integrate port and city, spatially and socially.

In conclusion, this special issue on port city cultures is both critical and constructive. The contributors propose new methods for conceptualizing port cities and their main characteristics—including their global networks and socio-spatial, colonial, and postcolonial dynamics. This leads to new ways of understanding port city histories, diversities, inequalities, and

9 Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA. and London: Harvard University Press, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061194>.

10 Simona Corradini, “Urbanistica di genere per la città portuale,” *Portus Plus*, no. 1 (January 1, 2011).

spatial dynamics. The alternative analyses serve as points of departure for more interventionist contributions. The articles suggest creative methods, strategies for interactions, and cultural interventions to work toward meaningful future-making for port cities in times of climate challenges and steep inequalities. The contributions show that narratives matter and these are often constructed and defended as part of government policies embedded in path dependent trajectories that can influence future interventions. A critical re-evaluation of these narratives can be fruitful in developing new port city strategies for European models as well as challenging these narratives by foregrounding non-European concepts of port city cultures.

Carola Hein is Professor of the History of Architecture and Urban Planning at Delft University of Technology and director of the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus PortCityFutures Centre. She has published widely and received a Guggenheim and an Alexander von Humboldt fellowship as well as other major grants. Her books include *Oil Spaces* (2020), *The Urbanisation of the Sea* (2020) *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage* (2019), *The Routledge Planning History Handbook* (2017), *Uzō Nishiyama, Reflections on Urban, Regional and National Space* (2017), *Port Cities* (2011), *The Capital of Europe* (2004), *Rebuilding Urban Japan after 1945* (2003), and *Cities, Autonomy and Decentralisation in Japan* (2006), and *Hauptstadt Berlin 1957-58* (1991).

Paul van de Laar is professor of urban history at the Erasmus University, and head of the history department at the Erasmus University School of History, Culture and Communication. His research focuses on comparative port city history and migration history. He is core member of the inter-university Center for Port City Futures. Together with Peter Scholten and Maurice Crul he edited *Coming to Terms with Superdiversity. The Case of Rotterdam* (2019). He is principal investigator associated with the HERA Joint Research Program PLEASURESCAPES. *Port Cities' Transnational Forces of Integration* (Barcelona, Gothenburg, Hamburg and Rotterdam) (2019–2021).

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MAIN SECTION

Challenging the Cosmopolitanism and Resilience of the Port city of Kochi through N.S Madhavan's novel *Litanies of Dutch Battery*

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ABSTRACT

Maritime India has been exposed to transformations in terms of both political and social processes due to the exchange of commodities, men and material. The main focus of the article is on the port city of Kochi, and the consequent encounters in the past in Indian Ocean for black gold (pepper). These encounters have led to a shaping of a unique maritime consciousness and cosmopolitanism of the city that we see even today. As against the popular Eurocentric representations, the article probes into the formation of a community-based 'world view' of the varied conquests, and reclamation of a historic past embedded in the imagination of indigenous people. It helps to pose larger questions about how the Empire is variously constructed by the agents who have alternately articulated it from different socio-cultural contexts. Through a critical reading of the acclaimed Malayalam author N.S Madhavan's novel *Litanies of Dutch Battery*, it is argued that although these encounters have resulted in the creation of a unique maritime consciousness, a closer examination of the silences and representations in these literary narratives reveals the exclusionist strategies and vulnerability of natives who were coerced to align with state envisioned projects. While deliberating on the resilience which has been enacted in these port cities, this article simultaneously looks at the genuine bonds of collaboration and solidarity which has been formed as a result of these trans-oceanic encounters.

KEYWORDS

Port-City; Maritime Consciousness; Trans-Oceanic Encounters; Kochi

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Memories of a Port City Beyond the Rulers and Invaders: Analyzing the Discourse of Resilience in the Novel *Litanies of Dutch Battery* by N.S Madhavan.

Identified with silence and boundlessness
 My spirit widens clasping the universe
 Till all that seemed becomes the Real,
 One in a mighty and single vastness.
 (Sri Aurobindo, 47)

Kerala, the southernmost state of India, had been the hub of maritime trade since 8th century and it enjoyed the unique privilege of having three major ports namely in Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. Around the 13th century, the local rulers realized the importance of ports as centers of trade and commerce and thereby shifted their attention from the consolidation of the power along terrestrial land, to gaining exclusive monopoly over the port cities. It is this well understood importance that led to the fortification, town and arsenal building, establishment of places of worship for its new and old inhabitants. These port cities became a vortex of political contestations with Vasco-da Gama's entry to Malabar in 1498. As a result of these infiltrations, the culture of port cities like Kochi which functioned as a staple port, underwent a rapid change in long standing values, practices and mindset. Most of the maritime histories and fictional narratives on the power politics in these port cities were written from the point of entry of the Portuguese into the spice trade. Ironically, these narratives conveniently ignore the presence of the Arab and Chinese traders who arrived in Malabar from the 8th century to the 14th century, much earlier than the Portuguese. It is interesting to note how the exclusive focus was on what the colonial powers were engaging with; the locals along these pepper highways were mentioned only when they seemed to threaten colonial expansion.¹

Myths and legends, as represented in regional literature unearth the palimpsest layers of colonial history buried deep within and helps the reader to comprehend the incongruences that lie beneath the sugar-coated claims of cosmopolitanism of the port cities. The historical narratives focus predominantly on trade strategies, globalization, political and cultural transformation as a result of trans-oceanic contacts, whereas the literary narratives express these historic events creatively; reflecting the social memory and aspirations of the people along the littoral.

¹ The best variety of pepper was grown north of Cochin to Chettuvay (Malabar). The highway used to transport pepper from the plantations in the hinterland to the coast via numerous rivers and backwaters is called 'pepper highways.' (Singh 55)

Therefore, rather than looking at historical and fictional narratives as two separate and compartmentalized watertight sectors; a complementary reading of both the narratives can help in comprehending the wide-reaching implications of maritime trade relations on a port city like Kochi and how memories of imperial belonging facilitate identity formation ranging from an all-encompassing cosmopolitanism to exclusionist jingoism.

It is interesting to note how new research in Indian Ocean World (IOW) Studies have opened up new debates and challenged the epistemic validity of Eurocentric claims. Indian historians like K. M Panikkar and O.K Nambiar have focused on the narratives of indigenous locals around the port cities of the Malabar coastal belt, which are replete with accounts of shock and trauma that resulted from Portuguese atrocities. Indian Ocean Studies scholar and curator, Neelima Jeyachandran's extensive work on the sacred geographical spots like the *Kappiri* shrines in Kochi, offer fresh insights into the slave trade and the lives of Kappiris or African slaves brought by the Portuguese as deckhands.² In addition, historians like Mahmood Kooria and Michael Naylor Pearson engage with literary productions since the 15th century, and assert that "Among the European sources, Portuguese materials have claimed the lion's share in the existing studies."³ They argue that many war songs in Arabi-Malayalam still continue to be circulated amongst particular communities of Malabar, awaiting the attention of scholars.⁴ Anjana Singh, a noted historian on Dutch regime in India, concurs with this view and expresses a deep concern over the obvious lack of anything close to a social history of the Dutch in India.⁵ Recent scholarships have opened up new challenges to the existing Eurocentric discourses on human relationship with the oceanic world, mobility and cultural exchange. This essay analyzes how, indigenous voices are challenging long-held assumptions of resilience and introducing a greater complexity to histories of cultural exchanges and encounters. Drawing on the regional fictional narratives and historical research available in the area; it is argued that although these encounters have resulted in the creation of a unique maritime consciousness, a closer examination of the *silences* and representations in these literary narratives reveals the exclusionist strategies and vulnerability of natives who were coerced to align with state envisioned projects. While deliberating on the resilience which has been enacted in these port cities, this essay simultaneously looks at the genuine bonds of collaboration and solidarity which have been formed as a result of these trans-oceanic

2 Neelima Jeyachandran, "Kappiri Shrines and Memories of Slavery in Kerala," ALA (അല), March 30, 2019, <http://ala.keralascholars.org/issues/issue-7/kappiri-shrines-slavery/>.

3 Mahmood Kooria and Michael Naylor Pearson, *Malabar in the Indian Ocean: Cosmopolitanism in a Maritime Historical Region*, 2018.

4 *ibid.* 143

5 Anjana Singh, *Fort Cochin in Kerala, 1750-1830: The Social Condition of a Dutch Community in an Indian Milieu*, vol. 13 (Martinus Nijhoff: BRILL, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004168169.i-317>, 6.

encounters. The theoretical frame-work used to approach the problem of incongruence between certain historical and literary narratives on port cities and to understand the nexus between the ruler and the trader in the formation of the social character of the port city has been borrowed from Indian Ocean scholars like Pius Malekandathil, Stephen Mueke, Ferdinand Rosa, M.O. Koshy, Anjana Singh, Sebastian R. Pranje, and post-colonial theorists like Ashis Nandy, Arjun Appadurai, and J. Devika.

Historical Background: Kochi as the Epicenter of Spice Politics

The popular notion of the beginning of the spice trade can be dated back to the Arabs entering Kodungalloor (Malabar province) as early as the 8th century. The ruler of Malabar called Zamorin or *Samoothiri* in the local language (translated as the king of oceans) whole-heartedly received them.⁶ When the Portuguese fleet reached the shores of Kappad beach (Kozhikode, Malabar province) in 1498, the Arab traders were displeased as the former slowly started encroaching and demanding a monopoly of the spice trade which ruined the Arab trade considerably. The Portuguese fleet was armed with cannons, which were unknown in the Indian Ocean. French historian Fernand Braudel is of the view that the maritime customs of the Indian Ocean "had always been extremely pacific."⁷ Michael Pearson corresponds with the same view and adds that "the Portuguese introduced politics into the Indian Ocean."⁸

The aggressive tendencies of the Portuguese marked the beginning of a fierce combat between the Zamorin and the Portuguese that lasted for almost three centuries. The narratives that surround the Indian Ocean are marked with several disgraceful historical events like the Portuguese seizure and the burning of ten Arab ships and crew in the harbor in full view of the people ashore.⁹ They bombarded the Muziris port for three full days and even forced the Zamorin to flee from his own palace.¹⁰ Although defeated, the Zamorin and his closest allies- the Marakkar troops (the Muslim merchants and sea pirates) who were experts in guerilla warfare provided a tough resistance to the Portuguese. This prompted the Portuguese to drift further south towards and explore the port of Cochin. Unlike the Zamorin of Malabar, who fought back aggressively, the kings of Cochin

6 Fernando Rosa, *The Portuguese in the Creole Indian Ocean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015), 73.

7 Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th - 18th Century*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

8 Michael Naylor Pearson, *The World of the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800: Studies in Economic, Social and Cultural History* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 106.

9 Gurukkal Rajan and Raghava Varier, *History of Kerala: Prehistoric to the Present* (Hyderabad: Orient BlackSwan, 2018), 195.

10 The narratives that surround the Indian Ocean are marked with several black historical events like the Portuguese seizure and burning of ten Arab ships and crew in the harbor in full view of the people ashore. (Gurukkal & Varier 2018, 195)

were weak and took support from the Portuguese to fight their internal wars against each other. Slowly, under the pretext of extending protection, the Portuguese demanded exorbitant trade concessions and exclusive ownership of land to build their pepper-warehouses. Later in October 1604, the arrival of the Dutch turned the tide against the Portuguese. The Dutch VOC (The United East India Company) was formed in 1602 with the aim of establishing commercial relations with India.¹¹

In post-colonial India, Cochin has attracted the attention of several scholars because of its religious tolerance and cultural resilience. Indian sociologist and political psychologist Ashis Nandy, in his book *Warps of Time: Silent and Evasive Pasts in Indian Politics and Religion*,¹² heralds Kochi's "alternate cosmopolitanism" as a model worth emulation in the wake of religious fundamentalism and hardcore assertions of ethnicity.¹³ The port city of Kochi has been home to many refugees, including the Jews, Konkani, and Kutchi Muslims, and is a place where as many as seventeen languages are spoken.¹⁴ In Nandy's terms, "it presents a different concept of dissent, wherein borders must be crossed not only from outside but also within."¹⁵ According to Ashis Nandy, a major factor that contributed to Kochi's cosmopolitanism was the docility and open-mindedness of the Kochi kings who 'took everything in their stride without much resistance.'¹⁶ He points out that they spent much of their time in religious and spiritual activities, begetting them the image of kings who were known for their piety and scholarship, making them poor stakeholders in the project of empire-building. The next section of the essay shows how beneath the veneer of sugar-coated cosmopolitanism and assimilating tendencies of both the king and the natives of Kochi, the fictional narratives establish the vulnerability of the subjects to maintain respectful relations and enact a state envisioned reconciliation.

Recreating Kochi through the Paranki Lens in *Litanies of Dutch Battery*

Litanies of Dutch Battery by N.S Madhavan, an Indian writer of Malayalam literature is a riveting account of the Portuguese, Dutch and British influence on Kochi. The novel is set in Lanthan Battery (Fort Kochi) and the historic events traverse four centuries: from the arrival of Vasco-da-Gama in 1498 to the communist regime in the 20th C. It reflects how the natives

11 Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrims: Contayning a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Lande Travells by Englishmen and Others.*, vol. 20 (Glasgow: James MacLehose, 1907), 206

12 Ashis Nandy, *Time Warps: Silent and Evasive Pasts in Indian Politics and Religion*, 2002.

13 *ibid*, 162

14 Fearing coercive conversion by the Portuguese Empire to Christianity in the 16th C, the Konkani Saraswat Brahmins from the Konkani Coast fled to Kochi where the king gave them refuge.

15 *ibid*. 162

16 *ibid*. 134

have responded to, complied and creatively reproduced the colonial underpinnings through their inter-generational memory. It is written from the perspective of Jessica, who belongs to the creolized community of Parankis.¹⁷ Postcolonial writers negotiate and recover multiple histories from the oeuvre of their historic past to wean off from the shackles of Eurocentric past and retrieve an alternative narrative which is of equal significance in understanding the maritime history of the place. Several Indian English writers like Amitav Ghosh and Arundhati Roy have brought unmediated responses from the locals in their novels like *The Hungry Tide* and *The God of Small Things* and transported them to a global audience. These stories of repression and resistance decenter privileged historical accounts and subvert institutional history. Using myths, legends and hear-says which have been circulating in Kochi, author N.S Madhavan takes us through the lives of protagonist Jessica, her great-grandfather Louis, who stole the ship building calculus from his master and settled in Lanthan Battery, her uncle- Edwin, who learnt the art of making Biryani from his father, Santiago chettan a neighbor who is passionate about reviving the nearly extinct art form called *Chavittunatakam*. N.S Madhavan places Lanthan Battery at the crossroads of global culture and ideologies. Throughout the novel, an insinuation is made as to how, unlike the Portuguese, the Dutch were a little more considerate while handling the cultural beliefs of the Hindus and Muslims. The following quote from the novel sums up the overall attitude of the Parankis towards the European colonizers:

Imagine history of western conquerors of Kochi as a pie. Divide it into three roughly equal wedges, each comprising one hundred fifty years. If the first piece had the hot peppery taste of the Portuguese, the second had the tangy sourness of the Dutch, and the last piece, that of English, could conjure up nothing but the bland taste of drinking water.¹⁸

The above post-imperial memory subtly points out the plight of the voiceless natives who were nothing but mute and passive spectators to the multiple invasions and political liaisons formed by the Kochi kings. In the novel, N. S Madhavan foregrounds the political disunity of the kings as one of the main reasons for the Portuguese 'to establish their hegemony over Kochi' (34). The locals had neither the agency nor support to challenge these imperial conquests. This challenges the notion of Kochi's cosmopolitanism exhibiting a happy co-existence devoid of conflicts and welcoming attitude of the natives to foreign intrusions put forth by critical thinkers like Ashis Nandy.

17 Parankis are the progeny of Portuguese sailors and local women.

18 N. S. Madhavan, *Litanies of Dutch Battery* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010), 15.

A close examination of the historical accounts of Kerala might possibly help in deciphering the reasons for the vulnerability of Kochi's citizens. The kingdom of Kochi was ruled by Rajas, who belonged to one of five *thavazhis* or households and the area was a constant field of contest for power and territories.¹⁹ To further their political ambitions and escape the vituperative takeovers by the Zamorin of Malabar, the Cochin kings entered into an alliance with the Portuguese and sought protection from the former. In his work, *Perumals of Kerala*,²⁰ noted Indian historian and political commentator Prof. M.G.S Narayanan points out as to how, with an increase in dependence on the outsiders (i.e Portuguese), an alienation was created amongst the elite subjects like the Brahmin leaders and the Nairs (warrior community) within the kingdom, which resulted in a lack of support, conspiracies and intrigues.²¹ Interestingly, Madhavan's literary imagery insinuates the reader to closely relook at the impact Portuguese and Dutch created in the public imagination. The Portuguese regime is perhaps denoted as 'hot and peppery', perhaps due to their fiery wars with Zamorins and Arabs to monopolize the spice trade, militarize and fortify their settlements and also spread their religious beliefs through forcible conversions. The imagery used by Madhavan for the Dutch is that of 'tangiiness', contradicting the popular view put forth by several historical sources. For instance, historians like Anjana Singh, in her book *Fort Cochin in Kerala (1750-1830): The Social Condition of a Dutch community in an Indian Milieu*²² highlights the fact that the Dutch were the "friendliest of all Europeans."²³ Their concern for the locals can be exemplified by the institutions they established like a school, a hospital in Fort Kochi and a leper house called the Lazarus House outside Fort Kochi.²⁴ This draws attention to the fact that on the whole the Dutch were much more 'bearable' than the Portuguese to certain sections of the society (like Hindus and Muslims) as they did not bring about much harm to the natives due to their non-intrusion policy. In addition, historical sources also point out how the political trysts of the Dutch were targeted towards the Portuguese who wielded power and control over the spice trade. They were cordial with the local rulers and entered into political treatises with the Zamorin of Malabar and King of Cochin in 1608 and 1610. In an essay titled "Native assistance in the Foundation of Dutch Power in Kerala", Indian historian M.O Koshy, reveals the strategy of the Dutch who "posed as liberators of the Indian people from the tyrannies of the Portuguese; and were hailed

19 Anjana Singh, *Fort Cochin in Kerala, 1750-1830: The Social Condition of a Dutch Community in an Indian Milieu*, vol. 13 (Martinus Nijhoff: BRILL, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004168169.i-317>, 26.

20 M. G. S Narayanan, *Perumals of Kerala* (Thrissur: Cosmo Books, 2018).

21 Ibid. 133

22 Anjana Singh, *Fort Cochin in Kerala, 1750-1830: The Social Condition of a Dutch Community in an Indian Milieu*, vol. 13 (Martinus Nijhoff: BRILL, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004168169.i-317>

23 Ibid. 242

24 Ibid. 148

by the people and the princes alike for developing industrial and financial resources."²⁵ Except for the sporadic temple raids and plunders on temples like Guruvayoor and Trikkannamathilakam in 1716 and 1757, which were essentially meant to destabilize the rulers (as temples were the power centers holding wealth and culture), the Dutch were not keen to forcibly entrench their culture or religion onto the natives; it was strictly mercenary and economic motives, which governed their enterprise. However, N.S Madhavan's novel challenges the above-mentioned popular notion and brings forth an alternate narrative of the Dutch being an equally despotic power like the Portuguese. In fact, there are several instances in the novel where the Dutch are shown ruthlessly chasing the Parankis and other converts. Father Pilathose's warning to the natives echoes the Dutch inconsistencies. "Remember the Dutch had already charred ten churches in Kochi. They were the ones to convert our Santa Cruz Church into a warehouse for spices."²⁶ It is also important to note that despite the Portuguese leaving Lanthan Battery, the Paranki allegiance towards the Portuguese never shifted to the Dutch and in fact, the readers can decipher the same display of loyalty in characters like Santiago and Edwin.

The most significant aspect which can be inferred through Madhavan's fictional narratives is that the Dutch aspirations were inclined towards acquiring indirect economic control rather than forcible annexations and social control as carried out by the Portuguese. Historical sources also point out the covert strategies which the Dutch employed to gain control. By crowning the Kochi king, Vira Kerala Varma as the king of Cochin, the Dutch became the 'king-makers' of the kingdom of Kochi, which gave them the right to place a crown bearing the insignia of the Dutch East India Company on the head of the prince, whereby the company was accepted as the "guardian and benefactor of the kingdom of Cochin."²⁷ Thus, it can be observed that it was not just the mercantile aspirations of the Dutch which crusaded their maritime mission, but they also employed clever ploys to unobtrusively establish their hegemony and influence popular imagination in India. Folk stories and legends too have played a significant part in enhancing the respectability and esteem of the Dutch. Several folk stories and books of legends like *Aithihyamala* (written by court scribes of Kerala like Kottarathil Sankunni) which were patronized by the local rulers, cast the Dutch in a favourable position because many of these kings were recipients of the Dutch protection. Thus, the indirect control of narratives was one of the methods by which the Dutch gained esteem amongst the natives (Hindus, Syrian Christians and Muslims). N.S Madhavan's *Litanies of Dutch Battery* subverts the official history to provide the readers with an

25 MO Koshy, "Native Assistance in the Foundation of Dutch Power in Kerala," vol. 49 (Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, JSTOR, 1988), 197.

26 N. S. Madhavan, *Litanies of Dutch Battery* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010), 174.

27 MO Koshy, "Native Assistance in the Foundation of Dutch Power in Kerala," vol. 49 (Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, JSTOR, 1988), 197.

alternative version which encompasses the lives of the excluded non-privileged section i.e Parankis who had to face several adversities as a result of the Dutch supremacy.

Bridging the Gaps

Leading Indian Ocean scholar Pius Malekandathil in his book *Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean*²⁸ identifies geography of the sea as one of the main reasons behind the resilience and accommodative tendencies of people along the long littoral stretch of India. He posits: "The fury of the sea, as well as the oddities and adversities waiting for them behind fatal waves and winds, were so common that these people had to discipline their wills and shape their behavior in ways very different from those of agrarian or urban spaces."²⁹ The maritime camaraderie between islanders belonging to different faiths of the Lanthan Battery is exhibited not just during a political crisis or invasion; rather it is well displayed in their personal lives too. During the precarious labour pains that Matilda experiences, the entire neighborhood gathers outside their home to chant clarion calls of 'Ailasa', 'Heave ho', 'Give a hand'³⁰ to uplift her spirits. Here, it becomes very interesting to note that all the above words are typically uttered in unison to encourage each other during the process of embarking or disembarking cargo from a ship. The use of the above words shows the maritime mindset of 'lending a helping hand' which was ingrained in the psyche of the islanders of Lanthan Battery. Here, the personal and political lives assume a distinct fluidity, transgressing the hardwired boundaries drawn by the State and regimes. Due to their susceptibility to uncertainty, supporting each other through precarious situations, joys and sorrows, and sharing whatever little resources that they had, became a part of their larger collective consciousness. In *Litanies of Dutch Battery*, Edwin wholeheartedly contributes his money for the festivities, especially towards buying the ingredients of Biryani. Despite the 'lack' and 'dearth' that they undergo in their personal life; at the dusk, people belonging to different religions like Raghavan Master, Pushpangadhan Master, Santiago, Prangi chettan etc. come together to join at the Ponjikkarra Toddy shop to sing, dance and share their woes, which displays the accommodative tendencies of these islanders.

The process of construction of infrastructure around the port cities slowly ebbed the gap between civilizations. The British Empire with Lord Willingdon at the helm was keen to improve connectivity between disjointed islands for better movement of men and material across shores. Sir Robert Bistrow, the chief British harbour engineer was appointed by the East India Company to spear-head the re-development project of Kochi

28 Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean*, 2015.

29 *ibid.*, xi

30 N. S. Madhavan, *Litanies of Dutch Battery* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010), 41.

port. N.S Madhavan's *Litanies of Dutch Battery* shows the commitment of Sir Robert Bistrow towards his work against all adversities. In the process, he gets to understand the city and people of the island better. He becomes so engrossed in the process of reclaiming land from sea and clearing hurdles that stood in the way of 'building the port' that he forgets his own position as a British officer stationed in Raj. Postcolonial writers would classify this behavior as cultural amnesia, a condition peculiar to natives who were in close contact with the colonial masters. Here the readers can situate Robert Bistrow in the same state, where he loses the sense of self and past to become a hybridized Robert Parashuram Bistrow.³¹ In a state of drunken stupor, he claims in the presence of Edwin that he "was the one who reclaimed more land from the sea."³² His involvement in breaking sand bars across Cochin, formation of islands and making of the two land bridges, negotiating and controlling flow of labour and building of Mattancherry wharf-ware became so intense that it took a toll on his health and he had to undergo a treatment in London. In his conversation with another colleague Sir Gordon Hearn, the engineer who built a railway line linking Peshawar to Durand Line, he says: "Madness is the wage for being creative in India."³³ Unlike the East India Company officers posted inland, the relationship which officers like Robert Bistrow (who worked in the port cities) had with natives were more compassionate as it was fraught with uncertainties. This fractured identity of Robert Bistrow might be an outcome of constant negotiations and re-imaginings to tame the untamable and chaotic sea. N.S Madhavan's character of Robert Bistrow holds a close resemblance to Joseph Conrad's character of Kurtz in *The Heart of Darkness* who goes 'mad' while exploring the heart of Africa and attempting to civilize the indigenous natives. Empathy, shared solidarity, and the guilt of having to play a controlling officer to get his tasks executed- all might have led Bistrow to lose a grip over his identity assigned to him by various social constructs. However, a Patiala peg poured by his cook Edwin makes Bistrow voice out his aspirations and deep rooted fears. Here, the master-servant boundary becomes fluid revealing how the fears and uncertainties associated with the sea are universal irrespective of class, caste, race or gender.

Sir Robert Bistrow's autobiography, *Cochin Saga* was the major reference material for the author while conceptualizing and writing *Litanies of Dutch Battery*. The *Cochin Saga* sums up the long history of Cochin port and also offers a sneak peek into the social life of the British in Cochin. In the book, Robert Bistrow nonchalantly states his love for the land and its inhabitants. He generously praises Kerala as a 'fertile place of waving palms and green valleys, wild hills and flowing waters and not without an early history

31 According to the Hindu legends, Sage Parasurama, was a warrior sage and an avatar of Mahavishnu, who threw an axe into the sea to reclaim the land of the Western coast.

32 *ibid.* 44

33 *ibid.* 45

and culture of its own.³⁴ He also gives credits of his success to the co-operation of all involved in the project. Unlike a stereotypical officer stationed in the Raj who unabashedly picked faults with his native staff, Bistrow accords his staff lavish praises. He describes the latter's efficiency in the following manner:

As to qualifications and aptitude, I found my indoor and outdoor staffs quite efficient and loyal, the indoor superior staff, mostly Hindu, the ship's crew mostly Moslem, the labour mostly Christian. So far as my personal staff were concerned, I regarded them collaborators rather than subordinates, and I was richly rewarded. I learned from them and I think they would be the first to acknowledge that the debt was reciprocal. It was a partnership in ideal proportion of self-discipline, mutual respect, and mutual assistance, and if from time to time, we had our differences, they too, were signs of life and kinship, not of cold blooded indifference.³⁵

Yet another interesting example of shared solidarity and amicable negotiations that Madhavan points out in his novel is that of the Dutch Governor General, Van Rheede.

Unlike other colonizers who dismissed oriental knowledge as esoteric and lacking reason, the Dutch evidenced an inclination and appreciation towards traditional forms of knowledge. N. S Madhavan's novel, draws the attention of the reader as to how the Dutch Governor of Cochin, Henric Adriaanne Van Reed gets completely disillusioned and falls out of the territorial conquest after being introduced to the various botanical herbs in the region of Malabar by a Caramalite priest.³⁶ This unique interest resulted in renunciation of territorial claims and was replaced by the passionate drafting of a twelve volume book called *Hortus Malabaricus* which till date is one of the finest books available on the medicinal properties of the plants in Malabar.³⁷ Another significant fact of this book is that unlike most colonizers or historians of the 16th C and 17th century, Van Reed never erased the names of the local collaborators. The contributions of Itty Vaidyan, the native physician is reverently mentioned in Vol I of the book.³⁸ A power subversion can be observed here, highlighting the fact that, for the Dutch VOC in India, intellectual activities were as important as their imperial expeditions.

Thus, as against the image of ruthless and plundering colonizers, the novel brings forth subversive characters like Sir Bistrow and Henric Adriaanne

34 Robert Bristow Sir and James Grigg Sir, *Cochin saga* (London: Cassell, 1959), 139.

35 *ibid.* 231

36 N. S. Madhavan, *Litanies of Dutch Battery* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010), 173.

37 *ibid.* 35

38 K. S Manilal, *Botany and History of Hortus Malabaricus* (Rotterdam: A.A. Balkema, 1980), 56.

Van Reed who recalibrate their energies and envision a world which is inclusive of the Orient. French art historian and Nobel prize winner Rolland described the trances and mystical states experienced by Ramakrishna and other mystics as an “oceanic sentiment”, one which Rolland had also experienced.³⁹ Particularly, Robert Bristow’s representation in *Litanies of Dutch Battery* and the *Cochin Saga* resonates what Romain Rolland points out as: “a sensation of ‘eternity’, a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded”, a “feeling of an indissoluble bond, of being one with the external world as a whole.”⁴⁰ Perhaps, it is this oceanic sense which drove several colonizers to develop a kind of empathy, emotional bonding and shared solidarity with the people of littoral.⁴¹

Culinary Transformations in Kochi as a Result of Maritime Trade

Food is one of the earliest aspects introduced by the colonizers into a port city. Collective consumption of certain food items is a part of the process of identity formation of a community or a place. It is very interesting to note how a precious food ingredient like pepper which opened up borders and forged solidarity was also the reason behind colossal dissents, and clash of cultures and conflicts. A lot of cultural exchanges between the locals and the traders in terms of food, language and rituals contributed to the calibration of multicultural plurality of the port city of Kochi. The cultural transactions were not limited to lending and borrowing from the food platter; it also resulted in a perforation of language and etiquettes of the Arabs, Portuguese, and Dutch into Kochi’s indigenous culture. Just as pepper was a great discovery in the European markets, the Portuguese introduced the large onions called *sabola* in Indian markets. The Parankis of Lanthan Battery fondly remember how their ancestors gave the land the first taste of big onion called *savala*, which is a word borrowed from the Portuguese term *sa-bo-la*.⁴² The Parankis of the land also proudly claim how it was not just onion, which got shared from the Portuguese casket, but also dried chilies. Even today, this legacy of the red chilies introduced by the Portuguese continues in the local Kerala cuisine.⁴³ In fact, Edwin, goes to the extent of subverting the popular notion regarding biryani and claiming vehemently: “Who gave the biryani to the Arabs? Malayali Muslims, who else?”⁴⁴ The above statement also reflects the faith and pride of Parankis in their association with the Portuguese and the

39 Marianna Torgovnick, *Primitive Passions: Men, Women, and the Quest for Ecstasy*. (Knopf, 2013), <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=458628>, 11

40 Ibid. 12

41 See *Primitive Passion: Men, Women, and the Quest for Ecstasy* by Marianna Torgovnick University of Chicago Press, 1998

42 N. S. Madhavan, *Litanies of Dutch Battery* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010), 62

43 Ibid. 62

44 Ibid. 61

quintessential disdain of Arabs who were arch rivals of the Portuguese in the spice trade.

The native acceptance and preference of certain food items like *kappa* also known as *tapioca* or *cassava*, so much that it has become the culinary icon of the state of Kerala, shows the colossal impact of Portuguese on Kerala as compared to other regimes. This tuber, a favourite with all the natives across and beyond Kerala, was brought by the Portuguese sailors (from Brazil) during their maritime expeditions. It was introduced by Vishakhram Thirunal (1880-1885 AD), the ruler of Travancore who attempted to replace the staple diet of rice with tubers of *cassava*.⁴⁵ In fact, many fruits and plants like guava, breadfruit, cashew, pineapple, and custard apple were brought to Kerala by the Portuguese from South America. This shows the nature of unequal relationship which existed between the Portuguese and Kochi kings who were obligated to acknowledge and assimilate the Portuguese culinary preferences. Macaroni was another food item which was brought by the traders of Italy in the 14th century. In fact, some of these interventions proved lifesaving during the times of a devastating crisis. For example, in postcolonial India, in the wake of food shortages, the communist government of Kerala, headed by E. M. S Namboothiripad resorted to providing free macaroni gruel in 1958 to avoid deaths caused by starvations. It is very interesting to note how the food items brought in by the Portuguese like *kappa*, red chilies & cashew have become the most influential or key ingredients in Kerala cuisine as compared to macaroni or *kadala* brought by Arabs or the Dutch.⁴⁶ This reflects the colossal impact of the Portuguese as compared to other European invaders and the vulnerability of the natives who succumbed to the acculturation process.

N.S Madhavan also draws the reader's attention to Portuguese introduction of western dining by bringing the *pinjannam* (plate) and *koppa* (mug) which got adopted seamlessly in the native lifestyle.⁴⁷ Thus, although the process of glocalization is not free from conflict, it has been advantageous at critical junctures as it bestowed a sense of privacy when adopted in the native lifestyle. The notion of family as a cohesive singular unit was introduced by Dutch. The very idea of constructing private toilets (*Kakkus* pronounced in both Dutch and Malayalam alike) helped to rusticate the idea of open defecation thereby ushering better health. Both these brought about a herculean change in the social dynamics of Lanthan Battery. It also shows the determined efforts of Europeans to create a home-like ambience, standardize cultures and assimilate themselves in an alien port culture. Every culture needs a catalyst to seamlessly perforate into an alien culture. In *The Litanies of Dutch Battery*, Edwin, the cook plays

45 N. S. Madhavan, *Litanies of Dutch Battery* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010), 143.

46 *Kappa* is the local term for tapioca and *kadala* refers to Bengal gram.

47 Before the Portuguese advent, food was mostly served in plantain or banana leaves.

the role of a catalyst by introducing, explaining and utilizing food products and cooking new and exotic dishes for the Parankis of Lanthan Battery, by which the Parankis establishes their own linkages and forges their collective identity.

Unearthing the 'Historical Silences' through Fictional Representations

Ashis Nandy's proposition that it would be rather safer to rely on the mythic or local narratives of Kochi, rather than falling back solely on the Eurocentric historical accounts can be partially agreed; however, there are aspects like political ambitions of the Kochi kings, shrewd manipulation of local kings by the Dutch, the practice of appointing foreign merchants as governors of major ports to mobilize and attract overseas commerce in the face of intensification of Indian Ocean trade, giving excessive liberty to foreign sailors to marry local women (both Hindu and Muslim), and reducing of cess tax from the nominal 6% to 3.5% for Portuguese cassado traders⁴⁸ which hardly gets reflected in both the local/folk narratives as well as fictional narratives such as of N.S Madhavan. The conspicuous absence of the above-mentioned events in the local narratives signify the fact that the indigenous crowd were just a silent witness and un-informed spectators to the process of cosmopolitanism, political operations, and expansion strategies undertaken by their own kings as well as the European powers.

Public silence is a common characteristic of a community's discourse, emerging from the failure of political leaders to disclose all that they know about a national crisis, to an embarrassing hesitancy when one person speaks to another about a socially taboo topic.⁴⁹ Historical research may have extensively drawn the reader's attention to the lacunae on part of the Cochin kings. However, historiographies of established Indian historians like K.P Padmanabha Menon's *Kochi Rajyacharitam*, K.M Panikkar's *The History of Kerala*, Dr. N. M Namboothiri's *Kerala Samskaram* or C. Achyutha Menon's *Kochi State Manual: Kerala State Gazetteer* fail to resonate the mode in which this trauma got embedded into the native's subconscious and registered in their memory. Madhavan re-creates history through social memory or the past experiences (communicated or repressed) within a given society. His memories of this port city is a shared and long lasting memory. While the social format of memory is built on inter- generational communication, political and cultural forms of memory are designed for trans-generational modes of communication. The stories witnessed and narrated by the patriarch of *Kanakkukatta*

48 Pius Malekandathil, *Mughals, the Portuguese, and the Indian Ocean: Changing Imageries of Maritime India*, 2015, 89-93.

49 Charles B Stone and William Hirst, "(Induced) Forgetting to Form a Collective Memory," *Memory Studies* 7, no. 3 (2014): 314.

family, Valia Louis Asari to his subsequent generations formed the collective imagination and social memory of the Parankis. Shared memory embraces both that is remembered and that which is not remembered. The events remembered by Jessica and Santiago establish the presence of certain silences about past events and people. Madhavan retrieves the buried past of lesser known luminaries like Italian voyager, Nicholas Conti, Archbishop Ludovico Martini and the Vicar Bernardini Baccinelli who built churches for Christians in Lanthan Battery. The naval might of the Ming Dynasty and colossal ships of Admiral Zheng Ho are brought to the reader's attention to signify the possibility of challenging a monolithic version of history. The tendency of Western scholarship to oversimplify, overemphasize and homogenize select historic events is highlighted through the examples Madhavan cites in the novel. The author, also draws the reader's attention to a lesser known fact of the presence of a Chinese settlement and sprawling Buddhist temple in Fort Kochi. The Portuguese act of dumping the idol of Buddha in backwaters⁵⁰ once again suggests that they came with a rigorous project of not just imperial expansion but also a religious expansion. This leads to the ontological question, whether it was the accommodative tendencies inherent in natives around the coastal rim or was it the fear of being erased and being cast away that gave birth to this highly lauded cosmopolitanism of Kochi?

Another historical event which is overshadowed by the European discourses and which has remained dynamic in social memory is the African presence in Kochi. In Madhavan's narrative, Santiaguchettan highlights the manner in which Kappiris or the black African slaves who were brought by the Portuguese to Fort Kochi. When the Dutch seized Kochi, Portuguese hoarded all their gold and diamonds in huge jars and buried it. A lot of Kappiris or African slaves were buried along with the treasure with a belief that they would safeguard these treasures. Several natives imbibed the belief unwittingly that if these Kappiri spirits were pleased, the former would be bestowed with wealth and hidden fortunes. It is due to the perpetuation of this myth that Santiaguchettan advises Gomeschettan to offer a pot of toddy (alcohol) and a plateful of chicken for the Kappiri Muthappan (or the African grandfather) and this belief still remains uncontested amongst the locals who offer the same as their token of respect to Kappiri Muthappan. This is symptomatic of the deification of suppressed subalterns and integration of retributive justice in mainstream society. Thus, myths encoded in social memory possess the power to subvert the process of codification, canonization and crystallization of history perpetuated by the Western empirical scholarship.

50 N. S. Madhavan, *Litanies of Dutch Battery* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2010), 235.

Re-interpreting Kochi's Resilience Beyond the Canonical Representations

Literature has always been a vehicle of memory and although it is often a partial representation of reality, it helps in articulating an ambivalence within the popular discourses. Madhavan's fictional narrative uses cultural memory alongside social memory to unearth this ambivalence, subvert the canonical frameworks and reproduce true sentiments of the Parankis towards the Kochi kings. Public memories expressed through art productions like *Chavittunatakam* (an opera designed by the natives of Lanthan Battery) become functional to decode the inherent meanings and concealed power relations and also foster healing. Originally written by Chinnathambi Annavi, in the 16th century in Tamil and pidgin Latin, the opera is a re-fabrication of Ludovico Aristo's 16th c play *Orlando Furioso*. *Chavittunatakam*, resonated the exasperation of the natives towards the Kochi kings. For instance, in the opera, various rulers like the Scindia of Gwalior, King George V, Queen Mary of England commands awe and respect from the natives; however, the king of Kochi is referred to as a "diminutive Koch"⁵¹ which reflects the insignificant position he occupied in the Paranki's hearts. *Chavittunatakam* brings out the inherent and abstract fear of the natives of being weak and victims of political barter. This led to the creation of a local hero like Karalman who undertakes crusades to save his countrymen. The Opera player Santiago's statement that "Loners rig history"⁵² shows the desperation rooted deep within their subconscious psyche to procure an effective leadership. Art forms and theatre in the 16th and 17th Centuries were highly patronised by the Kochi kings and these performances were strategically used to glorify their image, reinforce the divine rights theory and tilt the public imagination towards certain hegemonic ideologies. Santiago's statement that they would not make their Karalman stomp their feet like Kathakali dancers reveals the contempt natives held for this highly patronized dance form. Thus, cultural productions like *Chavittunatakam* became a medium to challenge and mock the existing hierarchical art productions like Kathakali and the patronisers of the art form—that is—the Kochi kings. The jubilation, and the act of setting Kochi Raja's blue conch and palanquin flag on fire the moment independence was declared suggests the change and stability the people of Lanthan Battery were aspiring for. Correspondingly, the narrative is interspersed with references to the rulers of Travancore who would go to any length to defend their kingdom against the European invaders. Madhavan brings to limelight events in indigenous historical records like the diplomatic tact of Marthanda Varma, who not only defeated and captured De Lannoy, the commander of Dutch army in the Battle of Colachel but also convinced him to accept the position as his naval commander.

51 *ibid.* 29

52 *ibid.* 90

Madhavan also remarks on the initiative taken by the Queen of Travancore, Sethu Parvathy Bai who herself got vaccinated first to help her subjects to overcome the fear of getting vaccinated.⁵³ Thus, Madhavan's narrative engages and contests the historical reality presented by European strictures and opens up a history full of alternative possibilities.

Madhavan's fiction intertwines personal memory and social memory to show its implications on each other. The agony caused to Jessica (addressed as Koch) by Pushpangathan Master's encroachment on her body, and her final act of transgression by feigning and embracing *madness* to survive in a chaotic world can be metaphorically read as Kochi's and the native's vulnerability to enact 'resilience' as a tool for survival and to maintain sanity amidst multiple infiltrations. Although Edwin feels that people would forget all that has happened in the past; Jessica's final question to her cousin Johnson, "who made up the history that we study in school?"⁵⁴ interrogates the fashionable garb of cosmopolitanism cast over the port city of Kochi. Thus, Madhavan's fictionalized 're-telling' of the history becomes a means to recuperate and unburden the multiple layers of trauma (both personal and political) and subjugation faced by the natives down the generations. It brings to the attention of readers the criteria of 'history making process' which practices the politics of selection and exclusion of a historical event or memory.

Conclusion

Litanies of Dutch Battery highlights the value of contemporary fiction in attending to the historical events in 15th -20th BC. It helps the reader in empathizing significant aspects beyond the popular ascriptions of the cosmopolitan past. The historical past of Kochi which has been called into question by a regional novelist like N.S Madhavan displays three modes of indigenous re-construction: a) employing methods like contestation of established stereotypes and discourses b) retrieval of buried histories c) presentation of local stories that perform and aid these contestations. Through N.S Madhavan's novel on the port city of Kochi, we understand how society constructs and maintains mnemonic practices and artifacts that exhibit "selective representation and selective forgetting."⁵⁵ N.S Madhavan challenges the codification of history and shows the reader the importance of history being dynamic and open to subjective narration of losses and gains achieved by a community. This paper leads to an ontological inference that the cosmopolitanism that emerged in Kochi was not merely due to the accommodative tendencies and resilience practiced down centuries but also due to the fact that they were

53 *ibid.* 8

54 *ibid.* 280

55 Charles B Stone and William Hirst, "(Induced) Forgetting to Form a Collective Memory," *Memory Studies* 7, no. 3 (2014): 320.

coerced into enacting cosmopolitanism in-order to synchronize with the policies of the state. N.S Madhavan's narrative also displays development of a unique inter- personal relationship and maritime mindset amongst both the people on the littoral as well as of the European officers stationed in these port cities who wrestle a host of unforeseen circumstances, natural disasters and political dictums.

The augmented maritime consciousness of both the categories made them better equipped to incorporate a fabric of inclusivity in their attitude. So, beyond the internal contentions and wars, it was also the impulses and churn of the ocean which played a colossal role in moulding a port mindset and bestowing a temporality which helped both the settlers and locals to re-calibrate and adapt according to the transformations around them.

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MAIN SECTION

Heritage Words: Exploring Port City Terms

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ABSTRACT

Maritime heritage structures, such as cranes or warehouses, are typical for historical port cities around the world and many of them have received recognition as having Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and have been listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites. They have often been preserved and revitalized as expressions of former shipping networks and urban power after containerization in the 1960s when modern ports moved out of their historic inner-city locations to urban peripheries. To learn more about the conceptualization of port heritage as part of global flows and local urban systems, we manually checked 1121 abstracts of world heritage sites published on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website¹, exploring a group of words describing the typology of buildings and structures associated with port functions and activities. We found 107 World Heritage Sites (out of 1121) related to port cities. By analysing the abstracts of the 107 sites, the authors established a series of findings. Firstly, the concepts of port city and port heritage reflected in the abstracts do not align with the definitions given by encyclopaedias or by people interested in port city research. The texts placed on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website mainly focus on specific heritage types and values, rather than the bigger picture of maritime-related structures. Secondly, the listed port heritage sites appear to emphasize three port city functions: maritime trade, defence and colonial practices. Other functions that include housing, leisure or religion are rarely mentioned in the abstracts. Thirdly, since port cities are places where sea meets the land, nature meets human settlements, they should stress the nature-culture connection. Yet, the listed world heritage sites present a culture-nature dichotomy in the testified OUV.

1 World Heritage Centre, "World Heritage List," <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>.

KEYWORDS

Port City Culture; Port Heritage; Outstanding Universal Value; Heritage Word

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Introduction

Port and port heritage have gained more scholarly and professional attention since the 1960s when containerization led to the abandonment of historic inner-city port areas and the development of large container terminals in the urban periphery.¹ Multiple port functions and their spaces—including ships and pipelines, port facilities and warehouses, industrial and logistic structures, headquarters and retail buildings, but also housing and leisure facilities—combine to create a port city culture,² that is rooted not only in places, structures, but also events, traditions, and practices. Historic port structures—cranes, warehouses, and other industrial buildings, have become icons of waterfront renewal projects—often as part of cultural tourism.³ These structures have come to represent port city culture in locations around the world. World heritage sites such as Liverpool, Bremen, Hamburg, Saint Petersburg, or Venice are examples of the prominence of maritime heritage sites with Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Many of them have been listed as World Heritage sites. The emergence of a particular type of maritime heritage through this port city transformation has come to be reflected in the growing use of the term “port heritage”. According to the Google Book NGram Viewer, the term emerged in the English-language literature in the 1960s and its use peaked around 2010.⁴

Yet, the question remains: what exactly are the structures that make up “port heritage”? Given the emergence of these sites as part of global maritime networks with a shared typology, we ask: how do the collective texts featured on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre’s website conceptualize port heritage? How does the discussion of port heritage recognize global maritime networks? What parts of maritime heritage does the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website’s list recognize and which ones does it ignore? How can port city culture, based on an understanding of heritage, become a vector of sustainable development in port city territories?

The current operationalization of world heritage nomination, inscription, and management has greatly affected the listing of port heritage sites and the justification of their OUV. Hence, we explore: does the operationalization help enhance and testify the maritime values of the sites from a networked perspective? Given that port cities are places where the sea

1 Carola Hein, “The Port Cityscape: Spatial and Institutional Approaches to Port City Relationships,” *PORTUSplus* 8 (2019); ICOMOS, “New Publication: “Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage,”” <https://www.icomos.org/en/116-english-categories/resources/publications/64528-new-publication-adaptive-strategies-for-water-heritage>.

2 Hein, “The Port Cityscape: Spatial and Institutional Approaches to Port City Relationships.”

3 José M. Pagés Sánchez and Tom A. Daamen, “Using Heritage to Develop Sustainable Port-City Relationships: Lisbon’s Shift from Object-Based to Landscape Approaches,” in *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage: Past, Present and Future*, ed. Carola Hein (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020); A. L. Grindlay et al., “Port Heritage in City-Port Transformations: Opportunities or Constraints?,” in *HERITAGE 2018 - 6th International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development* (Granada, Spain 2018).

4 Google Books Ngram Viewer, “Port Heritage,” https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=port+heritage&year_start=1800&year_end=2019&corpus=26&smoothing=3.

meets human settlements, the nature-culture interconnection should form vital parts of the OUV of these sites. We ask: Has the nature-culture linkage been reflected in the statements testifying the OUV? Are the heritage values embodied in natural beauty, geological history, biological diversity and ecosystems emphasized in the abstracts?

According to the existing categorization of world heritage sites, a site should be inscribed as a cultural, or a natural, or a mixed heritage site by assessing heritage either in cultural or natural sectors, following the separate criteria. We would like to know if the complex linkages between natural and cultural port-related resources are undermined in this way. Moreover, as argued by Lynn Meskell, the assessment of OUV is actually affected by certain influential nations and cultures—"excluding the World Heritage Cultural Sites in France, Greece, Italy, and Spain, 31% of the site descriptions of remaining World Heritage Cultural Sites indicated an Italian influence, and 10% were influenced by Spain."⁵ Sites considered to be of OUV are actually ones mainly inspired by Italy, Spain, and France.⁶ These countries are European countries where many important port cities are located. Trading, military, and colonial practices were among the dominant practices ensuring the prosperities of these European nations in history. Does the history of these nations influence how the OUV of listed port heritage is presented?

Understanding and defining the concept of port heritage—both on land and beyond waters—is crucial in several ways. First, it is intimately connected to what citizens and institutions deem valuable and choose to preserve. Developing a shared vocabulary is the foundation for a better understanding of specific values or identities inherent in port cities. It can help stakeholders develop shared strategies on how to identify, treat, utilize and redevelop port city resources and make them an inherent part of balanced and sustainable development in line with SDG 11,⁷ emphasizing the efforts to be strengthened to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage. Second, discussions on port heritage, including port structures, underwater heritages, natural sites outside the port, and marine sites, can also effectively connect both cultural and natural heritage sites. The coverage of such diverse heritage types makes a new challenge for the nature-culture dichotomy in world heritage inscription,

5 L. Meskell, *A Future in Ruins: Unesco, World Heritage, and the Dream of Peace* (New York:Oxford University Press, 2018).

6 Victoria Reyes, "The Production of Cultural and Natural Wealth: An Examination of World Heritage Sites," *Poetics* 44 (2014): 42–63.

7 The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, adopted by all United Nations Member, aims to renew and plan cities and other human settlements in a way that offers opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and green public spaces, while reducing resource use and environmental impact.

which has long been criticized by many researchers.⁸ Third, such an understanding of port heritage that recognizes both global linkages and port city networks within a port city territory is also in line with the 2011 Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach⁹ that has shifted heritage debates from its earlier object-based approach to one that places heritage in a larger spatial and societal context. At a time when climate change and sea-level rise threaten coastal areas and urban deltas with important heritage sites around the world, understanding the interconnectedness of these sites can also help in the development of strategies for heritage protection on a shared basis.

To address these questions, we developed a methodology as a first step towards a shared and comprehensive understanding of networked port heritage. Exploring heritage sites as part of a larger story through narratives can help us overcome the fragmentation related to the use of single words and to contextualize words in different languages, cultural contexts, and disciplines. Therefore, the narrative-descriptive approach was employed in our research of port heritage terms. We have focused on English terminology of port heritage in abstracts published on the World Heritage Centre website (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>). These abstracts were written up by state parties, approved and published by the World Heritage Centre, to briefly introduce the background, the OUV, authenticity, integrity, protection and management requirements of every World Heritage Site, following the Operational Guidelines. Through textual data analysis, we aim to understand the degree to which port heritage is presented as both globally or regionally networked and locally complex; facilitate the development of shared strategies towards conservation of heritage sites that are part of larger systems; help identify shared challenges and opportunities and develop visions for preserving, protecting and sustainably developing this group of heritage as part of sustainable port city territory development.

8 Philippe Descola and Gísli Pálsson, *Nature and Society: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1996). Larwood and Sarah France, "Culturally Natural or Naturally Cultural? Exploring the Relationship between Nature and Culture through World Heritage," in *Culturally Natural or Naturally Cultural?*, ed. Jonathan Larwood, Sarah France, and Chris Mahon (United Kingdom: IUCN National Committee UK, 2017).

9 UNESCO, "Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape Adopted by the General Conference at Its 36th Session," (Paris: UNESCO, 2011).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Reconceptualization of port heritage as practice of port city culture

Port cities are a particular type of city located at the edge of sea and land. They have grown as part of far-flung maritime networks and their spaces and institutions often reflect practices in faraway places more than those in nearby land-bound areas. Collective features of port cities include structures such as cranes, docks, and mooring facilities as well as housing, leisure spaces or even religious structures; they also include institutions, practices and local knowledge that form what Hein calls a port-cityscape.¹⁰ Through constant deliberation, often over centuries, many port cities have developed particular shared values. This is what we call a maritime mindset, or port city culture. A port city culture is more than a mentality, or a set of maritime artefacts, heritage objects or museum objects. It is a shared mindset of port city actors formed through the location and century-old investments. The presence—or absence—of such a maritime mindset characterizes port city conditions around the world and it shapes future development in port-city-regions. This complexity of inter-linked spatial forms and social practices is seldomly recognized as port heritage by national or global heritage institutions. Instead, many institutions focus on select spaces or practices, such as historic warehouses or cranes, on maritime objects or museums. Understood as a particular attitude towards maritime practices, a shared desire to facilitate port related activities, port city culture is an approach that is not only directed at the past, but also concerns the future. It influences the preservation and reuse of historic structures; it also helps connect past and present to the development of future port city practices.

The relevance of port city culture has been recognized by some professional institutions. For instance, the 2030 agenda of AIVP has been designed to guide the actions and projects of the port city to ensure sustainable relations between the city and the port.¹¹ AIVP's Goal 6 entitled "Port culture and identity" for sustainable port cities is to "promote and capitalize on the specific culture and identity of port cities and allow residents to develop a sense of pride and flourish as part of a city port community of interest."¹²

Even though port city culture starts to gain more academic and professional attention in different fields—as evidenced in this two-volume special issue of CPCL, ways to recognize or tag cultural heritage of this particular

10 Hein, "The Port Cityscape: Spatial and Institutional Approaches to Port City Relationships."

11 Hermeline Delepouve, "Aivp 2030 Agenda Gains New Signatories!," AIVP, <http://www.aivp.org/en/2019/11/21/aivp-2030-agenda-gains-new-signatories/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20AIVP%202030,to%20be%20achieved%20by%202030>.

12 AIVP, "06 Port Culture & Identity," AIVP, <https://www.aivpagenda2030.com/06-port-culture-identity>.

kind for shared discussions, interventions or protection are still lacking. We argue that conceptualizing port heritage as a particular heritage group will help increase the understanding of the related OUV from the historical, aesthetic, scientific, ethnological or anthropological point of view and facilitate its use as part of the Historic Urban Landscape approach (HUL).

2.2 Why words matter for heritage

Understanding the conceptualization of port heritage starts with a close reading of words. Words can play an essential role in identifying, describing, and promoting port heritage from a disciplinary perspective. Words also evolve through time, changing meanings or expanding their definitions. We use different terms when we talk about ports through the lens of economy, logistics and technology, or when we talk about port cities acknowledging the importance of society and culture. The way people describe a port city is based on the very paradigms that underlie societal choices and approaches to culture. The systematic analysis of words can help understand, guide change and identify strategies to imagine and make the future of port city culture.

Words construct realities: The way in which we conceptualize things shapes the way we live and build as well as how we conceive the past. Through words, people communicate visual, auditory, and haptic experiences, as well as feelings, beliefs, and theories. The symbolic system of language not only facilitates communication between oneself and the outside world, aiding with interpreting and sharing experiences in the world, it also acts as a tool for the mental manipulation of information,¹³ for the understanding of space and its design past, present and future. Wolff and Malt poignantly write

“Only humans have the added capacity of language, allowing them to selectively capture some of this richness in words and thereby receive and transmit information about the world through a symbolic system.” — Phillip Wolff and Barbara C. Malt, 2010¹⁴

In order to smooth out the problems in communication on port heritage, we need to pay attention to wording so that researchers, authorities, and practitioners can get a better grasp on port city culture based on a shared understanding. A better understanding of words used to build port city culture can help us get a better knowledge of potential bias and foci in

13 P. Wolff and B. Malt, “The Language – Thought Interface: An Introduction,” in *Words and the Mind: How Words Capture Human Experience*, ed. B. Malt and P. Wolff (Oxford University Press, 2010); Walter J. Ong, “Some Psychodynamics of Orality,” in *Orality and Literacy* (Taylor & Francis, 2003).

14 P. Wolff and B. Malt, “The Language – Thought Interface: An Introduction,” in *Words and the Mind: How Words Capture Human Experience*, ed. B. Malt and P. Wolff (Oxford University Press, 2010).

official documents, announcements, and presentations, so as to, in the long-term, improve port city relations and help heritage decision-making. Through textual data processing, we hope to build up a maritime corpus, and reflect on the conceptualization of port heritage.

3. Methodology

Port city culture is generated by numerous tangible structures and intangible phenomena, activities, therefore, a deep understanding of this complex notion is closely related to narratives and descriptions. As Tuan argued, “places are made by means of place-names, informal conversation and written texts. Speech is thus an integral part of the construction of places.”¹⁵ The action of naming makes a place familiar to us, and story-telling converts objects “out there” into real presences. In modern societies, written text has largely substituted oral story-telling. The written texts stem from the individuals’ motives to “describe, recount, and narrate a particular stream of thought that is situated within, or impacted by, a place or series of places.”¹⁶ We therefore employed a narrative-descriptive approach in our research of port heritage terms to testify whether the listed port heritage sites are perceived as parts of a larger system.¹⁷

3.1 Data collection

To answer the research questions, we modelled a systematic approach to decode and analyze textual data. We downloaded the short abstracts of totally 1121 World Heritage Sites from the website of the World Heritage Centre (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>). For most of the short abstracts, each of them consists of a brief synthesis, a statement of cultural / natural significance corresponding to the criteria assessing the OUV, authenticity, integrity, protection and management requirements (see webpage <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1192> as an example). For a few short abstracts, the part explaining the authenticity, or integrity, or protection and management requirements is not published. We established a list of building types and structures associated with port functions and activities, such as crane, wharf, warehouse, and lighthouse. We then used this list to manually filter out the short abstracts of the sites not relevant to port or port city. When searching the phrase “port city” in the world heritage list on the website (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>), only 17 sites appeared as search results. However, once we had a close look at the short abstracts and checked all the geo-locations of the World Heritage Sites, we found

15 Yi-Fu Tuan, “Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 81, no. 4 (1991).

16 Trevor M. Harris, “Deep Geography—Deep Mapping—Spatial Storytelling and a Sense of Place,” in *Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives*, ed. David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris (Indiana, US: Indiana University Press, 2015).

17 Tuan, “Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach.”

in-total 107 sites related to port city (see Appendix A). Hence within the general database of 1121 abstracts of World Heritage Sites, we created a subset of port heritage. By analyzing this subset and comparatively analyzing this subset within the context of the entire dataset, we can better understand how the abstracts published on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre's website conceptualize port heritage and the relevant issues in this conceptualization.

3.2 Data process and findings

For the data process of the set of 1121 World Heritage Site abstracts and the set of 107 port heritage site abstracts, we only focused on the English texts, as they form the main contents of the abstracts. Besides, texts in other languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Japanese, in all the abstracts, are translated from the English brief synthesis. Therefore, the English texts cover the most useful information in these abstracts. We adopted three digital methods as a series to help us decode and analyse the large quantity of narratives efficiently.

First, to grasp a general idea of what the abstracts of port heritage discuss, we generated a word cloud demonstrating the words and phrases of high-frequency and collocating relationships between them. As shown in Figure 1, the sizes of the terms represent their frequencies, while the distances between each term denote the strength of collocations, i.e., the closer, the stronger. Appendix B lists the count of each term/phrase and the strength of their relevance to other terms/phrases. In total, the top 50 most-used terms / phrases are selected and shown in Figure 1. We can see the terms most relevant to other words in the abstracts of port heritages are "Outstanding Universal Value", "historic center", "outstanding example", "ancient city", meaning the texts are mainly for stating the cultural significance of the sites that testify their OUV. Among all the criteria, "criterion iii" is most commonly met when the OUV of port heritage are assessed, meaning that most of the port heritage sites "bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared".¹⁸

Many of these sites are the "historic center" of a town or a city. Apart from this type, "rock art", "historical port town", "archaeological site", "small island", "military architecture", and "church" are the most common structural types among all the port heritages. Corresponding to the terms / phrases denoting the typology of heritage sites, there are quite a few names of the inscribed heritage sites, such as "City of Qalhat", "Hanseatic League", "old town Lunenburg", "Levuka historical port", "Fort Jesus Mombasa". The word cloud also demonstrates some crucial geological locations where port heritage concentrate, e.g., "Persian Gulf", "Baltic Sea",

18 UNESCO, "Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention," (Paris: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2019).

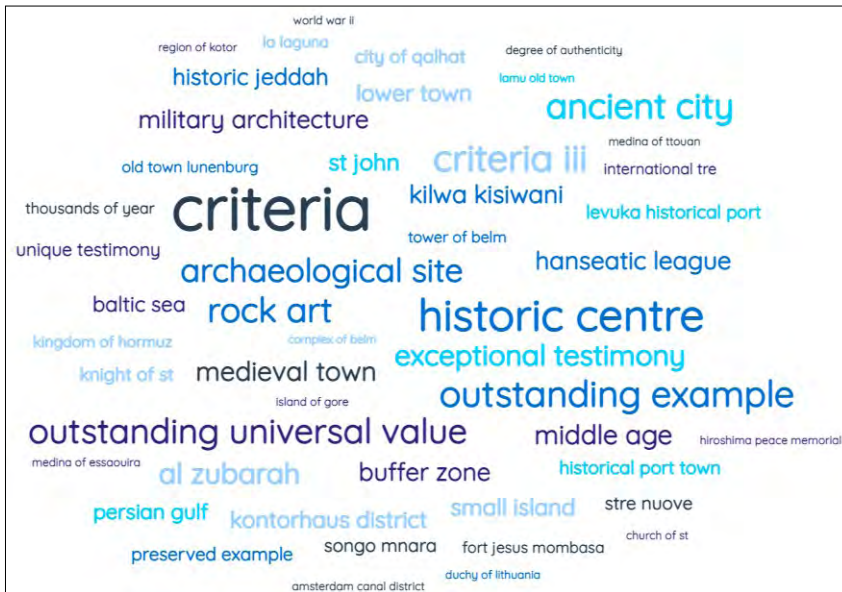


FIG. 1 Word cloud generated from the abstracts of port heritage published on world heritage centre website (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>)



FIG. 2 Word cloud defining port city referring to encyclopaedias including Merriam-Webster, Britannica, The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, and Encyclopedia.com

and some special structures associated with specific military events, for instance, “Hiroshima Peace Memorial”, and “World War II” [Fig. 1].

In Figure 1, we can also detect clusters of phrases that strongly collocate within the set of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre’s port heritage texts. The cluster of “ancient city”, “archeological site”, and “small island” delivers the connotation that there are some representative examples of historical ports built on small islands, and the archeological sites of the ancient cities can be found as vestiges showing that the civilization developed there due to connection between the islands and the continents. More obvious connections can be seen in the cluster of “military architecture”, “Tower of Belém” (a 16th-century fortification), and “Medina of Essaouira” (a late-18th-century fortified town), stressing the power of Portuguese colonialism and its importance in shaping the OUV of some port heritage



FIG. 3 Word cloud defining port city produced by learners in online course "(Re) Imagining Port Cities: Understanding Space, Society and Culture" (<https://www.edx.org/course/port-cities-and-urban-deltas>)

sites. However, this word cloud demonstrates little connection to either the definitions of port cities in encyclopaedias [Fig. 2], or the definitions presented in a word cloud compiled from input of learners in the online course entitled "(Re)Imagining Port Cities: Understanding Space, Society and Culture" (<https://www.edx.org/course/port-cities-and-urban-deltas>) [Fig. 3].

Second, to understand what specific terms are unique ones that are only frequently mentioned in the abstracts of port heritage but not in the entire set of abstracts, we calculated the frequency of use for every single word that appeared in the 1121 abstracts, as well as their frequencies in the subset of 107 abstracts of port heritages. By comparing the word frequencies between the two datasets, we can find out which words are used more often in the port heritage set. The results were also processed and visualized with a data mining tool 7D.¹⁹

Figure 4 shows the 7D interactive scattered diagram indicating the frequency of use of every single word that appeared both in the data set of abstracts of 1121 World Heritage Sites, and in the subset of abstracts of 107 port heritage sites [Fig. 4]. Every word is represented by a dot in the diagram. Larger dots are more frequent terms. The brighter the colour of the dot is and the further away from the origin of the coordinate system, the higher frequency it indicates. The main idea relevant for our analysis

19 Dan C. Baciú, "Cultural Life: Theory and Empirical Testing," *Biosystems* 197.104208 (2020)

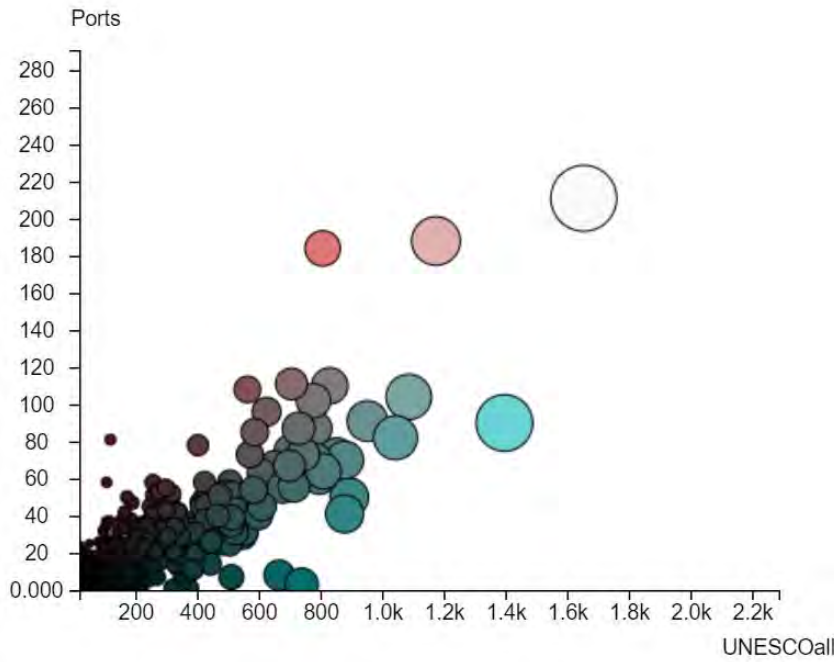


FIG. 4 Screenshots of scattered diagram with dots indicating the frequency of each word used both in the data set of abstracts of 1121 World Heritage Sites, and in the subset of abstracts of 107 port (city) heritages sites

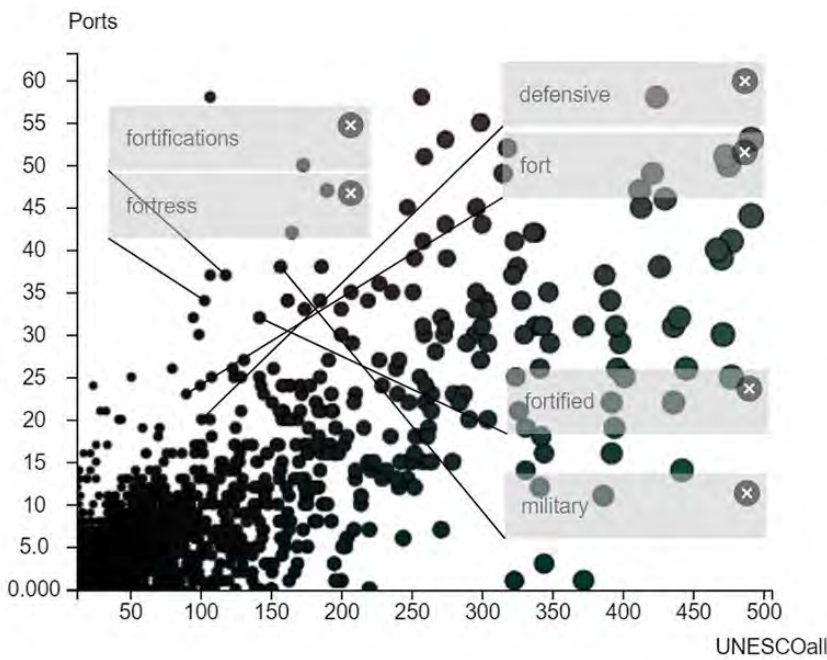


FIG. 5 Screenshots of scattered diagram with tags indicating the words used more frequently in abstracts of port-city heritages themed in military structures

is to compare word frequencies among the 107 port cities with word frequencies among all sites. Graphically, words that “lean” left to the y-axis (and are colored reddish) are more frequently used in the 107 port city abstracts compared to all abstracts, while words that lean right to the x-axis (and are colored blueish) are less frequently used in the same data [Fig. 5].

Some key themes in conceptualizing port heritage appeared, represented by the clustering of words used more frequently in the abstracts of port heritage. For instance, as shown in Figure 5, “fortifications”, “fortress”,

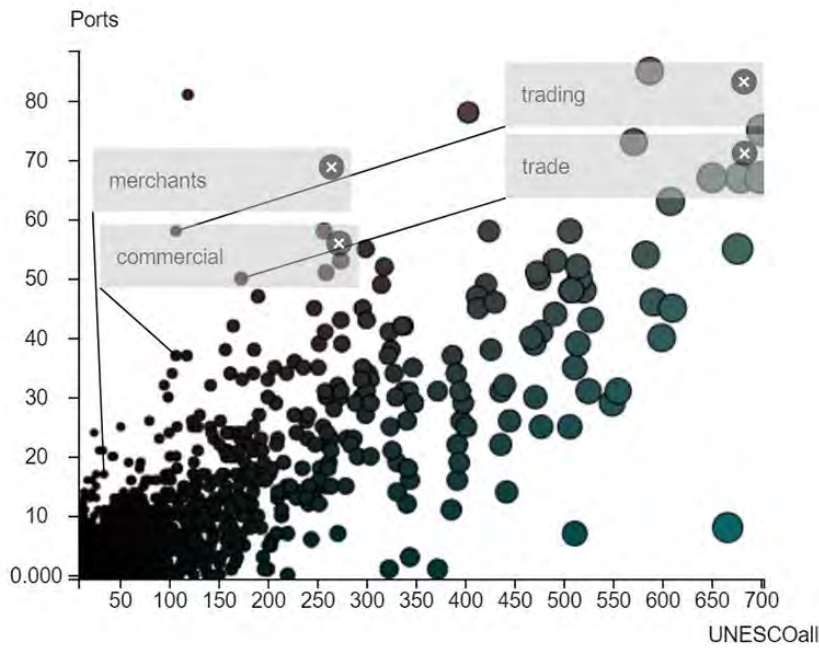


FIG. 6 Screenshots of scatter diagram with tags indicating the words used most frequently in abstracts of port-city heritage sites related to maritime trading

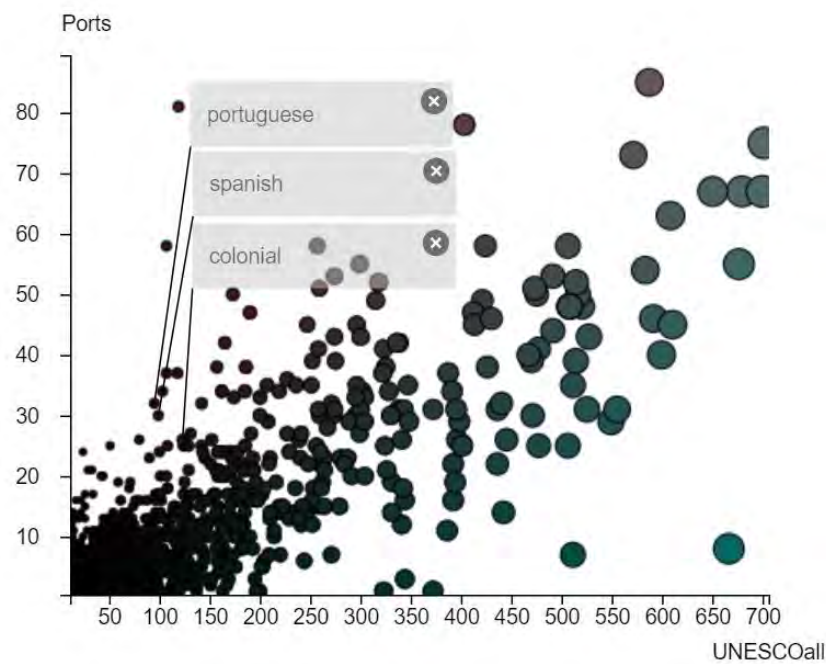


FIG. 7 Screenshots of scatter diagram with tags indicating the words used most frequently in abstracts of port-city heritage sites related to European colonialism

“defensive”, “fort”, “fortified”, and “military” all speak to the theme of military history and structure. These high-frequency words used in the texts denote that one of the most recognized and protected types of port heritage is the one associated with armed forces, as many ports play crucial military roles for the navy. The second theme is maritime trading, demonstrated by the clustering of “merchants”, “commercial”, “trading”, and “trade” [Fig. 6]. The third main theme is European colonialism that lasted from the 15th to 20th centuries, represented by the terms “Portuguese”, “Spanish”, “colonial” [Fig. 7]. The vestiges attesting European powers, extend their reach around the globe by establishing colonies in

the Americas, Africa, and Asia, form one of the commonly recognized heritage types in port heritage.

We can see that the OUV of port heritage sites, as represented in the 107 abstracts, speaks extensively to the interchange of values through military, trading, and colonial activities, over a span of centuries. Structures that witness these maritime activities are remarkable testimonies to the nature and objectives of power expansion. It seems that the abstracts render a picture of port heritage sites closely connected to the maritime activities by Italy, Spain, and France, and emphasise how these nations have built their prosperity upon military, trading, and colonial activities.

Third, we employed a data mining tool GeoD²⁰ to decode the geographical information in each of the 107 port heritage abstracts to understand how the abstracts that we studied represent the role of ports, shipping, maritime practices and exchange from a networked perspective. We were particularly interested in seeing whether the abstracts take into account the diverse structures that are part of the port cityscape beyond the military, trading and colonial functions on land and sea side, and therewith acknowledges the nature-culture interconnection in port-city-regions. GeoD identifies not only place names, but also well-known institutions, businesses, infrastructures, and famous people who are mentioned in the texts, which helps us explore how the different port and urban functions are related to one another in historical sites. The tool then locates places, headquarters, birthplaces, etc. on Google map by cross-reference to Wikipedia. Apart from the decoded geographical information, GeoD also takes into account the locations of the 107 heritage sites provided on the UNESCO World Heritage Center's website, so as to spatially link each heritage site with the geo-codable terms found in the abstract of the respective site.

To further explain the logic behind GeoD, let us take the World Heritage Site "Historic Centre of Macao" as an example. From the abstract of this site in txt format, GeoD extracts all the geo-codable terms that can be linked to Wikipedia such as "Portuguese", "China", "Church of St. Paul's", "Guia Lighthouse", "Mount Fortress", "Outer Harbour", "Penha", etc. Then, the tool geolocates these places on Google map and draws lines linking these places with the geo-location of the Historic Centre of Macao. These spatial links are shown on an interactive mapping to deliver a visual

20 Dan C. Baciú, "Cultural Life: Theory and Empirical Testing," *Biosystems* 197.104208 (2020).
Chen-Tse Tsai and Dan Roth, "Cross-Lingual Wikification Using Multilingual Embeddings," in *Proceedings of the 2016 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies* (Proceedings of the 2016 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies, San Diego, California: Association for Computational Linguistics, 2016), 589–98, <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/N16-1072>.; Chen-Tse Tsai, Stephen Mayhew, and Dan Roth, "Cross-Lingual Named Entity Recognition via Wikification," in *Proceedings of The 20th SIGNLL Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning* (Proceedings of The 20th SIGNLL Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning, Berlin, Germany: Association for Computational Linguistics, 2016), 219–28, <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/K16-1022>.; Dan C. Baciú, "Cultural Life: Theory and Empirical Testing," *Biosystems* 197 (2020).

expression. Overall, it must be said that the 107 abstracts represent very little data and coverage for the entire globe. We hope that additional data will clarify and correct our present findings at a later point.

Having a closer look at all the existing spatial connections on the mapping, there are some meaningful cultural and historical interconnections at the global/regional level. For instance, the link between “Historic Centre of Saint Petersburg and Related Groups of Monuments” and “the Gulf of Finland” [Fig. 8] suggests that the unique urban landscape of the port and capital city of Saint Petersburg actually emerged from the Neva estuary where it meets the Gulf of Finland. The link between “The Naval Port of Karlskrona” and “Baltic Sea” [Fig. 9], illustrates how the major European powers secured their positions largely through wars and battles at sea (see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/871>). The links between “Archaeological Border complex of Hedeby and the Danevirke”, “North Sea”, “Baltic Sea”, and “Denmark” [Fig. 10], briefly introduces the history of the archaeological site of Hedeby, situated between the Frankish Empire in the South and the Danish Kingdom in the North, becoming a trading hub between continental Europe and Scandinavia, and between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. The OUV of this site mainly lies in Hedeby’s vitality in facilitating exchange between trading networks spanning the European continent, and in controlling the trading routes, the economy and the territory at the crossroads between the emerging Danish kingdom and the kingdoms of mainland Europe (see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1553>). The link between “Historic Centre of Macao” and “Portugal” [Fig. 11] reveals the history of Macao as a Portuguese settlement from the mid-16th century to the year of 1999. The OUV of this site has been testified by Macau’s association with the exchange of a variety of cultural, spiritual, scientific and technical influences between the Western and Chinese civilisations (see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1110>).

Based on the analysis of the spatial links, we can see that firstly links related to the OUV of the port heritage sites are mainly associated with the military, trading and colonial history of a port city. Values related to other parts of the port cityscape, such as leisure districts, spaces of migration, and religion are missing. Either these spaces and their associated values have not been recognized as relevant enough for the World Heritage list, or their contribution to port city functions has not been recognized. Secondly, the reciprocity between two or multiple neighbouring port heritage sites are rarely seen in the mapping. For every sea or ocean, normally more than one port heritage site exists along its coastline. These sites connected by the same body of water, should have many social, cultural and economic linkages. In the port heritage abstracts, however, the linkages between neighbouring ports or between one port and its counterpart are seldom mentioned. For instance, in Figure 9. “Historic Centre (Old Town) of Tallinn,” another port heritage site closely related to Baltic Sea, is not mentioned in the abstract introducing “The Naval Port of Karlskrona”.

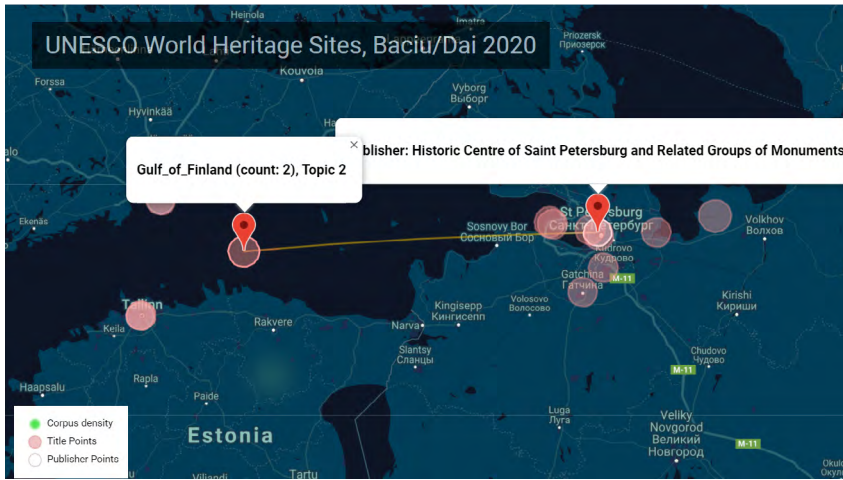


FIG. 8 The link between “Historic Centre of Saint Petersburg and Related Groups of Monuments” and “the Gulf of Finland” revealed from the world heritage site description

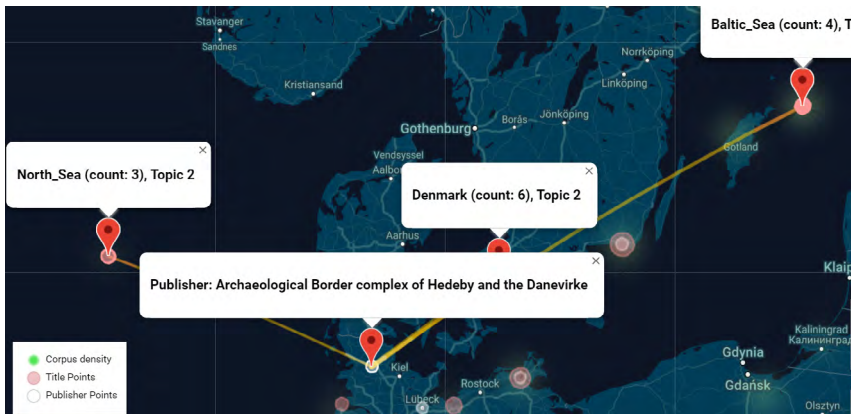


FIG. 9 The link between “The Naval Port of Karlskrona” and “Baltic Sea” revealed from the world heritage site description

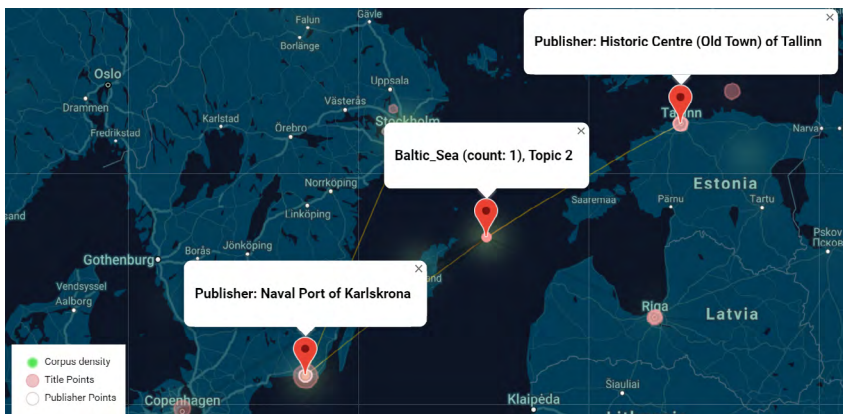


FIG. 10 The link between “Archaeological Border complex of Hedeby and the Danevirke”, “North Sea”, “Baltic Sea”, and “Denmark” revealed from the world heritage site description

Thirdly, the nature-culture interconnections in port-city-regions are barely seen in the mapping. The visible nature-human settlement linkages are mostly to indicate the geological locations of the sites, but not the natural beauty or geological history of the sites. Comparing our mapping with the interactive map of World Heritage Sites and with ESAI's map of global shipping (https://www.esa.int/Applications/Telecommunications_Integrated_Applications/ESAIL_s_first_map_of_global_shipping) [Fig. 12],

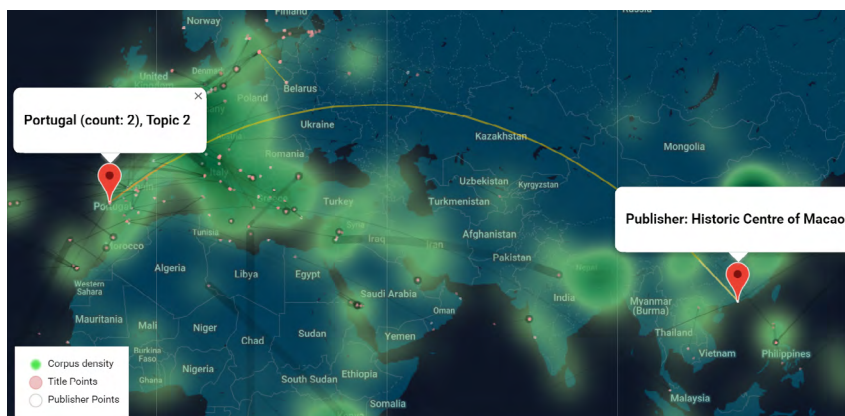


FIG. 11 The link between “Historic Centre of Macao” and “Portugal” revealed from the world heritage site description

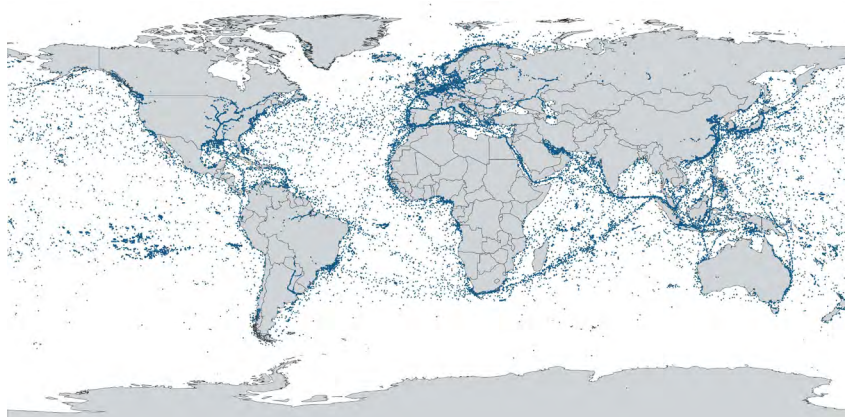


FIG. 12 ESAIL’s map of global shipping

we can see that the number of the ports / port cities today are actually much higher than that of ones listed as world heritage sites. It is interesting to realize that the mapping of the 107 port heritage abstracts only partly mirrors the much larger present maritime network. For instance, very few port heritage sites are recognized and protected at a global level along the British Columbia Coast and the long coastline of Southeast Asia, where shipping activities greatly concentrate. One of the reasons might be that, for many ports, their values reflected merely in shipping and maritime practices are not outstanding enough to support the nomination of the city or town as a world heritage site. Nevertheless, heritage practitioners, in a networked perspective, can discover and stress other cultural and natural values of these ports/port cities, reflected in cultural practices and natural phenomena at a local, national or even global level. The heritage values of these ports and sites can be used to promote the collaboration, interaction, or even tourism industry, e.g., cruise tourism, between ports and port cities.

Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 Problematic conception of port heritage

Our findings suggest that the port heritage conceptualized by the abstracts of world heritage sites is rather limited in themes and scope. Firstly, structures and spaces featuring the port heritage or the port cityscape in the world heritage list are of some specific heritage types such as the historic centre of a town or a city, rock art, historical port towns, archaeological sites, small islands, military architecture, and churches. Many structures playing important roles in port functions and activities, such as cranes, warehouses and lighthouses, are seldomly inscribed as parts of the heritage sites. Secondly, the OUV of listed port heritage sites, as presented in the abstracts, is mainly related to three port city practices: maritime trade, defence and colonial practices. It is surprising that other practices or values reflected in urban spaces, including houses, leisure facilities or religious spaces, are rarely recognized by UNESCO or deemed not so relevant to functions of ports and port cities. The reason may lie in the lack of official narratives on port city networks, their global links and local imprint, as part of UNESCO criteria for heritage conservation. Thirdly, the port heritage should represent an interaction of historical natural and cultural resources that occurred at the port-city-region interface. However, the intimate relationship between human and nature has not been emphasized or recognized as parts of the OUV in the abstracts of port heritage sites. Thus, we argue that UNESCO's perspective on preserving port heritages is not living up to its full potential. The reasons shaping such a perspective largely lie in the existing dichotomous categories of cultural and natural sites and associated criteria assessing the OUV of World Heritage Sites.

4.2 Limitations

Our research also has a couple of limitations. First, regarding the decoding of geo-codable terms, our detection of locations has certain inaccuracies. While we have cross-referenced the processed geological information with Wikipedia, we did not correct any of the geocodes provided by Wikipedia. Therefore, although most spatial connections between heritage sites and geographic information, indicated by the yellow lines, are correct, some might be wrong. In addition, the word cloud, the unique port city terms, and the spatial connections indicated in our mapping are found only based on the short abstracts of heritage sites. It is possible that more high-frequency, unique terms, and spatial connections are mentioned by UNESCO in other documents or through other media, that we have not studied in the current research. Future studies should include a larger database that more inclusively represents UNESCO's discourses upon port heritage sites.

4.3 Conclusion

In this article, we first introduced the notion of port heritage, and explained why we should reconceptualize port heritage as practice of port city culture. Second, through decoding, analysing and visualizing textual data, we revealed the general focus of UNESCO on port heritage, unique terms used by UNESCO to describe the port heritage in question, and the geographical maritime network composed of port heritage sites and their related locations to demonstrate the spatial connections between port heritage sites with other places and functions in the city, the region or around the world. We argue that the limited vision employed in valuing the port heritages by the global authority overlooks the interconnections between the port and other urban spaces, nature and culture, neighbouring port-cities linked by seas and oceans, hindering the recognition of networking of seas, ports, hinterlands, and all the associated tangible and intangible features. The main reasons shaping such a vision are the established World Heritage Site categorization, and the operationalization of the criteria assessing the OUV of World Heritage Sites.

Appendices

Appendix A. The selected port city related world heritages, indicated by their World Heritage Site ID number and Names in English

ID number	Name in English	ID number	Name in English
996	Historic Centre of Brugge	1211	Genoa: Le Strade Nuove and the system of the Palazzi dei Rolli
95	Old City of Dubrovnik	661	Himeji-jo
97	Historical Complex of Split with the Palace of Diocletian	688	Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu Cities)
582	Old Rauma	775	Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome)
1181	Le Havre, the City Rebuilt by Auguste Perret	1495	Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region
1256	Bordeaux, Port of the Moon	1535	Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region
1467	Speicherstadt and Kontorhaus District with Chilehaus	1593	Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan
272	Hanseatic City of Lübeck	1349	Seventeenth-Century Canal Ring Area of Amsterdam inside the Singelgracht
1067	Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar	788	Early Christian Monuments of Ravenna
456	Paleochristian and Byzantine Monuments of Thessalonika	1055	Lamu Old Town
978	Old Town of Corfu	1295	Fort Jesus, Mombasa
852	Historic Centre of Riga	299	Tyre
541	Vilnius Historic Centre	295	Byblos
125	Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor	183	Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna
837	Medina of Tétouan (formerly known as Titawin)	184	Archaeological Site of Sabratha
59	Bryggen	190	Archaeological Site of Cyrene
540	Historic Centre of Saint Petersburg and Related Groups of Monuments	699	City of Luxembourg: its Old Quarters and Fortifications
871	Naval Port of Karlskrona	1223	Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca
959	Historic Quarter of the Seaport City of Valparaíso	131	City of Valletta
285	Port, Fortresses and Group of Monuments, Cartagena	1227	Aaprasvati Ghat
1399	Levuka Historical Port Town	895	Historic Fortified Town of Campeche
658	Coro and its Port	753	Medina of Essaouira (formerly Mogador)
1058	Portuguese City of Mazagan (El Jadida)	599	Island of Mozambique
135	Fortifications on the Caribbean Side of Panama: Portobelo-San Lorenzo	352	Rock Art of Alta
755	Historic Centre of Oporto, Luiz I Bridge and Monastery of Serra do Pilar	1010	Land of Frankincense

1361	Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah	1537	Ancient City of Qalhat
144	Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Ruins of Songo Mnara	790	Archaeological Site of Panamá Viejo and Historic District of Panamá
819	Historic Area of Willemstad, Inner City and Harbour, Curaçao	500	Historic Centre of Lima
1312	Tower of Hercules	677	Baroque Churches of the Philippines
1308	Paraty and Ilha Grande – Culture and Biodiversity	206	Central Zone of the Town of Angra do Heroísmo in the Azores
1548	Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site	263	Monastery of the Hieronymites and Tower of Belém in Lisbon
217	Ancient City of Nessebar	1402	Al Zubarah Archaeological Site
741	Old Town Lunenburg	980	Historic and Architectural Complex of the Kazan Kremlin
1178	Humberstone and Santa Laura Saltpeter Works	632	Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands
1110	Historic Centre of Macao	26	Island of Gorée
810	Historic City of Trogir	929	San Cristóbal de La Laguna
1533	Venetian Works of Defence between the 16th and 17th Centuries: Stato da Terra – Western Stato da Mar	555	Birka and Hovgården
204	Old Havana and its Fortification System	37	Archaeological Site of Carthage
841	San Pedro de la Roca Castle, Santiago de Cuba	668	Historic City of Ayutthaya
1202	Urban Historic Centre of Cienfuegos	724	Medieval Monuments in Kosovo
822	Historic Centre (Old Town) of Tallinn	1253	Gamzigrad-Romuliana, Palace of Galerius
583	Fortress of Suomenlinna	916	Robben Island
1553	Archaeological Border complex of Hedeby and the Danevirke	1265	Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape
493	Medieval City of Rhodes	417	Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture
530	Delos	1578	Risco Caído and the Sacred Mountains of Gran Canaria Cultural Landscape
595	Pythagoreion and Heraion of Samos	313	Historic Centre of Cordoba
234	Churches and Convents of Goa	314	Alhambra, Generalife and Albayzín, Granada
244	Elephanta Caves	318	Monastery and Site of the Escorial, Madrid
945	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus)	379	Historic City of Toledo
1610	Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto	381	Old City of Salamanca
1042	Old City of Acre	384	Old Town of Cáceres
1220	Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee	782	La Lonja de la Seda de Valencia
394	Venice and its Lagoon	829	Archaeological Areas of Pompei, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata
726	Historic Centre of Naples		

Appendix B. Count and Relevance of selected keywords in the word cloud

No.	Word	Count	Relevance	No.	Word	Count	Relevance
1.	outstanding universal value	15	0.998	26.	island of gore	4	0.266
2.	historic centre	27	0.798	27.	medina of essaouira	4	0.266
3.	outstanding example	17	0.754	28.	preserved example	6	0.266
4.	ancient city	16	0.576	29.	kilwa kisiwani	9	0.266
5.	rock art	15	0.488	30.	region of kotor	4	0.266
6.	exceptional testimony	11	0.488	31.	amsterdam canal district	4	0.266
7.	city of qalhat	6	0.399	32.	unique testimony	6	0.266
8.	levuka historical port	6	0.399	33.	hiroshima peace memorial	4	0.266
9.	historical port town	6	0.399	34.	kontorhaus district	8	0.266
10.	knight of st	6	0.399	35.	church of st	4	0.266
11.	hanseatic league	9	0.399	36.	medina of ttouan	4	0.266
12.	middle age	10	0.355	37.	world war ii	4	0.266
13.	archaeological site	14	0.355	38.	degree of authenticity	4	0.266
14.	tower of belm	5	0.333	39.	lower town	8	0.222
15.	old town lunenburg	5	0.333	40.	baltic sea	7	0.222
16.	fort jesus mombasa	5	0.333	41.	military architecture	9	0.222
17.	thousands of year	5	0.333	42.	small island	8	0.222
18.	kingdom of hormuz	5	0.333	43.	stre nuove	6	0.222
19.	persian gulf	7	0.31	44.	historic jeddah	8	0.222
20.	st john	8	0.31	45.	international tre	5	0.222
21.	lamu old town	4	0.266	46.	la laguna	5	0.222
22.	complex of belm	4	0.266	47.	buffer zone	9	0.222
23.	al zubarah	11	0.266	48.	criteria iii	18	0.222
24.	duchy of lithuania	4	0.266	49.	medieval town	10	0.222
25.	songo mnara	6	0.266	50.	criteria	74	0.218

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Contributions

Tianchen Dai and Carola Hein developed the idea, the research question, the methodology and the arguments. Tianchen Dai took the lead in writing of the text. developed the idea, the research question, the methodology and the arguments together with Carola Hein. She also took the lead in writing of the text. Carola Hein developed the original idea and research question for the project. She worked with Tianchen Dai on the methodology and the argument as well as the writing of the text. Dan C. Baciú provided digital tools and knowledge, in particular related to GeoD and 7D, and created the visuals after data pre-processing by Tianchen Dai.

MAIN SECTION

In the Minds of People. Port-City Perspectives, the Case of Rotterdam

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ABSTRACT

Following the geographical 'Any-Port Model', urban design has stipulated and enforced the disunion of port and city over the recent decades. In conjunction with other disciplines, the emphasis has laid at dislocation of production activities in favor of logistic-productive dynamics. At the same time, professional focus was on the urban areas where most citizens are. While this practice has led to redevelopment of abandoned harbor areas too, foremost the approach stimulated stronger physical boundaries between lived city and the remaining and new harbor areas. This article describes the application of the dominant model in Rotterdam over the recent decades, on the base of literature review, and, it confronts this with the concepts of Rotterdam which are in the minds of professionals-in-training, through method of 'mental mapping'. On the one hand, mainly harbor areas are memorized when respondents are asked to draw the port-city of Rotterdam, even though its efficient port infrastructure makes public space in these areas rare, and most harbors are located behind inaccessible borders. On the other hand, civic areas, which have a refined network of public spaces and are places for daily life, reveal also all kinds of tangible and intangible signs and symbols related to characteristics of the port-city when memorized; even more. Various elements, linked to water-land or the flows of goods, people, and ideas, dominate the minds of the people when they think of Rotterdam in general. These outcomes reconfirm the unique unity of port and city and provide a way to find an alternative or supplementary model accepting the complex nature of port-cities.

KEYWORDS

Port-cities; Mental mapping; Public space; Port-city models; Urban design; Urban development; Rotterdam; Networks of public space

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In conjunction with other disciplines, urban design has stipulated and enforced the disunion of port and city over the recent decades. This is seen both in professional practice as well as in the models applied. The conceptual disunion becomes particularly clear in the case of Rotterdam, representing a particular kind of port-city. Being Europe's largest seaport and one of the most populated European cities within its administrative limits, this port-city is generally seen as a world port-city, alike say Shanghai and Singapore, or Los Angeles and New York. World port-cities are linked in a global distribution network, wherein they may be each other's competitors. Rotterdam aims to be "a complete port with a strong logistical and industrial function": a 'Global Hub' and ambitiously 'Europe's Industrial Cluster'. At the same time, particularly from economic perspective, Port Authority and Municipality underline local interconnectivity: "the future of the port goes hand in hand with the future of the city".¹ They confirm a division and contrast between port and city, while acknowledging that the two are interrelated. This paradox generates a challenge. In this view, civic areas provide locational advantages in favor of port economic growth. In the same line, Rotterdam displays a certain desire to reunite port and city on more levels. For a decade now, Rotterdam plans to redevelop the harbor area of Waalhaven, the largest artificially dug harbor basin in the world, along with several other harbor areas. These areas became in disuse alike other harbors did in the past. The plan has been dubbed 'Stadshavens'; city-harbors. The Municipality and Port Authority aim to offer a greater variety of living and working environments "with a typical Rotterdam character: tough, rugged, fascinating, colored by maritime activities", according to their collaborate vision. Port-activities are gradually substituted by a mix of work and education at certain locations: combining "research, design and manufacturing", aiming to contribute to a sustainable and resilient future of the city.² The vision on the development and urban design reports a desire for integration of port and city. It unfolds a desire to confirm the port-city union on more levels than just economics. Notwithstanding the uniqueness of every case and without any intend to re-categorize, this article seeks for a revision to the inherited Modernist model by illustration of Rotterdam.

The Generally Accepted Port-City Narrative

We may state that port-city relationships of the Rotterdam type are unique and very different than say a coastal town with a small-sized city tightly intertwined with its small-sized port. Following the so-called '*Any-Port Model*' as introduced by High-Modern geographer Jim Bird first in the

1 Havenbedrijf Rotterdam, "Havenvisie 2030: Port Compass 'Direct the Future. Start Today.'" (Rotterdam: Havenbedrijf Rotterdam, November 15, 2011).

2 Programmabureau Stadshavens Rotterdam., "Stadshavens Rotterdam. Structuurvisie" (Rotterdam: Programmabureau Stadshavens Rotterdam, incl. Havenbedrijf Rotterdam N.V. and Municipality of Rotterdam, September 29, 2011).

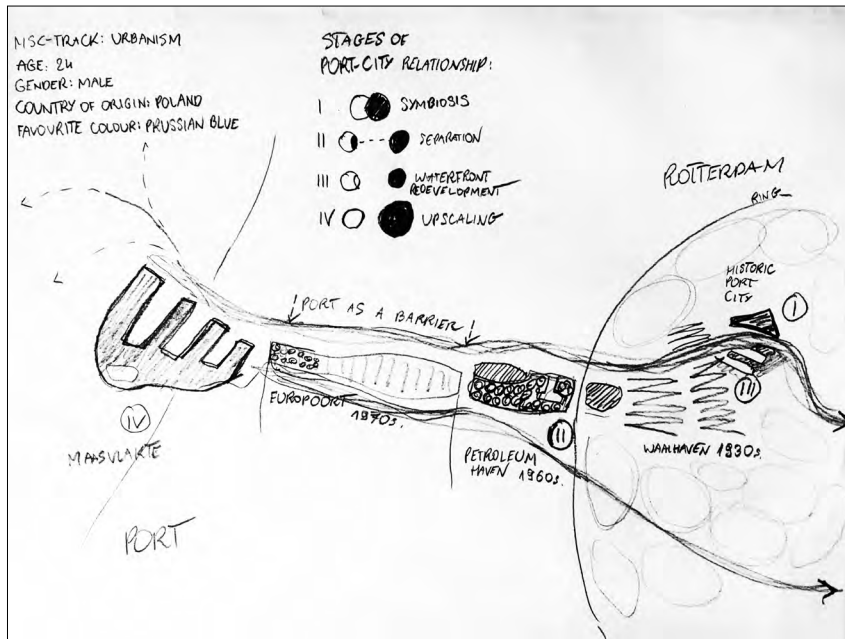


FIG. 1 Illustrating an Acculturated Understanding of a Port-City in one Response, 2020, credits through an anonymized response in the graduate course on People, Movement and Public Space by Maurice Hartevelde.

United Kingdom,³ one usually elaborates on this by stating that such a type of world port-city evolved from its ancient settlement, through quay and dock development, via expansion and specialization, into a divided port and city. In this concept, port and city are seen as separated elements, say; ‘port|city’ whereby the stroke denotes division, rather than ‘port-city’, in which the usual hyphen joins two notions. Ports may cover all harbor areas outside of the city and are located on long distance of their cores, whereas their cities comprehend urban areas where citizens live and among others have their homes. Ports as such have grown into the sea, often by land reclamation, whereas cities as defined in the model have grown inland. From this lens, we may recognize Rotterdam as a port, and as a city. The harbor areas are extensive and without dwellings. Notably, it includes docks for ships with a draft of twenty meters, which are designed in conjunction to an extra deep engineered channel dug in the North Sea, which lead to fully automated container terminal on the shore. Robots, with a height of more than 125 meters, dwarf any human presence. Then, indeed, what is defined as Rotterdam city seems a different world. This differentiation is persistent in the evolution of Bird’s generalist evolutionary model. Primarily, his successor Brian Hoyle adds an additional period of waterfront redevelopment.⁴ Abandoned harbor areas are simply seen as becoming appropriated and urban designers and area developers transform them into civic areas. The disunion of port and city remains manifest. The conceptual boundary within the two simply shifts: ‘port’ becomes ‘city’. By presuming a linear evolution of the port|city

3 James Bird, *The Major Seaports of the United Kingdom* (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1963), 23–24.

4 Brian Stewart Hoyle, “The Port-City Interface: Trends, Problems and Examples,” *Geoforum* 20, no. 4 (1989): 429–35, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185\(89\)90026-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185(89)90026-2).

interface, the opposition persists. This conceptual division leads to a persistent and reoccurring outcome, which does neither answer to the emerging desires to reconnect port and city, nor does it present a definition and understanding of port-cities as a whole. It also does not contribute “to shape multiple layers of the built environment”.⁵ In other words, not the division between port and city, rather the path dependency grounded in the dominant port|city definition keeps the idea and praxis of two realities alive. Taking Rotterdam as exemplary case, this article underlines that the problem defined by a presumed separation of port and city is set in a very firm interdisciplinary postulation which effects all layers of urban design and area development of port and city, while it is firmly embedded in among others the organization and governance of both. This effects urban development [Fig.1].

The Conceptual Disunion of Port and City from Multi-Disciplinary Perspective

Given the Rotterdam case, we may argue in favor of the two-world model. We may even state that the separation between Rotterdam port and city has been manifest already in the thirteenth century, since a dam was built in its fen stream Rotte at the lower end near the river to the sea. Historically approached, this urban element not only gave the place its current name, more so it separated the early settlement along the Rotta, or ‘muddy water’,⁶ from the natural harbor along the river, even before any modern quay or dock was designed. A city with such a dam may comprehend delineated places for harboring ships and for people in different fashions already in ancient times. As such, it opposes the linear evolution which grounds the ‘Any-Port Model’. Over time, difference between the two may be foremost a matter of scale and size. Even by following a binary port|city model, Rotterdam represents a type of port-city with harbor areas which have been *always* allocated outside the civic areas. Yet, still, the postulation of port versus city has been emphasized explicitly in urban design and development only since the 1990s. Echoing through the Hoyle-Bird narrative, the emphasis was placed at a moment when abandoned harbors were redeveloped, and further dislocation of production activities in favor of logistic-productive dynamics in the port was seen in contrast with what was envisioned as the future of the city. The considerable increase of efficient productivity gains in the port itself has emerged at the cost of jobs, and, unlike in the past, many port-related human activities have been located outside the port area, as social-geographers Ton Kreukels and Egbert Wever observed at the time. For this reason,

5 Carola Hein, “Port Cities,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Cities in World History*, ed. Peter Clark (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 821–22, 825
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199589531.013.0043>.

6 In Dutch, ‘rot’ meant muddy or cloudy, and ‘a’ meant water, alike more common Dutch ‘aa’, meaning river-like water; a water course or stream.

Rotterdam citizens had become more disconnected from the harbor than before. Also in this view, consequently the separation became clear in the networks of public space: “the spatial networks in which the port is functioning nowadays do not, unlike in the past, coincide with those of the Municipality of Rotterdam.”⁷ The conceptual disunion of port and city was the deliberate result of approaches in urban development, as drafted by the public government. Port and city were presumed to be conceptualized as two dichotomistic entities, port and city, each having a pull factor, each facing a possible futures: prosperity or decay.⁸ The urban planning and design department of the Municipality laid a corner stone for this split port|city view on Rotterdam. It was put forward in Rotterdam City Plan a few years before, in 1992. The plan focused primarily on the city and the abandoned harbor areas near its center, while their view was blocked by the boundary of what was defined as the port. They made explicit that the vision on the port had to be pictured by the Port Authority.⁹ In the professional municipal mental picture of the future of Rotterdam, the city was considered as compact and the port, though still economically essential, as part of a larger peripheral area including active harbors.¹⁰ The whole was imagined as independent patches in a so-called carpet metropolis.¹¹ Within their scope, the construct resulted in two very different approaches towards the design of public space. The approach for Kop van Zuid was exemplary for what has to be achieved in the city. Form, color, and choice of materials would “express the community and metropolitan scale of the public open space, while the same design tools will stress a more personal and individual scale in spaces of a semi-public character”. The approach for the areas serving Mainport Rotterdam was exemplary for the opposite view of the Port Authority. The design of the public space should serve logistics here. Important design aspects were ‘the clarification of its structure through landmarks’, ‘the quality of its main infrastructure’, ‘the recognizability of relationships with the environment’, ‘the improvements of natural and recreational shared use’, and ‘visibility of port activities’.¹² The municipal port authority was privatized and transformed into a public

7 Ton Kreukels and Egbert Wever, “Dealing with Competition: The Port of Rotterdam,” *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* 87, no. 4 (1996): 293–309, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9663.1998.tb01560.x>

8 Ontwikkelingsbedrijf Rotterdam, “Naar Een Economische Visie voor (de Stadsregio) Rotterdam: Vier Scenario’s: Rotterdam Wereldwijd. Rotterdam Geketend, Rotterdam Ontkoppeld, Rotterdam Getalenteerd” (Rotterdam: Ontwikkelingsbedrijf Rotterdam [OBR], 1995).

9 Dienst Stedenbouw en Volkshuisvesting, “Stadsplan Rotterdam: Een Visie op de Ruimtelijke Ontwikkeling van Rotterdam tot 2005” (Rotterdam: College van Burgemeester en Wethouders van de Gemeente Rotterdam, Dienst Stedenbouw en Volkshuisvesting, 1992).

10 Martin Aarts, *Vijftig Jaar Wederopbouw Rotterdam: Een Geschiedenis van Toekomstvisies* (Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 1995).

11 Willem Jan Neutelings, *Tapijmetropool in the Regio Den Haag en Rotterdam*, 1990, drawing, 1990, Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam: NEUR.t4.

12 Dienst Stedenbouw en Volkshuisvesting, “De Kop van Zuid: Buitenruimte” (Rotterdam: Dienst Stedenbouw en Volkshuisvesting, 1991); Gemeentewerken Rotterdam, “Beleidsrapport Onderhoud Buitenruimte Havengebied 1997-2001 (concept)” (Rotterdam: Gemeentewerken Rotterdam, January 1996).

limited company soon after the presentation of the two visions. It was no longer part of the municipal administration in 2004. Yet, although, the municipality of Rotterdam and since 2006 also the Dutch State became its only shareholders, in terms of governance, the port became one entity (private, from juridical perspective) and the city another (public). The future of the port, more or less independently of city, was arranged under unbundling agreements. Effectively, through these arrangements, the dichotomist port|city model became manifest in the urban fabric and the design of the public space in both port and city: "Because the roads and public spaces have been attributed to the Port Authority as part of the port authority's business, the Operational Port Agreement stipulates that the Port Authority will carry out maintenance and the technical management serving this purpose as a careful (road) manager and in such a way that that the public interest is safeguarded." This included placement of underground infrastructures in the port (cables and pipes) and the number of entrances to the private premises of the port industrial areas from the publicly accessible spaces, effecting the boundaries between them.¹³ The then contemporary public private partnerships echoed through in both parts of Rotterdam, while, at the same token, it built on the age-old importance of private equity in the Rotterdam port.¹⁴ The split governance structures, resulted in different priorities in urban design, and consequently effected the physical form of the two areas. This was recognized in morphological urban analyses highlighting the public space networks in those days. Urban designers rediscovered ancient-old patterns in the refined urbanized landscape of the city while they left the harbor areas in the port simply blank. Their eyes turned away of the "industry and harbor landscape", which was said connected to a "traffic machine".¹⁵ Again from the view point of the design of public space, the refined street network in the city stood against the large-scale infrastructure in the port.¹⁶ The narrative of disunion, thus the underlying port|city model, stayed quite persistent in understanding port-cities within a variety of professional fields up

13 De Brauw, Blackstone, Westbroek, "Akte van Oprichting Havenbedrijf Rotterdam NV, versie d.d. 23/28-12-2003, including Operationele Havenovereenkomst, with Ontvlechtingdocument," 503110691987] statute[231203_statuten.714.doc. (Amsterdam: De Brauw, Blackstone, Westbroek, December 30, 2003).

14 Paul Th. van de Laar, *Financieringsgedrag in de Rotterdamse Maritieme Sector, 1945-1960*, Tinbergen Institute research series, no. 17 (Rotterdam: Erasmus University, 1991); Brian Jacobs, "Rotterdam Scenarios," in *Trategy and Partnership in Cities and Regions: Economic Development and Urban Regeneration in Pittsburgh, Birmingham and Rotterdam*, by Brian Jacobs (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2000), 140–60, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-05184-4_8.

15 Frits Palmboom, *Rotterdam, Verstedelijkt Landschap* (Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 1987).

16 Han Meyer, *De Stad en de Haven: Stedebouw als Culturele Opgave in Londen, Barcelona, New York en Rotterdam: Veranderende Relaties tussen Stedelijke Openbare Ruimte en Grootschalige Infrastructuur* (Utrecht: Uitgeverij Jan Van Arkel, 1996); Han Meyer, *City and Port: Urban Planning as a Cultural Venture in London, Barcelona, New York, and Rotterdam : Changing Relations between Public Urban Space and Large-Scale Infrastructure* (Utrecht: International Books, 1999).



FIG. 2 Tourist taking a Photo of the Kop van Zuid from the Erasmus Bridge, 2021, credits by Maurice Harteveld.

to today.¹⁷ The port and city of Rotterdam were considered different and have been since [Fig. 2].

Examining the Port City Model by the Method of Mental Mapping

Following the above, there seems a dominant definition of 'port-city' as legitimate acculturated understanding of what is a port-city. In an experiment, underlying this article, this was tested by applying a heuristic technique: a group of multi-disciplinary graduate students, thus professionals-in-training, were asked to draw two familiar but different maps by mind: one of 'port-city Rotterdam' and one of 'Rotterdam'. These so-called 'mental maps' reveal a person's point of view and perception of an area of

17 Han Meyer, Anne Loes Nillesen, and Wil Zonneveld, "Rotterdam: A City and a Mainport on the Edge of a Delta," *European Planning Studies* 20, no. 1 (January 2012): 71–94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2011.638498>; Steenhuis Marinke et al., *The Port of Rotterdam: A World between City and Sea* (Rotterdam: NAI010 Publisher, 2015); Beatrice Moretti et al., "States of Co-Existence and Border Projects in Port Cities: Genoa and Rotterdam Compared," *Urban Design and Planning* 172, no. 5 (October 2019): 191–202, <https://doi.org/10.1680/jurdp.18.00037>; Jean-Lucien Bonillo, André Donzel, and Mario Fabre, eds., *Métropoles Portuaires en Europe: Barcelone, Gênes, Hambourg, Liverpool, Marseille, Rotterdam*, Les Cahiers de la Recherche Architecturale 30/31 (Marseille: Ed. Parenthèses, 1992).

interaction.¹⁸ Every person draws a different mental map, related to what one remembers. Mental maps show elements that are present in the area, or are thought to be, in relation to each other. These elements may have been placed in a different location than where they are found in reality, while still having some sort of geographic resemblance to maps we all know: cartographic maps. The engagement of active participation of people experiencing the area afford instant knowledge as to respondent's understanding, and emphasize selection and organisation of memorable elements. No consult of information – but memory – is needed to reveals a personal, thus subjective, understanding of an area through memorable elements. The consequent graphic representations of that area may be self-discovery, yet mostly, like in this study, it eases the cognitive load of respondents to the researcher.¹⁹ The elements drawn are easily identifiable and are easily grouped in to overall patterns, e.g. homogeographical or phenotypological. In an overlap of multiple mental maps, we can discover relations or intersections between people's understanding, memory, thus intersubjective images of an area. Whereas, in general, mental mapping measures geographic preferences among different social groups, particularly in relation to anthropological understanding diversity in society and cultures,²⁰ in this case, mental mapping tests a belief system. In that sense, the method of mental mapping reveals the "subjectively experienced problematic", which is "outside of scholastic disciplines", and particularly challenges disciple and mastering in education, similarly as the French anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu did.²¹ The group of people in this experiment were all in university,²² hence the group of participants has been well-delineated, while differences in terms of educational background has been clear too.²³ The applied approach of mental mapping introduces a creative approach, which challenges disciplinary cultures.

18 Luc Pauwels, "An Integrated Conceptual and Methodological Framework for the Visual Study of Culture and Society," in *The SAGE Handbook of Visual Research Methods*, by Luc Pauwels and Dawn Mannay (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2020), 14–36, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526417015.n2>.

19 seq. George A. Miller, "The Magical Number Seven, plus or Minus Two: Some Limits on Our Capacity for Processing Information," *Psychological Review* 63, no. 2 (March 1956): 81–97, <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0043158>; Lionel Standing, "Learning 10000 Pictures," *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology* 25, no. 2 (May 1973): 207–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14640747308400340>.

20 Peter Gould and Rodney White, *Mental Maps*, Pelican Geography and Environmental Studies (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974); Roger M. Downs and David Stea, *Maps in Minds: Reflections on Cognitive Mapping* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

21 Pierre Bourdieu, *La Distinction. Critique Sociale du Jugement* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1979), 2, 52, 66.

22 seq. Les Solomon, "Mental Mapping: A Classroom Strategy," *Journal of Geography* 77, no. 2 (February 1978): 70–75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221347808980076>.

23 seq. Gould and White, *Mental Maps*, 51–53.

Testing Port|City Premises among Professionals-in-Training

Professionals have disciplined minds. The concepts, which they are using, are the result of training. And, what they have learned is based on generally accepted belief systems, stemming from ideology, perhaps more than from skills. So, every decision taken can be seen as ideology-based.²⁴ Discipline epistemologies explaining conceptions bring their own explanatory power to understandings of the disciplines, and with their specific analytic lens, partial apprehensions too.²⁵ Therefore, it's valuable to take a closer look at the professionals in training. What is in their minds? For the heuristic experiment, a sample group of sixty-five international graduate students responded. These students participated in a TUDelft graduate course and have an educational base in urban design, development, or closely related professions, but not (yet) in understanding port-cities.²⁶ Without conceptual explanations beforehand, these graduate students were asked: "draw the port-city of Rotterdam by mind". The drawings of the participants displayed a delineated variety of urban elements: Water, docks, cargo, moving loads, and ships. More so, this series of mental maps focus on whatever may be the port. It is remarkable that 'Rotterdam' is indicated as an independent distanced territory in nearly a quarter of the cases (23%), alike the cities of Schiedam, Vlaardingen, and Maassluis on the north bank (12-13%). Hook of Holland, under the administrative authority of Rotterdam, yet closer to the seaport is added most often (25%). Harbour villages, like Pernis and Rozenburg (5-7%), are mentioned similarly. In hindsight it makes sense that the drawings map port-activities and indicate cities apart. A 'port' just happens to be a place on the water in which ships shelter and dock to (un)load cargo and/or passengers. A 'harbor' is a sheltered place too, and in its nautical meaning it is a near-synonym for sheltered water, in which ships may dock, especially again for (un)loading. So, the above linguistic lemmas are conceptualized, connected to imaginable objects and drawn in accordance to their connotation. Apparently in a 'port-city', the adjective 'port' modifies the meaning of 'city' in such an extent that this echoes in the minds. Objects associated with the port form what we call a 'mental map'. In general, putting such a map on paper displays a person's subconscious representation of an area, and although each map is subjective, a representative sample

24 Jeff Schmidt, *Disciplined Minds: A Critical Look at Salaried Professionals and the Soul-Battering System That Shapes Their Lives* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 15, 37-38, et seq.

25 Joëlle Fanghanel, "The Role of Ideology in Shaping Academics' Conceptions of Their Discipline," *Teaching in Higher Education* 14, no. 5 (2009): 565-77, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510903186790>.

26 The graduate students were registered in MSc-tracks on Urbanism, Architecture, Building Engineering, Housing, Landscape Architecture, Transport, Infrastructure and Logistics, Policy, Complex Systems Engineering and Management, and Media Studies. They have drawn the maps in 10 minutes end of April 2020, before they started the course on 'People, Movement, and Public Space', run by the author to investigate port-city Rotterdam. This method is applied and evaluated in the same course since 2014 to investigate different cities.

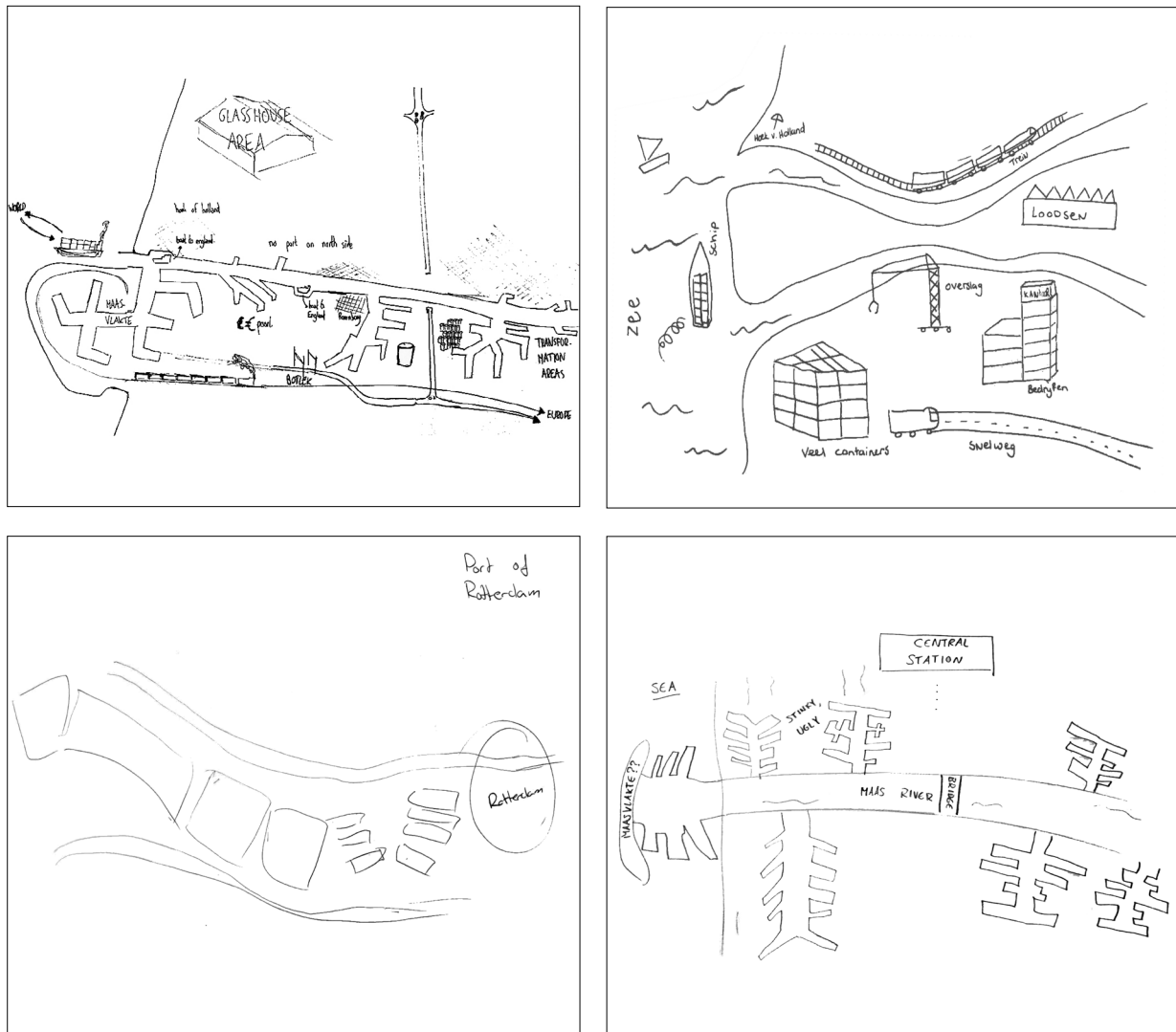


FIG. 3 Mental Maps of Port-City Rotterdam, examples drawn by students of Urbanism (a), Transport, Infrastructure and Logistics (c), Architecture (b), and Media Studies (d), 2020, credits through anonymized responses in the graduate course on People, Movement and Public Space by Maurice Harteveld.

helps to identify areas and people's affiliation to these areas. Yet, mental maps with a strong emphasis on ports – rather than of port-cities as a whole – seem very limited in their scope. In general, participants use to approach ports as a vague relatively large section of the city: Sixty participants handed-in a mental map of the port-city Rotterdam, some of which a mind map with just words or a kind of assembled image impression. All with the emphasis on the port: 80% draw the river Maas,²⁷ 65% of them add docks, and 47% the sea shore. Following the conceptual urban design perspective on mental maps of Kevin Lynch,²⁸ we may label the port or any harbor area a 'district' in our mental maps, with the river as its water 'edge' and perhaps as predetermined 'path' to reach the sea, a waterway. It is alike all those areas we know, but not know exactly. Here, 'landmarks' and 'nodes', defined by him too, are rare [Fig. 3].

27 This includes the New Waterway at the mouth of the river Maas.

28 Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1960).

In the Rotterdam sample, sub-territories are delineated mostly by adding words. The number of places and times extra info is provided varies a lot. The intercontinental relations seem to matter: Europe is written down (14%), as is United Kingdom/England, including the ferry (12%). Once or twice participants add Germany, Belgium and Norway. Details lack. The indication of the harbor areas is exemplary on the local levels. Of all, 'Maasvlakte' is added most frequently (50%). The Dutch sea port formed by an extensive area of reclaimed land is also included by foreign participants. Other labels are nearly always added by Dutch. The neighboring large harbor area 'Europoort' is indicated in words seven times (12%), whereas the three harbor areas closer to the city center (Rijnhaven, Maashaven, Waalhaven) are named in different combinations just twice each (3%) and references to 'old harbors' or 'the old port-city' are made only in three maps (5%). This does not mean that people don't know these latter harbor areas. Again, docks are drawn. Yet, as these harbors are not anymore, or to lesser degree, used for docking ships, participants, also from abroad, see these areas in a different way. In their mental maps, we recognize these areas more often as redeveloped piers: Kop van Zuid (13%) Katendrecht (7%), M4H makers district (7%) and RDM terrain (3%). The nearby Erasmus Bridge is quite often drawn as a landmark or place in the midst of a city (20%). We see more accurate shapes representing the piers with more detail and some public buildings are indicated here (like Hotel New York and Fenix Loods, both 7%). This set of mental maps unfolds detailed images of the port-city near the center.

Occasionally we see some sort of detail also in what is considered as the port, like the storm surge barriers, mostly the Maeslantkering (13%). Containers (18%) and oil drums (27%) are pictured too. Following Lynch, they may be harbor 'landmarks' or if coming in groupings as 'nodes', but they lack any precision and context. They more seem symbols replacing words. As such they are 'characterizations' of certain area. Next to this, another 40% of maps indicate industrial areas, or depict refineries and pipes. The sum of oil-related symbols used stands in strong contrast to just 8% representation of the more-recently developed wind farms and turbines. Same can be stated for the old-school cranes which are drafted (13%). Although they resemble mostly construction cranes rather than those truly used in the harbor, they don't look like the panamax cranes in the non-human automated port terminals of Rotterdam seems. Perhaps in a few cases. (0-3%). The terminal areas themselves are absent in the maps. Admittedly they are only a few years old, mostly out of view from the public roads, and not yet so often used as an illustration of the port area. Anyone remembers deck or bulk cranes from paintings and photographs. The lack of detail in outlined harbor areas correlates with lacking detail in the network of public space. A panamax or wind turbine is big enough to see when people experience the port area. But, most people are elsewhere. Streets seldom are outlined in the harbor areas. Instead only

highways and main roads (30%), railways for trains (18%) and metro (7%) are put on paper schematically. Some trucks and cargo trains are used as characterization. Add to this ships, many times drawn with containers on board, and/or a few vessels (27%).

As much as 'port' remains dominant in the minds of people, and mental maps remain predominantly vague, we can conclude that basically port-cities relate to places where goods arrive or depart. Details are repeatedly mere characterizations, determining distinguishing features of harbor areas. With this, the image remains somewhat ancestral and this may stay unless people are present in these areas or inside pictures are communicated widely.

Testing Port-City Counter Premises among Professionals-in-Training

Given the dominance of the port and port-related phenomena in the above set of mental maps, one may wonder what would be the map of a lived city. Following the above, mental maps are more accurate when illuminating inner-cities and other civic areas. Everyday life gives people daily updates in such places. The same group of graduate students was also asked to "draw Rotterdam by mind" before challenging them to draw the 'port-city'. In this question, 'port-city' was explicitly left out. This set of mental maps is richer in the kind of objects drawn indeed, though still they do relate to a subconscious image of port-cities. Fundamentally, it makes sense that this question generates more info. The configurations of the networks of public spaces in the civic areas differ from port infrastructure. Block sizes and private premises are much smaller and street and intersection density much higher. In this set of mental maps, we see areas, which are clearly more familiar for the participants. Now most approach Rotterdam as a relatively detailed known territory. All participants handed-in a mental map of Rotterdam, some of which again a mind map or assembled image impression. In comparison with the other set of maps, a few more participants draw the river Maas (+5%), less participants, but still 40%, adds docks (-25%) yet now never with its name, and just 9% includes the sea shore (-38%). In difference, the Schie (9%) and Rotte (6%) are reoccurring, and the same group of people now detail the Maas with its island Noordereiland (28%), whereas only twice the Maasvlakte is named. In addition too, a wide variety of neighborhoods and neighboring cities have been named both on the north and south bank. Feyenoord (14%), Charlois (8%), Kralingen (12%) and the cities of Schiedam (23%) and Delft (9%) are named most often. Again, we recognize Kop van Zuid, now even in 46% of the cases (+31%), as well as the other redeveloped harbor areas. Maps outline Katendrecht (+2%), M4H makers district (+4%) and once RDM terrain. One adds Lloyd Quatre. Symbolic characterizations referring to port activities are there as well; 17% industry (-7%), 18% ships and vessels

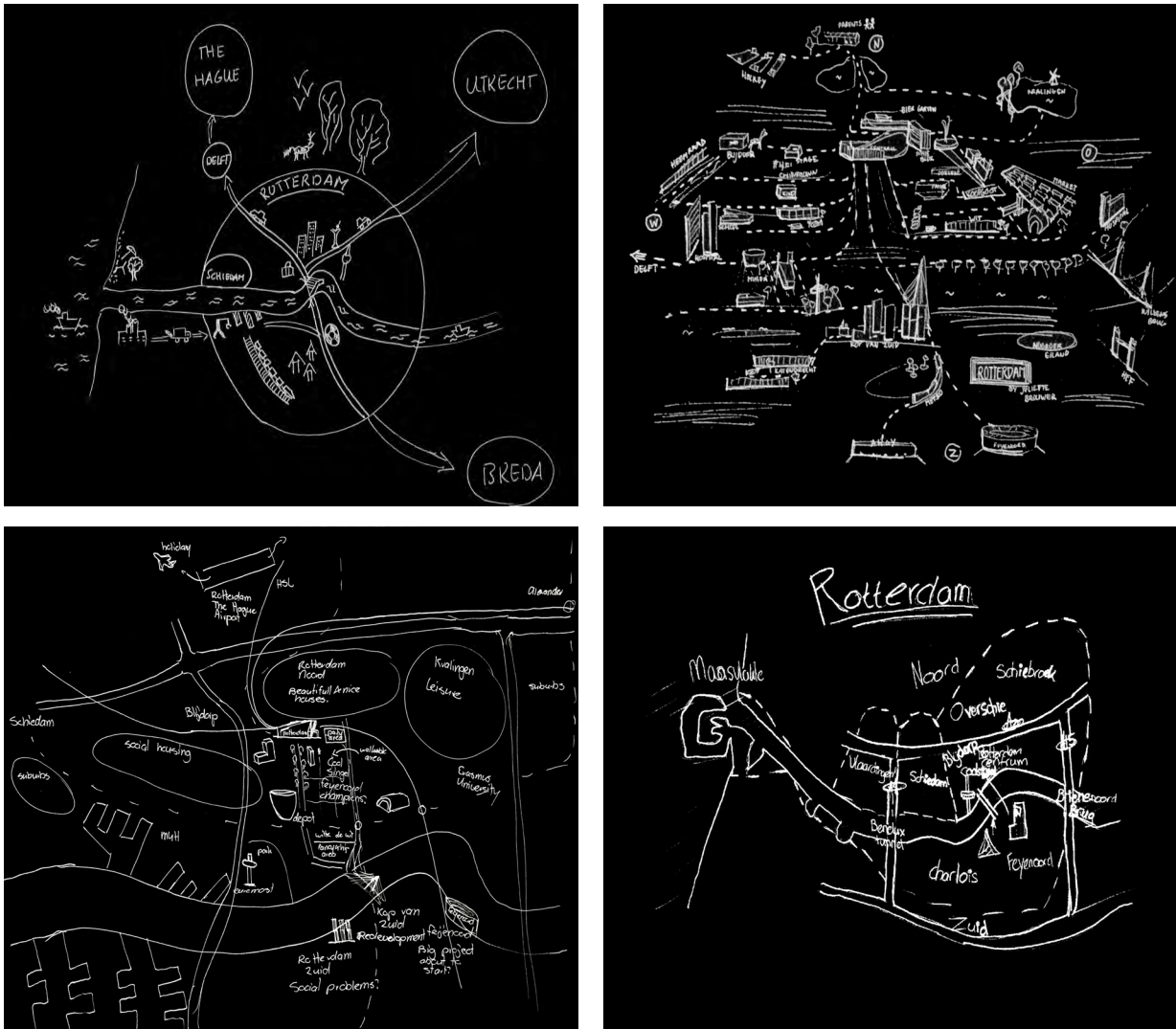


FIG. 4 Mental Maps of Rotterdam, examples drawn by students of Transport, Infrastructure and Logistics (a), Urbanism (b), Architecture (c) and Complex Systems Engineering and Management (d), 2020, credits through anonymized responses in the graduate course on People, Movement and Public Space by Maurice Harteveld.

(-8%), 5% cranes (-12%) and just one time each in this case; containers, refinery, oil drums, and a wind turbine. No advanced port cranes. Clearly, the memory on port activities is utilized less when making decisions in drawing the mental map of Rotterdam [Fig. 4].

Focus turn to the heart of the lived city. We see much more often the Erasmus Bridge (82%), now being supported by an outdoor street networks in at least half of the cases (52%). Central station is indicated, and mostly quite accurate (65%), rail networks (37%), highways/main roads (34%), the airport, other stations, passenger trains, metro (8-14%). We can even indicate specific public spaces within the maps. Participants have included for instance the city's spine Coolingsingel (22%), a filled-up canalized moat and arterial road, or the outdoor market Binnerotte (5%), filled-up outlet of the Rotte, both recently redesigned. They also picture the nearby multi-level shopping street Koopgoot (20%) and the pedestrian mall Lijnbaan (8%), as well as the indoor shopping center Zuidplein (6%), central in the urban fabric south of the river. A refined network used

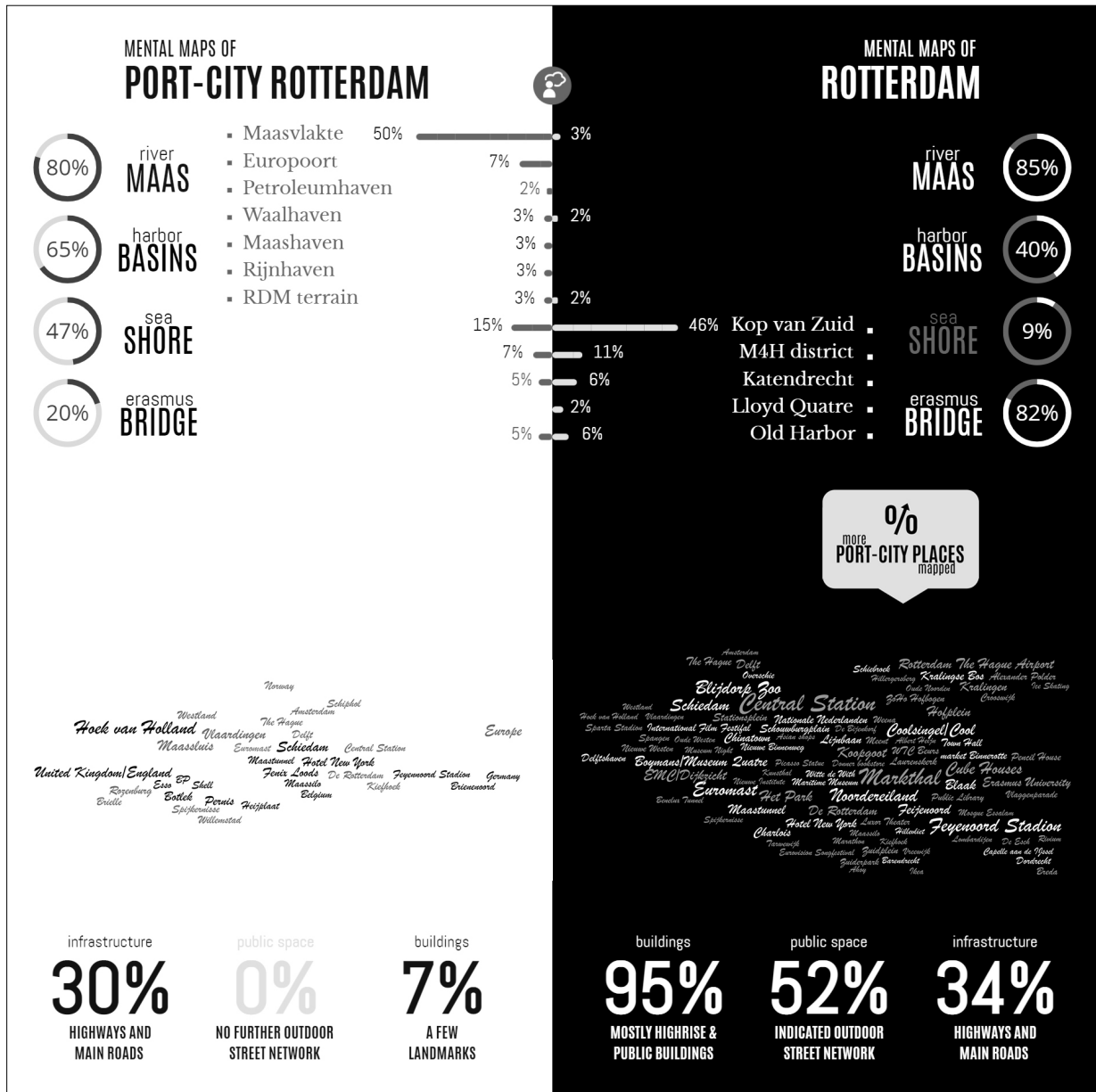


FIG. 5 Infographic of the Comparative Analyses on the two Sets of Mental Maps, credits Maurice Harteveld.

by people goes along with more insight in the urban fabric. A little more than 95% of the mental maps of Rotterdam indicate buildings. Half of the maps includes high-rise (50%), of which quite a fair number is indicated accurately in the CBD areas or representing headquarters with logos. Tourist attractions are present, like the colossal archwise structure of the Markthal (40%), the observation tower Euromast (34%), and peculiar Cube houses (26%). Many people from abroad map these. Even international festivals are mentioned (9%). We can also recognize drawings of several museums, nameworthy within the scope of study, are the Maritime Museum (3%) and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (14%), bearing the name of one founder, who earned his reputation through the economic transformation of the Rotterdam port, but few may know. The town hall is drawn only three times. This building implicitly presents many port-city signs carried in its design (e.g. sculptures, portraits, emblems

on the facades, and allegorical canvases inside make reference to the port-city). Many more public spaces and buildings are sketched, like a park, square, public library, theatre, warehouse, store, supermarket and shops, but these must be present in mental maps of many other cities too.

The level of detail in mental maps of the lived city is higher as expected. On the base of this set, we can conclude that port-cities relate to places where people arrive or depart, next to goods, *and* where the world comes together. Public spaces in the port-city of Rotterdam showcase interconnections around the world: global businesses, multinationals, international brands, universal amenities, cosmopolitan locations, world event stages and festival areas, tourist magnets, ex-pads towers, etc. Occasionally, we are able to recognize symbols of houses and humans as apparent general characterizations for certain areas. Ethnographically, a minor group mentions Chinatown or Asian shops (9%), the presence of inhabitants with different cultural backgrounds (6%), and anthropologically related; diversity and variety of lifestyles in general (7%). Respectively drawn once and twice; the Mosque Essalam, biggest in the Netherlands, and the 'Vlaggenparade', including all flags of the UN. These precisions echo through, the observation that port-cities relate to places where cultures live together.

Mental Layers and the Union of Port and City

Comparing the two sets, goes along with understanding what has been drawn. What attracts attention are the levels of detail. On the one hand, the set of mental maps of Port-City Rotterdam lacks detailed maps. Immense harbor areas often not detailed in the mental maps and placing imaginary elements instead make perfectly sense. The unobserved is never taken into account, whereas objects generally associated to ports are. It is a duality which is recognized since the birth of an experimentalist search for psychophysical correlations.²⁹ The limited amount of information in these mental maps can be explained fairly simple. Mental maps are always based upon our experiences and upon information we have gathered over time. When we know less, we draw less.³⁰ In the Rotterdam case, no participant knows Restaurant De Punt in the Europoort, or snack-bar Smickel-Inn at the Maasvlakte. People only have physically large features in mind. These could be seen from a distance. Public meeting places presume presence, but there not. So, people add objects they presume are there. This is connected to the lack of public accessibility of the port area itself. Public space is rare, often fenced and walled and thus the public expanse of the harbor areas is limited. Since the general public cannot access most of its maritime and industrial landscapes, few people

29 Edwin G. Boring, *The Physical Dimensions of Consciousness* (New York; London: The Century Co., 1933).

30 David V. Canter, *The Psychology of Place* (London: The Architectural Press, 1977).

can map the exact layout of the port area from their memory. In addition, the lack of detail in the maps also relates to the speed visitors have. Public spaces in the harbor area are car-dominant, functional port infrastructure for transport and distribution. An old urban design lesson teaches that we see less if we move fast.³¹ In the civic areas, people experience the port-city very different. People move with different paces. Paths are different, perspectives are different, and perceptions are different. We can be informed in various ways. Very fundamental in environmental psychology is the difference between people who know the city in mediated ways and those who reside there.³² We may know the city by heart, or through a novel or other books. We may recall paintings or online images. We may be informed through a wide variety of social media, films and music. On the other hand, the set of mental maps of Rotterdam introduces a lot of detail, and maps reveal many elements related to the port-city: buildings related to long established migrant relations, objects related to global capital, and nodes and lines related to distribution. From this perspective, the interrelation between port and city remains manifest. Tangible and intangible signs and symbols, which do relate to the basic flows of goods, hence people and ideas, underpin the culture and nature of a port-city. Despite a multiplicity of differences between individuals, their mental maps, the set of drawings show many more elements related to port-cities than the ones introduced before. Remarkably, if the question is less biased, the amount of information drawn in mental maps increases.

Comparing the two sets against the generally accepted port-city narrative uncovers another remarkable observation. The responses to 'draw port-city Rotterdam' displays a scholastic interpretation of port-city, which echoes through the port|city model and cultured interdisciplinary viewpoints on this. Although, diversity is displayed among the respondents, foremost this set of results reveals a discourse of beliefs and practices. Already in the classroom, there seems a dominant definition of 'port-city' as legitimate acculturated understanding of what is a port-city. This contrasts with the responses to 'draw Rotterdam' (without adding port-city). This set devalues scholarly understanding in favor of direct experience and simple delight. It offers a basis for opposing the established model. Educational background did not effect this. By overlapping maps, people's personal perspectives are intersected and as such generate a supplementary model by-passing the presumed disunion of port and city. In this experiment, a majority of elements, ranging from indexed sub-territories, public spaces and built structures to symbolic characterizations, relate to the port-city of Rotterdam, no matter if explicitly asked to draw this. More so, the rich intersubjective mental layer which go along with not

31 Donald Appleyard, Kevin Lynch, and John R. Myer, *The View from the Road* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1964); Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1972).

32 Canter, *The Psychology of Place*.

asking to draw the 'port-city' produces both the obvious as well as the associative or even the invisible union of port and city. This completes and rectifies the generally accepted ontological port|city model. In this way, the method of mental mapping helps to make conceptions in the minds of people explicit, before applying a concept which is a precooked model. The method of mental mapping has been able to inform urban design before, both in academia and practice, and from this professional point of view, they can connect histories of cities to future making again and with more care.³³ The approach serves beneficially the continuation of contemporary participatory approaches in urban planning and policies for development.³⁴ Both can affect the further development of port-cities on all levels, ranging for example from metropolitan governance to the design of public space.

To conclude, first, the method of mental mapping reveals subconscious interrelations between port and city when participants are asked to draw a map of a port-city by mind, as long as the researcher is not explicating that the city in question could be typified as such. A considerable share of the elements drawn are expected to represent tangible and intangible signs and symbols relating to characteristics of a port-city. Analytically indexing those will bring forth a interconnected port-city rather than a divided one. Such study will help urban designers and others to identify port-cities as 'cities', and as such to overcome the conceptual dichotomy of port and city which generally has led them to reproduce this in their practice. Awareness rises when comparing such mental maps with maps drawn of port-cities, which the researcher did typified as such to the respondents. Second, the method of mental mapping tests our premises. It takes into account that what is drawn is "rooted and influenced by cultural frameworks of experiences", and what is discovered in the maps reflects "the biases and values of their beholders."³⁵ By introducing the method in an early stage of professional training to students, who are still learning to identify the various frameworks and dimensions of urban culture, future professional port-city practices may seek connections rather than disconnections.

Still, like any experiment, a follow-up with different participant groups is needed. Then, at a certain point of saturation, new maps may not be surprising anymore. The undrawn is always out there. The intent cannot be

33 e.g. J. C. Moughtin et al., *Urban Design: Method and Techniques* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2003); Matthew Carmona et al., *Public Places Urban Spaces: The Dimensions of Urban Design* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2003); Michael Larice and Elizabeth Macdonald, eds., *The Urban Design Reader*, 2nd Edition (New York: Routledge, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203094235>; Mark Sheppard, *Essentials of Urban Design* (Clayton South: CSIRO Publishing, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1071/9780643108776>.

34 e.g. Tal Berman, *Public Participation as a Tool for Integrating Local Knowledge into Spatial Planning* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-48063-3>; Sarah Banks et al., eds., *Managing Community Practice* (Second Edition): *Principles, Policies and Programmes*, 2nd edition (Bristol: Policy Press, 2013).

35 Vera John-Steiner, *Notebooks of the Mind: Explorations of Thinking* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1985); Gould and White, *Mental Maps*.

complete. However, in discovering maritime mindsets, we can already look beyond the water, docks, cargo, moving loads, and ships in the future. More so, the awareness of the (inter)subjectively experienced contributes to the sociology of education on port-cities, and generates desire for an interdisciplinary port-city practice based upon an open mind.

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MAIN SECTION

The Decaying Port City as a Tourist Destination: Valparaíso's Commodified Decline

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ABSTRACT

This article explores how neoliberal policies shaped the transformation of Valparaíso, Chile, from a deindustrialized, declining city to a site of tourist appeal that commodifies, in an ambivalent but striking way, its own decay. We describe the city's economic, social and cultural trajectory from a period of global importance as a key port city to its deindustrialization and accelerated decline, particularly in light of the imposition of violent economic policies between the 1970s and 90s. Drawing on the notion of slow violence and critical literature around heritage, postcolonial, deindustrial and 'poverty' tourism, we trace the impact and materiality of economic abandonment into the present moment, together with the city's contemporary reliance on tourism for economic survival through a form of dereliction tourism. In a port city like Valparaíso, which has suffered economic decline, widening inequality and precariousness, of which neoliberalism is one cause, the full plasticity and ambivalence of neoliberalization processes is revealed.

KEYWORDS

Valparaíso; Slow Violence; Neoliberalization; Dereliction Tourism; Heritagization

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Introduction

Port cities have been fundamental for the expansion of capitalism. They connect distant territories by channelling “flows” of “commodities, capital, migrants, and tourists”.¹ Nevertheless, the relation between port cities and capitalism has been anything but stable. The history of Valparaíso, the mythical Chilean port in the South Pacific, has been marked by accelerated urban development and industrialization during the second half of the 19th and early 20th century, followed by a period of long but steady economic decay, deindustrialization, persistent casual labour, poverty and urban inequality.² What was the impact of neoliberal policies in Valparaíso and how did these policies respond to urban decline? This article explores how the neoliberal transformation of the port city of Valparaíso drove the deindustrialized, declining city to become a site of tourist appeal that commodifies, in an ambivalent but striking way, its own decay. Rather than providing a straightforward solution to the challenge of urban development, this strategy raises troubling new questions. How can the industrial past be remembered with integrity rather than sensationalized and romanticized, while satisfying the tourist desire for authenticity? Are the ethical tensions possible to overcome without falling into a coloniality of entertainment, poverty tourism and exotism, with a power dynamic established between rich, voyeuristic visitors and struggling locals? Is it possible to implement a culture-led and tourism-led development strategy that pays tribute to the history, culture and identity of local communities? And can local communities recover the postcolonial, post-industrial touristic city for themselves? Rather than providing clear answers to each of these questions, our aim is to interrogate and unsettle dominant discourses on development through tourism.

In the next section, we explain our selection of Valparaíso as a case study and describe the city’s economic and social trajectory from a period of global importance as a key port city to deindustrialization and the acceleration of the city’s decline during the dictatorship and its imposition of violent economic policies in the 1970s and 80s. Next, we set out our methodology and the value of exploring visual data when considering the tourist gaze. The following section presents our conceptual framework of neoliberalism, ‘slow violence’ and dereliction tourism. In the two sections that follow, we deploy these analytical tools to examine photographs that illustrate the impact and materiality of economic abandonment into the present moment. The final two sections discuss our findings and conclude

1 Boris Vormann, *Global Port Cities in North America: Urbanization Processes and Global Production Networks* (London: Routledge, 2015), 3, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315739557>.

2 Pablo Aravena and Pablo Andueza, eds., *Valparaíso Reclamado. Demandas Ciudadanas de La Ciudad-Puerto* (Valparaíso: Perseo Ediciones, 2013); Hernán Cuevas and Jorge Budrovich, “La Neoliberalización De Los Puertos En Chile: El Caso de La Ciudad-Puerto de Valparaíso,” *Revista Austral de Ciencias Sociales*, no. 38 (2020): 337–63, <https://doi.org/10.4206/rev.austral.cienc.soc.2020.n38-17>; Marcelo Mellado and Patricio Rozas, *Política y ciudadanía: los gritos del Puerto* (Valparaíso: La Quebrada, 2017).

that the articulation of neoliberalism and tourism favours the production and consumption of Valparaíso's degraded urban places and the appropriation of its past, current and imaginary sociocultural landscape as a tourist destination. The city's contemporary reliance on tourism for economic survival is examined as a form of dereliction tourism, drawing on critical studies on heritage, postcolonialism, deindustrialization and 'poverty' tourism.³ We argue that the materiality of the city – written through with inequalities – has been put to work towards the city's economic survival in the context of neoliberal slow violence. That is, "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all."⁴ The case study of Valparaíso, which has suffered economic decline, widening inequality and precariousness, reveals the full plasticity and ambivalence of neoliberalization processes. Neoliberal intervention, we argue, offered Valparaíso the tools – and created the necessity – to commodify and market its own historical decay as 'heritage' for tourists.

Valparaíso as a Paradigmatic Case

Valparaíso is a port city located in the Pacific coast of central Chile, 116km north-west from Santiago. It was established in 1544 as the Official Port of Santiago, three years after the founding of the capital city. Valparaíso was not meant to become a city in its own right, merely an operative site for the supply of Santiago. Between 1850 and 1914, Valparaíso was one of the most important ports in the Southern Pacific, as vessels moving goods between Europe and the west coast of the USA were forced by the long journey around South America to stop off in Valparaíso. During this Golden Era, Valparaíso became a thriving and progressive city, a commercial hub, a financial node, and a home to artistic movements and literature. As the Unesco World Heritage description reads: "Valparaíso is an exceptional testimony to the early phase of globalization in the 19th century, when it became the leading commercial port on the sea routes of the Pacific coast of South America." This Golden Era came to an end when the Panama Canal opened in 1914. Ships no longer needed to undertake the long odyssey, causing the slow but steady decline of Valparaíso.

The expansion of international trade, the restructuring of production and transport, and globalization have altered the world economy, transforming the world-system into a plastic and networked economy of global supply

3 Rodney Harrison, *Heritage. Critical Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Alice Mah, "The Dereliction Tourist: Ethical Issues of Conducting Research in Areas of Industrial Ruination," *Sociological Research Online* 19, no. 4 (2014): 162–75, <https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.3330>; Manfred Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Findings Regarding an Extraordinary Form of Tourism," *GeoJournal* 75, no. 5 (2010): 421–42, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-009-9311-8>.

4 Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA. and London: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2, <https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061194>.

chains that continually reorganize the international division of labour and the global geography of capitalism.⁵ Parallel to global processes, neoliberal modernization in Chile replaced 'inefficient' traditional and industrial activities in Central Chile with efficient agribusiness and mining. Because the efficiency of port logistics was key to the global competitiveness of these extractive sectors,⁶ the logistical modernization of the port followed a similar pattern of neoliberal restructuring, including the virtual privatization of the waterfront, new infrastructure, containerization and intermodal transport and, more recently, giant shipping, automation, computerization and online tracking. This economic restructuring, implemented more decisively since 1974 under the dictatorship, had ambivalent effects on Valparaíso's social and economic life.⁷

These policies caused deindustrialization and a massive loss of working-class jobs in the docks and manufacturing sectors. The docks' labour force was cut by 60% in the early 1980s and the average hourly wage of the regular dockworker dropped at a similar rate.⁸ Traditional maritime industries and employment declined, destroying numerous good quality jobs, giving way to a more capital-intensive and productive logistical process. The neoliberal modernization produced a permanent reserve army of unemployed labour, social precarity, poverty and inequality.⁹ Similar to other port cities, Valparaíso's urban fabric has been influenced historically by its global connectivity and lifestyle, and the presence of water as an important aspect of daily life. In recent times, Valparaíso's port cityscape has been determined by the logic of neoliberal capitalist modernization and its changes in port activity, technologies and infrastructure.¹⁰ This involved a spatial restructuring of the littoral, which has been virtually privatized through several public bids that favoured big business: in concrete, retail (such as Plaza and CENCOSUD holdings), cruise passengers terminal (Terminal de Pasajeros Valparaíso, from the Urenda family holding) and port companies (such as Terminal Pacífico Sur from the von Appen family holding and Terminal Cerros de Valparaíso from the Spanish

5 Hernán Cuevas and Jorge Budrovich, "La Neoliberalización De Los Puertos En Chile"; Paul Ciccantell and Stephen Bunker, eds., *Space and Transport in the World-System* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998).

6 Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso, *1912 Plan de Desarrollo Portuario 2012* (Valparaíso: EPV, 2012).

7 Cuevas and Budrovich, "La Neoliberalización De Los Puertos En Chile."

8 Hernán Cuevas and Jorge Budrovich, "Contested Logistics? Neoliberal Modernization and Resistance in the Port City of Valparaíso," in *Choke Points. Logistics Workers Disrupting the Global Supply Chain*, ed. Jake Alimahomed-Wilson and Immanuel Ness (London: Pluto Press, 2018), 162–78.

9 Ibid.; Valentina Leal and Carlos Aguirre, *Estiba y desestiba. Trabajo y relatos del Valparaíso que fue (1938–1981)* (Chile: Inubicalistas, 2020).

10 Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and Karen Wigen, *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007); Joan Alemany and Rinio Bruttomesso, eds., *The Port city of the XXIst century. New challenges in the relationship between port and city* (Alghero, IT: RETE, 2011); Carola Hein et al., "Introduction: Connecting Water and Heritage for the Future," in *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage: Past, Present and Future*, ed. Carola Hein (Cham: Springer, 2020), 1–18, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-00268-8_1.

holding OHL).¹¹ Although port activity is lucrative, its relative weight in the city's economic life has steadily declined. Additionally, a physical separation was installed between the modern port and the city, symbolic for critics who state that Valparaíso does not benefit from its port.¹² The city today has an ambivalent, disconnected relationship with the port, yet one which is excavated for, and prized in, the tourist imagination.

Methodology

In this article we use photography, along with our ethnographic account and reflexive interpretations, to provide a greater understanding of the commodification of urban heritage, inequality and poverty. As Douglas Harper states, "[t]he photograph can be thought of as 'data'".¹³ Across sociology, urban studies, anthropology, criminology and many other disciplines, the so-called 'visual turn' has emphasized the potential of analysing images, their production and cultural interpretation.¹⁴ We are attentive to the various problems of theory, methods, ethical engagement, and social responsibilities that come with the production, representation, and analysis of images.¹⁵ We follow Linfield in acknowledging that photographs are open-ended and that this is part of their power:

"by refusing to tell us what to feel, and allowing us to feel things we don't quite understand, they make us dig, and even think, a little deeper...we might see them as part of a process—the beginning of a dialogue, the start of an investigation—into which we thoughtfully, consciously enter."¹⁶

A particular, critical reading of photographs, which we offer here, can stand as an invitation to look more carefully and critically and to interrupt

11 Cuevas and Budrovich, "Contested Logistics? Neoliberal Modernization and Resistance in the Port City of Valparaíso."

12 Aravena and Andueza, *Valparaíso Reclamado. Demandas Ciudadanas de La Ciudad-Puerto*; Mellado and Rozas, *Política y ciudadanía: los gritos del Puerto*.

13 Douglas Harper, "An Argument for Visual Sociology," in *Image-Based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers*, ed. Jon Prosser (London: Routledge, 1998), 29. See also Sarah Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001); Douglas Harper, *Visual Sociology* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

14 Fadwa El Guindi, *Visual Anthropology: Essential Theory and Method* (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2004); John Collier and Malcom Collier, *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1967); Philip J. Ethington and Vanessa R. Schwartz, "Introduction: An Atlas of the Urban Icons Project," *Urban History* 33, no. 1 (2006): 5–19, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S096392680600349X>.

15 Michelle Brown, "Visual Criminology and Carceral Studies: Counter-Images in the Carceral Age," *Theoretical Criminology* 18, no. 2 (2014): 181, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480613508426>; Harper, *Visual Sociology*; Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research*; Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (New York: SAGE, 2011).

16 Susie Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 30, <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226482521.001.0001>.

dominant discourses.¹⁷ The political and emotional engagement with a particular interpretation of a photograph invites viewers to “allow the suffering of the world to enter into them instead of despising it as abjection.”¹⁸

Collaboratively interpreting these photographs, we noted how “personality, cultural values, and ideologies of the viewer, as well as the context in which the images are presented, all shape the meaning of pictures.”¹⁹ Our different backgrounds as researchers - including nationality (one of us is Chilean, the other is Irish and visited for a short time, experiencing the city as a tourist), gender, mother tongue and disciplinary training - prompted reflexive conversations about the nature of the port city and its history, neoliberal restructuring and its legacies, and the place of the visual and the spatial in the tourist imaginary. Attentive to “a visual language that can be deciphered and the implications more fully understood”,²⁰ photographic analysis was a revealing starting point for our joint analysis of the experience of dereliction in Valparaíso, and its commodification through tourism.

Modern tourism is a variegated field: from mainstream tourism, to alternative and niche tourism, including problematized categories such as poverty tourism and dereliction tourism.²¹ Slums, ruins and abandoned infrastructure hold a strange appeal and can produce nostalgia for the past, attracting tourists by emphasising beauty in decay. But to view dereliction and ruins in this way - instead of as symbols of poverty and reminders of painful economic and social restructures - speaks to a particular, pre-existing perspective.²² We consider here through illustrative photographic analysis what it means for a city – a port city with a rich economic, cultural and military history – to shape its identity around the presentation of aesthetics of decay for the tourist gaze. The concept of the tourist gaze “highlights that looking is a learned ability and that the pure and innocent eye is a myth”.²³ To depict this gaze as unproblematic naturalizes its social and historical character, concealing the power relations involved in seeing as a tourist that often involves cultural, racial and colonial stereotypes. We note that the tourist gaze is not a one-directional process of influence and oppression. It is a dialectical process by which the expectations that tourists in search of ‘authenticity’ place on local populations and territories

17 Carly Guest and Rachel Seoighe, “Familiarity and Strangeness: Seeing Everyday Practices of Punishment and Resistance in Holloway Prison,” *Punishment & Society* 22, no. 3 (2019): 353–75, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1462474519883253>.

18 Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance*, 30–31.

19 Phillippe Bourgois and Jeffrey Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 14.

20 Eamonn Carrabine, “Images of Torture: Culture, Politics and Power,” *Crime, Media, Culture: An International Journal* 7, no. 1 (2011): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659011404418>.

21 John Urry and Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (London and New York: SAGE, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446251904>; Rolfes, “Poverty Tourism”; Mah, “The Dereliction Tourist.”

22 Mah, “The Dereliction Tourist.”

23 Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 1.

can potentially be mirrored and financially capitalized upon. This suggests a more active process of extracting or generating value from the remainders of historical heritage: commodifying decaying traditions, local culture, architecture and abandoned infrastructures for tourism development, heritage reappropriation and capital accumulation.

We collected different types of photographs. In some cases, we took pictures ourselves in an effort to depict and collaboratively analyse the situation under observation. In other cases, we used photographs from our own and others' collections and archives.²⁴ These photographs served as visual devices to reflect on the transformation of the city. Our selection was made from several hundred photographs. Both taking photographs and selecting images were part of a reflexive process integral to our research and interpretation. We favoured a selection of photographs (most of them our own) of the port city and its post-industrial materiality that we feel capture the tensions and contradictions between the economic, functional site of the port city, 'heritigized' tourism sites and the abandonment of the city's poor to slow violence. The visual is prominent in touristic place promotion: it "presents the world as image".²⁵ As a result, "the reveries of tourists are likely to be the reveries determined by tourism and its imagery".²⁶ In our photographic analysis, we draw on *Cultura Puzzle's* guide to Valparaíso and *Lonely Planet's* tourist guide to explore how Valparaíso's post-industrial character and sites of memory are 'renarrativized' and repurposed for the tourist gaze. Photographs are culturally embedded and, at the same time, they are subjective. Their meanings depend on a constructed gaze and on who is looking. As will become clear in the following sections, these photographs disrupt touristic discourses and reveal the slow violence underway in Valparaíso. In sum, our pictures of Valparaíso are visual data integral to our observations in the field, our joint and cross-disciplinary analysis, and our critical portrait of Valparaíso's decayed decadence and its commodification through tourism.

Neoliberal 'Slow Violence' and Dereliction Tourism: Critical Tourism Studies and Neoliberal Appropriation of Heritage

Valparaíso's transformation over time produced a particularly hybrid urban landscape consisting of poor slums (resulting from decades of rural immigration, impoverishment and popular land grabbing since the

24 We are grateful to Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso, Luis Muñoz and Héctor Aguilera, local photographers, who kindly offered us their own collections and archive.

25 Nigel Morgan, "Problematizing Place Promotion," in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 177, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470752272.ch14>.

26 Peter Osborne, *Travelling Light: Photography, Travel and Visual Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 27.

1960s), abandoned infrastructures and industrial ruins (resulting from deindustrialization and productive restructuring in the 1980s), alongside redevelopment projects and gentrified areas with restaurants and boutique hotels (resulting from neoliberal marketization and promotion of local and global tourism since the 1990s).²⁷ The poverty and inequalities of the city are presented to the tourist - or at least form the background 'scenery' of the tourist experience - as 'authenticity' and 'culture' in a process of 'culturisation'.²⁸ The abandoned areas of Valparaíso are important to the tourist gaze only as the 'background' or 'scenery' against which the city is understood. For example, the Lonely Planet describes the "spectacular faded beauty of its chaotic cerros (hills)",²⁹ encouraging tourists to consider these housing constellations as a "charming jumble",³⁰ but, in fact, we see precarious and crude housing in informal settlements, and the abandonment of people to degrading living conditions [Fig. 1]. As critical tourism studies tell us, tourism is promoted today as "an industry that can turn poor countries' very poverty into a magnet for sorely needed foreign currency".³¹ Studies on 'poorism' or 'poverty tourism' show that poverty itself can be semantically charged as 'culture'³² and marketed to tourists searching for 'authenticity,' 'reality' and the complexities of place. While the tourist industry might renarrativize poverty and the experience of slow violence, destitution and poverty are part of the appeal for tourists.³³

While Cultura Puzzle acknowledges that "the city owes greater attention to the detriment of the urban infrastructure and equipment" in the hills, it explicitly states that "those areas with World Heritage status, historical monuments and historic neighborhoods" ought especially to be prioritized.³⁴ When a city is reshaped for the tourist gaze, the value of heritage, and the efforts expended on its upkeep, is in relation to touristic commodification. The abandonment of local residents stands in contrast to the investment in, and 'heritagization' of, other parts of the city. In the following sections, we use the conceptual framework of slow violence to analyse Valparaíso's dependency on tourism and the ways in which that dependency transforms and commodifies the city's relationship with its past.

The many threads and complexities of Valparaíso's history and neoliberal modernization, including this phase of culture-led and tourism-led

27 Francisco Quintana and Francisco Díaz, eds., *Proyecto Ciudad: Valparaíso* (Santiago: ARQ Editores, 2015).

28 Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism."

29 Lonely Planet, *South America*, 14th ed. (Lonely Planet, 2019), 467.

30 Ibid., 471.

31 Regina Scheyvens, "Exploring the Tourism-Poverty Nexus," *Current Issues in Tourism* 10, no. 2-3 (2007): 238, <https://doi.org/10.2167/cit318.0>.

32 Ramchander 2007, cited in Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism," 439.

33 Ibid., 422.

34 Cultura Puzzle, *Valparaíso capital cultural* (Valparaíso: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso, PUCV, 2010), 27.



FIG. 1 Steep stairs in Valparaíso's Slums. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

development, are more intelligible if we interpret them as a banal, gradual but pervasive process of violence. Nixon defines slow violence as violence that is attritional, often disguised or invisible across temporal and cultural frames.³⁵ The unspectacular, mundane violence of neoliberalism in Valparaíso has generated widespread resistance in recent years. 2019's protests saw public outrage directed squarely at the violence of neoliberalism and the brutal inequalities it generates, resulting in a constitutional referendum. The contradictions of tourism's role in the city's economy and identity was laid bare in this context: the centrality of tourism to the neoliberal economy is undeniable, the visibility of socio-political unrest had significant economic implications, yet the city's primary tourist sites were strangely untouched by the uprisings.³⁶ The impact of the Covid-19 public health crisis on global tourism has also revealed the

35 Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, 2.

36 See: <https://portalportuario.cl/2017-ano-los-pasajeros-la-carga-entraron-conflicto/> and <https://portalportuario.cl/primavera-portuaria-trabajadores-eventuales-cumplen-un-mes-movilizados-en-valparaiso/> [26-12-2020]

imprudence of over-reliance on tourism, and highlighted the socio-economic vulnerabilities and inequalities emerging from the neoliberal settlement.

Slow violence is at work in the city of Valparaíso. Yet for the tourist, the city's economic and material decline actually provides a certain appeal: a desired sense of authenticity, a narrative of industrial grandeur to post-industrial decay, and a romanticized colonial maritime and military history. The iconography of place associated with the city's decline is commodified and marketed in 'place promotion,' allowing for a process of 'heritisation'³⁷ and gentrification that drives the tourist economy. This is a deeply violent neoliberal process and one that illustrates Nixon's warning that slow violence can become taken-for-granted, perceived as the natural order of things, even – essentially - re-written as 'recovery.'³⁸ In Valparaíso, the city's decayed sites of industrial and cultural memory are transformed into 'heritage' and put to work as economic resources; the 'authentic' materiality of the city becomes valuable primarily in relation to capital generation through touristic appeal. Neoliberalism provides the tools to commodify and market the city's decay and poverty to the tourist gaze. In short, the city's economic survival has become reliant on a form of dereliction tourism that markets its own deterioration. This is a violent strategy, with implications for cultural identity and dignity, economic stability and equality (particularly in times of political upheaval and global crisis), and sense of place.

Residents, visitors and the tourism industry all participate in the continuous social construction of tourism landscapes.³⁹ The appeal of tourism is often to encounter different cultures; culture is a mode of observation for the observance of differences as cultural differences.⁴⁰ Through observation, the tourist conceives of culture as a social construct, enveloping poverty, dereliction and decay within this framework of 'culturization.' Tourism involves a process of 'place promotion' which contributes to the cultural production and consumption of landscapes, spaces and places through "the comprehensive application of marketing techniques".⁴¹ The stories, myths, visuals and materiality of place are commandeered by the tourist imperative to serve a clear business function, a marketing rationale. The discourses set to work also reveal taken-for-granted underlying narratives of place; the effect is to immobilize "our dynamic world, changing it to spectacle and straitjacketing it in cliché and stereotype."⁴² The tourist, driven by postmodern alienation, is searching for the 'authentic'

37 Gregory J. Ashworth and John E. Tunbridge, "Whose Tourist-Historic City? Localizing the Global and Globalizing the Local," in *A Companion to Tourism Studies*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 212.

38 Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*.

39 Morgan, "Problematizing Place Promotion," 173.

40 Pott 2005: 92, cited in Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism," 439.

41 Hughes 1998: 19, cited in Morgan, "Problematizing Place Promotion," 174.

42 Ibid.

elsewhere, in otherness.⁴³ The authenticity desired by the tourist is staged by tourism, providing a sense of a backstage glance into 'native' lives.⁴⁴

There is an intimate relationship between place promotion and heritage. Place and people are transformed into heritage to "produce a unique product reflecting and promoting a unique place or group identity."⁴⁵ 'Heritage tourism' means that a city – a product in an economy of 'globally competitive' cities – must have a "unique selling point," a particular, marketable local heritage.⁴⁶ Heritagization is "the process through which heritage is created from the attributes of the past – including relics, artifacts, memories, or recorded histories."⁴⁷ The histories, cultures, material remains, geographical idiosyncrasies and mythologies of Valparaíso as a post-colonial port city are marketable commodities. Industrial heritage tourism - defined as "the development of touristic activities and industries on man-made sites, buildings and landscapes that originated with industrial processes of earlier periods"⁴⁸ - is seen as a sensible means of not only preserving heritage but also reconstructing and monetizing these landscapes. This is an intensely material process - sites available for commodification include buildings and architecture, factories and machinery - but it also refers to cultural histories extant within entire communities.⁴⁹

A series of historical and economic shifts associated with postmodernism such as deindustrialization, gentrification and commodification have led to the rise of industrial heritage tourism.⁵⁰ The slow violence of industrial decay, counterintuitively, generates a marketable city:

"The perception of industrial heritage, which has evolved as a feeling of disorder and decay in the ruins, turns out to be an appeal. The raw character of the space has increasingly become the focus of neoliberal conceptions of urban planning."⁵¹

Industrial ephemera produces a landscape "more interesting than present-day modernity" in this era of postmodern collective nostalgia, which Xie understands as a third industrial revolution: urban renewal as a means of reviving decayed industries has become the norm and "brings industrial

43 Ibid.

44 Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, Berkeley, CA (University of California Press, 1999), 99.

45 Ashworth and Tunbridge, "Whose Tourist-Historic City? Localizing the Global and Globalizing the Local," 211.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid., 212.

48 J. Arwel Edwards and Joan Carles Llundés i Coit, "Mines and Quarries: Industrial Heritage Tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research* 23, no. 2 (January 1996): 342, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(95\)00067-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(95)00067-4).

49 Philip Feifan Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism* (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781845415143>.

50 Ibid., 44.

51 Ibid., 14–15.



FIG. 2 Industrial ruins in Valparaíso. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

romance into everyday life".⁵² Nowhere in Valparaíso is this more evident than in the Barón Pier area. An abandoned post-industrial site comprising the ruins of industrial capitalism (docks, warehouses, a huge railway garage and other installations) is now reappropriated by leisure capitalism as part of an ambitious waterfront redevelopment plan consisting of the reconstruction - heritagization - of old warehouses and ruins as a shopping center and a waterfront promenade [Fig. 2].

A central concern articulated in industrial heritage tourism literature relates to the tension between authenticity and commodification, that industrial landscapes are distorted into aestheticized spaces of leisure and entertainment.⁵³ This is a selective, reductive process that tends towards the spectacular and erases more difficult histories.⁵⁴ The heritage discourse is constructed through the selective memory and prerogatives of various stakeholders in the celebration, commemoration and commodification processes.⁵⁵ While governments want to repurpose industrial districts towards a commercial future, as in Valparaíso, local heritage preservation movements hope to conserve the particular set of values associated with old industries, and tourism businesses capitalize on their

52 Ibid., 36–37.

53 Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*; Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*.

54 Robert Summerby-Murray, "Regenerating Cultural Identity through Industrial Heritage Tourism: Visitor Attitudes, Entertainment and the Search for Authenticity at Mills, Mines and Museums of Maritime Canada," *London Journal of Canadian Studies*, no. 30 (2015): 74, <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.ljcs.2015v30.005>.

55 Summerby-Murray, "Regenerating Cultural Identity through Industrial Heritage Tourism."



FIG. 3 Funicular at the touristic Cerro Artillería. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

commercial value.⁵⁶ The intertwined forms of tangible (buildings, landscapes, machinery) and intangible (values, lifestyles, traditions, mores and folklores) heritage are put to work by the tourism industry to generate capital.⁵⁷ 'Heritagization' is also highly selective locally, with implications for what heritage is preserved and receives investment. Of Valparaíso's funiculars, for example, many were granted National Historic Monument status but have ceased working in recent years "due to the financial losses involved in maintaining the elevator in operation".⁵⁸ Some funiculars in gentrified areas of the city, coinciding with UNESCO heritage site demarcation, however, are operational as "one of the best preserved manifestations of the city's industrial heritage and one of the most visited tourist attractions"⁵⁹ [Fig. 3].

A significant part of Valparaíso's urban identity is the maritime awareness of its dwellers, who can see the port city from the hills [Figs. 4-5]. Valparaíso's unique topography also shaped its cityscape: it resembles a natural amphitheatre looking towards the bay, and many ravines cut the urban continuum.

56 Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 7.

57 *Ibid.*, 18–19.

58 Cultura Puzzle, *Valparaíso capital cultural*, 164.

59 *Ibid.*, 183.



FIG. 4 Valparaíso as Amphitheatre. Image courtesy of Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso.



FIG. 5 Valparaíso Bay, view from Cerro Barón. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

Three urban areas are clearly identifiable: 1) the littoral or seacoast where most port activity takes place, 2) the so-called 'plan' where most public services, banks, universities and higher education institutions are located [Fig. 6], and 3) the 44 hills or boroughs where the majority of the population lives. Whereas the waterfront, the 'plan' and a few wealthy hills have been designed in line with architectural styles and urban planning criteria, the majority of the houses in the hills are the product of popular creativity and self-construction [Fig. 7].

Valparaíso embodies the idea that a city is always a collective and precarious built environment. Many houses seem to hang from the cliffs,



FIG. 6 Valparaíso's Historical Quarter. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.



FIG. 7 Valparaíso's Slums (Cerro Cordillera). Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

diverging from architectural principles, sound design, and canonical aesthetics. Valparaíso grew as a spontaneous network of narrow passages, long stairways, funiculars and elevators, with many established and informal city viewing-points, and a ubiquity of retaining walls that make construction possible. Central to the particular topography of Valparaíso is its steepness, providing views of the bay for the many residents of the hills. There is a cultural notion of the right to a view of the bay, which is evident in the construction of "spontaneous benches and balconies with a view of the sea."⁶⁰ It is a deeply unequal city – many of the hills' residents suffer extreme poverty, as well as fires, floods and earthquakes – yet there

60 Ibid., 26.



FIG. 8 Slums and Apartment Towers in Valparaíso. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

is an irresistibility to its topography, its view of itself. Enormous residential towers, many used during holidays by Santiaguinos and international tourists, now disrupt this local vista, depriving the hill's residents of this simple enjoyment of the city [Fig. 8]. This is indicative of the inequality of access to the city's benefits in the neoliberal, touristic settlement and the severance of these residents from the city's identity.

Neoliberalization and Heritagization

In neoliberalism's unstoppable drive for capital accumulation, the conditions of the city and its deprived residents are transformed into new, unexpected business opportunities. To resist the decay of the city and remain economically and culturally relevant, both the national government and Valparaíso's Municipality implemented an ambitious recovery programme through a public-private partnership in the early 2000s. The so-called *Plan Valparaíso* aimed at transforming the declining city into a site of global tourist appeal to supplement - and coexist with - the port city project.⁶¹ This plan demanded a narrative of Valparaíso's identity and uniqueness, for which its port city culture was commodified for the purpose of economic development. This performative discourse re-signified the relevance of historic buildings, ruins and spaces, and popular culture.

According to the latest yearbook published by the National Tourism Service (SERNATUR), the number of foreign tourists who stayed for more than 2 nights in 2017 was 712.169.⁶² During the summer of 2016-2017,

61 Quintana and Díaz, *Proyecto Ciudad: Valparaíso*.

62 Pedro Ernesto Moreira Gregori et al., "Turismo y Patrimonio. El Caso de Valparaíso (Chile) y El Perfil Del Turista Cultural," *PASOS. Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural* 17, no. 5 (2019): 1005-19, <https://doi.org/10.25145/j.pasos.2019.17.071>.



FIG. 9 Small touristic boats in the port of Valparaíso. Image courtesy of Héctor Aguilera.

the number of cruise passengers was close to 98.976.⁶³ A recent survey showed that most foreign tourists, and the numerous national visitors, are drawn to Valparaíso's port, its bay, hills, coast and especially its architecture, gastronomy and history that have made it a recognisable World Heritage Site by UNESCO.⁶⁴

This turn to tourism has prompted debate around the city's identity in the public sphere. Critics argue that new cultural awareness has not produced better economic opportunities for its population, but benefited the tourism industry and real estate land speculation.⁶⁵ Central to this conflict are the uses of the limited seaside and areas suitable for port activities, a symptom of a much wider problematic. The competition for the coastline in Valparaíso is illustrated in [Fig. 9], which shows a patient line of small boats, ready to take tourists for sightseeing tours of the bay, where they can enjoy a skyline view of the city from the water. In the background, industrial infrastructure – ships and cargo peers – frame the port entrance. Naval vessels loiter further out in the bay, connecting the tourist's imagination with the city's maritime past: Valparaíso, "the birthplace of the Chilean Navy and the city from where it powers over the sea."⁶⁶ These structures and vessels have a deep-rooted connection to the city's history and economic life, yet these smaller boats occupy valuable space in the port as the city is reconfigured for the tourist's gaze. The port is

63 Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso, *Memoria Anual 2020* (Valparaíso: EPV, 2020).

64 Moreira Gregori et al., "Turismo y Patrimonio. El Caso de Valparaíso (Chile) y El Perfil Del Turista Cultural."

65 Aravena and Andueza, *Valparaíso Reclamado. Demandas Ciudadanas de La Ciudad-Puerto*; Pablo Aravena, *La destrucción de Valparaíso* (Escritos antipatrimonialistas) (Chile: Inubicalistas, 2020); Mellado and Rozas, *Política y ciudadanía: los gritos del Puerto*.

66 Cultura Puzzle, *Valparaíso capital cultural*, 64.



FIG. 10 Ibis Hotel in Valparaíso. Image courtesy of Luis Muñoz.

offered up to tourist curiosity, an opportunity “to contemplate the shipping yards”, to see the city from within and beyond the port.⁶⁷

Just as the IBIS hotel in the next photograph [Fig. 10] illustrates, with its design reminiscent of colourful, piled up cargo containers, tourism finds its place in the centre of this functional port - the hotel is convenient for those disembarking cruise ships. Tourism makes another spatial intrusion into the port - the economic actors compete for space and, in a strangely parasitic relationship, the boats and the hotel enhance the ‘portness’ of the port for the tourist gaze, and welcome them inside its daily workings.

Yet the contemporary, functioning port and its place in the tourist imaginary is distinct from the heritage presented outside of the port walls: derelict, nostalgic industrial infrastructure and the particular hedonistic and cosmopolitan culture attributed to its past as a stopover port, “a place with abundant tavern tall tales and maritime stories”.⁶⁸ The constructions and uses of the past are central to critical reflection about Valparaíso’s contemporary identity.

67 Ibid., 177.

68 Ibid., 36.

Tourism's Coloniality and Failed Promise in Valparaíso

Tourism has ultimately failed in its promise to offer economic security for locals. Scholars have noted that international tourism fitted nicely into a neoliberal strategy of encouraging indebted countries to grow their economies and trade their way out of poverty.⁶⁹ Tourism can be considered a postcolonial system: it perpetuates the notion of 'periphery,' 'underdeveloped' Global South countries as both exotic and inferior.⁷⁰ Tourist economies are especially significant in economically underprivileged states; neoliberal international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank champion tourism as a 'passport to development',⁷¹ while the United Nations and international funders have framed it as a lever for development.⁷² In the postcolonial world, the economic promise of contemporary mass tourism to newly decolonized countries saw the reproduction of colonial economic dynamics, with countries "welcoming back their old masters with open arms."⁷³ Local poverty also enables the growth of the industry at the expense of the locals who are compelled to offer cheap labour: "to some extent tourism always feeds off the poverty of host regions".⁷⁴ While governments will invest in infrastructure to meet the needs of tourists, local people often live without basics. Local residents are not mere victims of a destructive global industry⁷⁵ and do have opportunities for resistance and subversion. However, this agency is necessarily limited by the neoliberal socio-economic settlement, in which the poor rarely benefit from tourism.⁷⁶ 'Periphery' states such as Chile are forced to accept economic conditions set by 'core' countries. Local communities providing resources to tourists - often from the Global North - are compelled to accept economic conditions tourists view as appropriate:⁷⁷ "the power relations that condition these transactions are distinctly asymmetrical".⁷⁸ In post-industrial cities such as Valparaíso, the economic benefits

69 Scheyvens, "Exploring the Tourism-Poverty Nexus."

70 Anne-Marie d'Hautesserre, "Postcolonialism, Colonialism and Tourism," in *A Companion to Tourism Studies*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 235–45; Jessica Bell Rizzolo, "Exploring the Sociology of Wildlife Tourism, Global Risks, and Crime," in *Conservation Criminology*, ed. Meredith L. Gore (Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 133–54, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119376866.ch8>.

71 Anthony Carrigan, *Postcolonial Tourism*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203832097>.

72 Linda Boukhris and Emmanuelle Peyvel, "Tourism in the Context of Postcolonial and Decolonial Paradigms," *Via Tourism Review*, no. 16 (2019): 3, <https://doi.org/10.4000/viatourism.4119>.

73 Louis Turner and John Ash, *The Golden Hordes: International Tourism and the Pleasure Periphery* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1975), 15.

74 Plüss & Backes, 2002, cited in Scheyvens, "Exploring the Tourism-Poverty Nexus," 238.

75 Ibid., 242.

76 Scheyvens argues that this is not inevitable, that tourism could be directed towards social and environmental goals and the needs of the poor, rather than serving neoliberal economic motives, Ibid., 249.

77 Bell Rizzolo, "Exploring the Sociology of Wildlife Tourism, Global Risks, and Crime."

78 Carrigan, *Postcolonial Tourism*.

of tourism do not necessarily help people whose livelihood and identity have been endangered or dismantled by deindustrialization.⁷⁹ The gentrification of former industrial sites and development of tourist attractions in and around these sites may create jobs but are no replacement for the former skilled industrial jobs, and often require skills that displaced workers do not have.⁸⁰ Employees in a newly generated tourist economy no longer require specialized skills and are therefore precarious and replaceable.⁸¹ Where post-industrial economies rely primarily on tourism, the financial benefits to the local community may be insignificant and lead to increasing precarity.

Similar to other post-industrial places, Valparaíso embodies a distinctive place identity as a former centre of industry, colonial maritime and military history that constitute sources of pride for local residents. Tourism is conceived as a catalyst for meaning-making and identity (re)construction; the government may hope that actively emphasizing local heritage will encourage and strengthen people's identification with Valparaíso, as a condition for its successful external marketing. The production of tourist sites is expected to create a sense of place, to promote values such as uniqueness, imagination, authenticity and sustainability, and can generate community participation.⁸² But while tourists seek out industrial landscapes out of "nostalgia for vanishing landmarks," industrial sites are increasingly romanticized and sanitized as part of a process of gentrification, commodification and post-industrialization that transforms space and culture.⁸³ In Valparaíso, history has been presented in a trendy, commodified version, fraught with spectacle and simulacra. Heritage and tourism development often fail to preserve intangible industrial values or create new values to unite the community.⁸⁴ Further, heritage tourism is a global phenomenon and the standardization of practice in marketing local heritage means that local places often mirror successful strategies elsewhere, at the cost of local character⁸⁵ and risking a homogenization and standardization of industrial tourism sites.⁸⁶ In places given over to tourism, such as Valparaíso, both locals and tourists are part of an "endless recycling of cultural circuits" of production and consumption, the meanings and values generated by which change over time.⁸⁷ A tourism landscape becomes "both a represented and presented space, both a

79 Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 50–51.

80 Aravena, *La destrucción de Valparaíso* (Escritos antipatrimonialistas).

81 Ibid.

82 Gouthro and Palmer (2011), cited in Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 2.

83 High and Lewis (2007), cited in Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*.

84 Aravena, *La destrucción de Valparaíso* (Escritos antipatrimonialistas).

85 Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 15.

86 Ibid.

87 Irena Ateljevic and Stephen Doorne, "Cultural Circuits of Tourism: Commodities, Place, and Re-Consumption," in *A Companion to Tourism Studies*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 292.

signifier and signified, both a frame and what a frame contains, both a real place and its simulacrum, both a package and the commodity inside the package".⁸⁸ In this complex production and consumption of place, tourism "voraciously appropriates surrounding economies, sociocultural landscapes, and built environments to reconstitute as 'tourist destinations'".⁸⁹ These processes are evident in Valparaíso, where the identity of the place, and ability of local residents to identify with the place, is being transformed and challenged.

Conclusion

The relationship between the marketing of the city, its heritagization and its own residents' perspectives and identity is an ambivalent and complex one. This paper has considered, through analysis of illustrative photographs and narratives within tourism guides, whether the industrial past can be remembered with integrity while satisfying the tourist desire for authenticity, cautioning that the colonial dynamics of entertainment, poverty tourism and exotism generate significant ethical tensions. We have asked whether it might be possible to implement a postcolonial ethics of culture-led and tourism-led development strategy that pays tribute to the history, culture and identity of local communities, and whether local communities might recover the postcolonial, post-industrial touristic city for themselves.⁹⁰ These questions remain largely unanswered and point to some unsolved – and maybe unsolvable - tensions and ethical challenges involved in any urban development strategy in a port city such as Valparaíso. We introduced tourism data to indicate the number of visitors and the appeal of the city as articulated by tourists, but our concern is the particularity of dereliction tourism and its implications. Dereliction tourism is never the explicit purpose of tourism policies and cannot be captured in mainstream tourism data. The troubling politics of this tourism lies in the relation between neoliberal incorporation and the commodification of poverty, spatial inequality, precarity and local culture, neoliberal 'slow violence', heritagization and dereliction tourism. We have argued that the neoliberal strategy of economic reliance on a distinct type of nostalgic 'heritage' tourism has led to the city being marketed as a site of decay, where particular sites are prized and preserved for the tourist gaze while the city's deep inequalities and poverty are reframed, in line with colonial logics, as part of the city's 'authentic' 'charm'. Further research needs to be conducted in Valparaíso to explore the changing sense of its cultural identity fraught with tensions between the authentic and the constructed, the local and the global, the public and the commodified, and the role

88 Mitchell 1994: 5, cited in *Ateljevic and Doorne*, "Cultural Circuits of Tourism," 296.

89 *Ateljevic and Doorne*, "Cultural Circuits of Tourism: Commodities, Place, and Re-Consumption," 296.

90 *Ashworth and Tunbridge*, "Whose Tourist-Historic City? Localizing the Global and Globalizing the Local."

of tourism in promoting the economy and morale in Valparaíso's local communities, so heavily impacted by the slow violence of neoliberal restructuring, industrial decline and dereliction.

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MAIN SECTION

A Call for Value Literacy in Port City Transitions

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ABSTRACT

Over the last decades, values have been re-addressed in planning, policies, businesses, heritage and education. While these fields seem to agree on the importance of values, it is often unclear what actors mean by values, and how they use these values to shape decisions. A decade after a global financial crisis, in the midst of a global pandemic, and on the eve of global climate emergencies, difficult choices need to be made to safeguard a sustainable future. These choices call for value-driven deliberations, especially in the globally connected, multi-problem environment of the port city. To do that, however, stakeholders need to know what they mean when they talk about values, and how to deliberate them. In other words: they need to be *value literate*. In this article, we study the concept of value and values in the context of port cities in the past, present and future. After an analysis of historical uses of values in port cities, we assess six projects that explicitly and implicitly deal with values in port cities, to explore methods or strategies that can help to elicit values in different phases of decision making processes.

KEYWORDS

Value Literacy; Methodology; Transitions; Port City Eco-system; Complexity

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Why Values Matter in Port Cities

Port city territories are characterized by a multiplicity of stakeholders with varying interests. Within this multiplicity, conflicts over the use of space and resources are inevitable. At the basis of these conflicts lie not only clashing interests, but also a variety of conflicting beliefs and values. Whereas ports often focus on economic development, technological innovation and industrial development, cities tend to interpret economic success more broadly, taking into account citizen wellbeing and liveability. Both sets of interests are valid, but they often do not align into a single shared approach towards the spaces of and in the port. To move forward at a time of multiple urgent challenges (such as sea level rise, urbanization, energy transition), port cities need ways to identify and analyze the values and interests that lie at the core of these challenges to be able to deliberate and formulate common goals.

Moving forward in such a complex context requires a new skill that lets stakeholders look beyond polarized viewpoints and seemingly dichotomous interests (such as progress and clean air, or wellbeing and wealth). In the current article, we refer to this particular skill, as 'value literacy'. After defining the concepts of values and literacy, we give a historical overview of values in port cities. In the second part of this article, we present six case studies that have been developed in the context of Delft Design for Values (DDfV, an interfaculty project at Delft University of Technology) and the PortCityFutures research group of the Leiden Delft Erasmus university collaboration. Through these case studies, we explore two things: first, the complexities of the context of port cities, and second: the act of teaching and learning as a tool to develop **value literacy**. Differently put, these case studies do not only refer to education projects as a safe space to learn, but also they also illustrate how decision making processes are dealing with values, knowledge and skills that help acknowledge the existence of different values and subsequently take them into account for value-based design.

What are Value(s), What is Literacy?

The noun *value* (a number, a monetary price or worth), the verb to *value* (to appraise and consider something as important) and the plural noun *values* ("the beliefs people have, especially about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life, that control their behaviour") mean a myriad of different things.¹ Whereas the different meanings and uses of the word value may be confusing, they do share linguistic roots and, as anthropologist David Graeber argues: "the fact that we use the same word to describe the benefits and virtues of a commodity for sale on the market [...] and our ideas about what is ultimately important in life [...], is not

1 Based on and quoted from the lemma *Value* in the Cambridge Dictionary.

Google Books Ngram Viewer

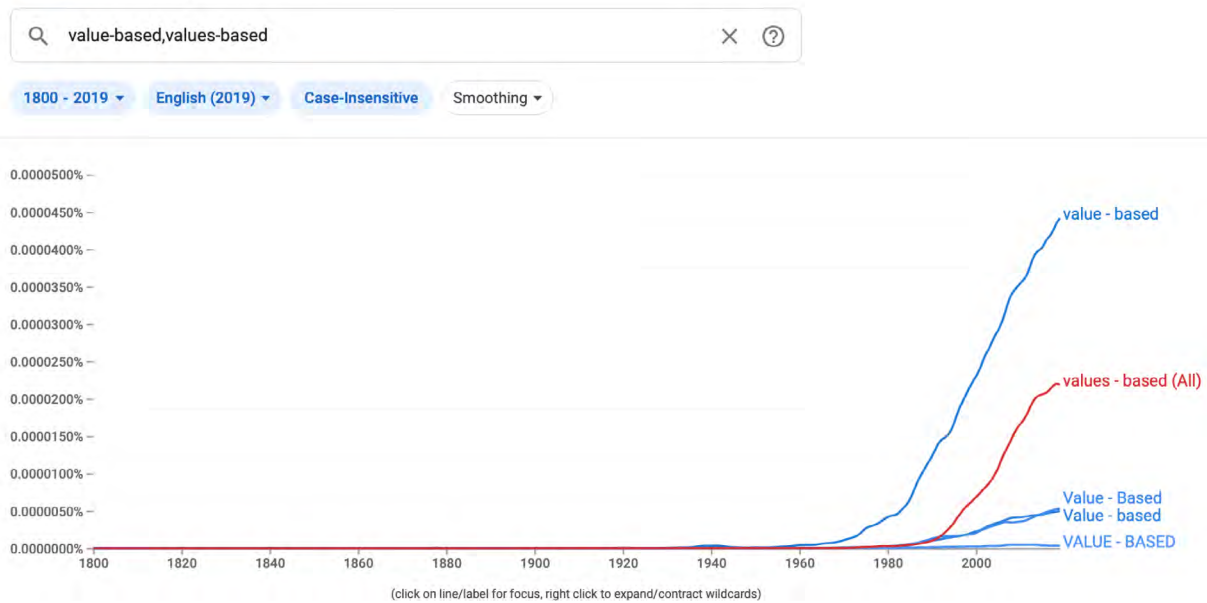


FIG. 1 A Google N-Gram search shows a rapid increase in use from the 1980s onward for the word 'value-based', and from the 1990s onward for 'values-based' (in the Google Books English language repository).

a coincidence. There is some hidden level where both come down to the same thing."² What coincides within these different meanings has to do with the act of valuing or adding value, as a means of production. The production of monetary value and personal values (such as beauty and well-being, but also the value of domestic work, for example), Graeber argues, has become separate only since the industrial revolution. His statement that it is "value that brings universes into being", alludes to the imagination of groups and individuals: through their values, they imagine what their environment is and what it should or could be.

Over the last three decades, value-based or value-driven techniques saw an increased popularity, for example in discussing necessary measures to mitigate the consequences of climate change. Here, values are often linked to education: they can be 'shared' in the sense of teaching or educating, or 'shared' in the sense of having something in common. This led, for example, to slogans like UNESCO's *Change minds not the climate*, implying that to stop climate change, human agency is required to deal with large, structural changes. Businesses (re-) discovered values in the 1990s, with 'value-based' or 'values-based' corporate strategies and identities, such as IKEA [Fig. 1].³

These relatively new uses of values are not without challenges. Questions on *whose* values are dominant, and which power structures are behind

² David Graeber, "It Is Value That Brings Universes into Being," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3, no. 2 (June 2013): 219–43.

³ See for example Bo Edvardsson, Bo Enquist, and Michael Hay, "Values-based Service Brands: Narratives from IKEA," *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal* 16, no. 3 (May 2006): 230–46, <https://doi.org/10.1108/09604520610663471>.

them come to the rise when values are used within decision making processes. Connected to such criticisms is an approach of science, policies and designs according to the idea “that social, ethical, and political values should have no influence over the reasoning of scientists, and that scientists should proceed in their work with as little concern as possible for such values”.⁴ Several scientists from various fields have argued, however, that this ‘value-freedom’ is problematic for several reasons. Heather Douglas, for example, argues for a ‘value-neutral objectivity’, a position that is “balanced or neutral with respect to a spectrum of values”.⁵ Economist Lans Bovenberg sees a “simultaneous advocacy” for values that are less dominant in public discourse as the basis of a good economy. Shared values create trust, and trust is crucial for relational economics that create value, rather than transactional economics that subtract value elsewhere: “By voluntarily committing to the ethical value of the simultaneous promotion of interests, decision makers create wealth rather than destroy value by robbing others.” Simultaneous advocacy, according to Bovenberg, is an ethical value in itself.⁶

Another way of negotiating values was proposed in the world of design in the 1990s under the moniker of ‘Value Sensitive Design’ (VSD). Whereas this method also endured criticism, Janet Davis and Lisa P. Nathan argue for a pluralistic stance: that VSD should not recommend any position on the universality or relativism of values, but rather leave VSD researchers and practitioners free to take and support their own positions in the context of particular projects.⁷ Yet, in order to be sensitive to values, it is necessary to recognize them when discussing or deliberating within a certain project or process. Since values are tacit and intangible, however, this can be difficult. In her work on tacit knowledge in design processes, Elise van Dooren addresses this difficulty.⁸ She connects the sensitivity of values to the contextuality of knowledge in general: what someone knows, or what they think they know, greatly affects their position within a discussion or deliberation. This is also the case with values, which are often even more tacit: they can be of a personal, professional or cultural nature, ranging - in the case of the architect - from what is good architecture to what is morally good.⁹ Van Dooren argues that while those values to the individual feel ‘obvious’ and are often unconscious, in the process of teaching, designing,

4 Heather E. Douglas, *Science, Policy, and the Value-Free Ideal* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 1, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt6wrc78>.

5 Ibid., 123.

6 Lans Bovenberg, “Where is the Love, over Waarde en Waarden” (Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2019), <https://pure.uvt.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/45904877>.

7 Janet Davis and Lisa P. Nathan, “Value Sensitive Design: Applications, Adaptations, and Critiques,” in *Handbook of Ethics, Values, and Technological Design*, ed. Jeroen van den Hoven, Pieter E. Vermaas, and Ibo van de Poel (Dordrecht: Springer, 2015), 1–26, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-6994-6_3-1.

8 Elise Van Dooren, “Anchoring the Design Process,” *A+BE | Architecture and the Built Environment*, October 17, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.7480/ABE.2020.17.5351>.

9 Ibid., 36.

or deliberating, these values need to come to the surface to be able to properly discuss them. The ability to do so requires knowledge about the tacitness of values, and skills to make them explicit.

This set of knowledge and skills is central to what we call 'value literacy'. The concept of literacy - literally the ability to read and write - has recently been more broadly interpreted as competence or "knowledge of a particular subject", for example in the concepts of 'digital literacy' or 'financial literacy'.¹⁰ In this article, however, we stay closer to the original meaning of the word literacy as a language-based skill that allows social interaction and embeddedness, or as the Canadian institute for Education in Alberta defines it: "...the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with language to acquire, construct and communicate meaning in all aspects of daily living."¹¹ Value literacy, then, is the knowledge of one's own tacit values, and the ability to identify and phrase these values in a conversation. Moreover, in line with Graeber's definition of values as shapers of our imaginaries, value literacy enables someone to imagine their environment and deliberate or negotiate their future.

This notion of imagining in order to shape possible futures based on values is particularly important, because the dominance of current spatial imaginaries can lead to individual inertia. Even when a stakeholder attaches value to, or is emotionally involved with the outcome of a project, when they feel they have no sufficient agency within the matter, they tend to withdraw or shut down.¹² Furthermore, while fearful images of the future might attract attention to problems, they are not sustainable ways to engage stakeholders, argue Saffron O'Neill and Sophie Nicholson-Cole.¹³ They do, however, state that images "imagery and icons that link to individuals' everyday emotions" can make a claim to someone's value system, and activate them.

Changing Values in Port Cities

The need to make implicit, unconscious, tacit or seemingly 'obvious' values to the fore is especially important in port cities, which we often associate with tangibility, toughness and materiality. In ports, we can measure the value of the standard unit of containers, TEU (Twenty Foot Equivalent Units), and profits per shipped container. Values such as inclusiveness, health and environment might seem 'obvious', but in reality need to be

10 Cambridge Dictionary.

11 "What Is Literacy?," Alberta Education, accessed December 16, 2021, <https://education.alberta.ca/literacy-and-numeracy/literacy/everyone/what-is-literacy/>.

12 See, for example, Susan D Moeller, *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War, and Death* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

13 Saffron O'Neill and Sophie Nicholson-Cole, "Fear Won't Do It': Promoting Positive Engagement With Climate Change Through Visual and Iconic Representations," *Science Communication* 30, no. 3 (March 2009): 355–79, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1075547008329201>.

deliberated and negotiated, often after the damage is done. Port governing systems, moreover, often hold dominant narratives about the importance of economic growth for the wealth of citizens.

Port cities do have long traditions of value-based networks, which are often related to port interests or a 'maritime mindset': in order to maintain their position in the global maritime network, they had to quickly and decisively adapt to political, economic, social or technological transitions.¹⁴ Historically, private and public stakeholders built coalitions to address these shared problems. This was possible because these actors had shared interests (maintaining transnational trade), but also values that went beyond their mutual competition, and were rooted in, for example, faith-based communities, philanthropy, or informal clubs and networks.¹⁵ An example is the Hamburg-based *Versammlung Eines Ehrbaren Kaufmanns zu Hamburg*, the VEEK. The VEEK has existed since 1517 to promote consistency, cosmopolitanism and reliability. The group has built on long-standing traditions to practice contemporary economic ethics: such as fairness, working on time, and correctness.

Port cities have also been at the front of value conflicts: especially after the industrial revolution and toward the end of the 19th Century, the low wages of port workers and raising awareness of inequalities resulted in social unrest, strikes, and organization into unions. This powerful push-back caused elites in power to re-evaluate their values and - sometimes on their own initiative, sometimes forced by legislature - to raise wages and improve labor conditions. The *Scheepvaartvereniging Zuid*, a Rotterdam-based employers network, for example, issued rules and laws based on values of 'good employeeship', doing for the workers "that which is not required by law."¹⁶

In the second half of the twentieth century, these close-knit networks - in which port and city were entangled - dissolved, or at least lost their power within the public realm. Containerization and globalization caused companies to lose touch with their cities of origin, while democratic movements protested the power of elites that had strong ties to big business. Values such as 'communication' and 'transparency' aimed to open up negotiations on the future of the port city to the interests of citizens as well, rather than relying on the profits that were made in the port to trickle down to the

14 Carola Hein, "Temporalities of the Port, Waterfront, and the City," in *City on Water*, ed. Guenter Warsewa (Wroclaw: Association of European Schools of Planning, 2016), 36–45.

15 Robert Lee, "The Social Life of Port Architecture: History, Politics, Commerce and Culture," in *Standentwicklung Zur Moderne - Urban Development towards Modernism*, ed. Frank Pieter Hesse (Berlin: Hendrik Baesslerverlag, 2012), 33–52, <https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/icomoshefte/article/view/20425>; Carola Hein and Dirk Schubert, "Resilience, Disaster, and Rebuilding in Modern Port Cities," *Journal of Urban History* 47, no. 2 (March 2021): 235–49, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144220925097>.

16 Matthijs Dicke, Paul van de Laar, and Annelies van der Zouwen, *In het belang van de haven: een eeuw Scheepvaartvereniging Zuid* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2007).

city. New coalitions gave voice to disenfranchised groups challenging port pollution and expansion.¹⁷

Technological and economic arguments, however, remained at the core of the port city rationale, and do so up until the present day. In part, this is because of path dependencies in the large institutions that are part of port city governance, as Paolo De Martino argued in his 2021 dissertation for the case of Naples and Carola Hein and Dirk Schubert for Rotterdam, London and Hamburg.¹⁸ Crucial here as well, however, are the tacit and implicit values and interests within port city decision making that are representative of the port city reality, but also performative of what some call the *spatial imaginary*: “stories and ways of talking about places and spaces that transcend language as embodied performances by people in the material world”.¹⁹ These stories and ways of talking can inform and influence strategic narratives, but also the thinking of citizens and their agency within processes regarding their living environment.

New Negotiations, New Values?

In order to take up the multifaceted challenges that port cities face, it is important to be aware of the tacit knowledge and implicit values that inform decision making processes. Traditional value conflicts in port cities, such as the conflicts between profit and livability or between global connectedness and local wellbeing, are still very much relevant for port city deliberations. New conflicts, such as profit in the short term and climate safety in the long term, further complicate decision making processes. Yet, deliberations of values among a broad spectrum of stakeholders are far from common practice in the development of port city areas.

With many challenges facing port city regions - from the production of fossil free fuels to rising sea levels, and from housing shortages to poor labor circumstances of seafarers and truckers - we argue that processes of development in port cities can benefit from making tacit values (that may be obvious to some but unknown to others) explicit. Here, we do not argue that value deliberations should be used to let all stakeholders agree to a certain preordained plan or strategy. Rather, we follow ethnographer David Mosse’s argument that in order to implement good policy, the process needs to include the right amount of stakeholders and

17 Dirk M. Koppenol, *Lobby for Land: A Historical Perspective (1945-2008) on the Decision-Making Process for the Port of Rotterdam Land Reclamation Project Maasvlakte 2* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Boom, 2016).

18 Paolo De Martino, “Land in Limbo,” A+BE | *Architecture and the Built Environment*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.7480/ABE.2021.09.5813>; Carola Hein and Dirk Schubert, “Resilience and Path Dependence: A Comparative Study of the Port Cities of London, Hamburg, and Philadelphia,” *Journal of Urban History* 47, no. 2 (March 2021): 389–419, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144220925098>.

19 Josh Watkins, “Spatial Imaginaries Research in Geography: Synergies, Tensions, and New Directions: Spatial Imaginaries,” *Geography Compass* 9, no. 9 (September 2015): 508–22, <https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12228>.

skilled, open-minded project leaders who recognize the diverse values and interests and know how to implement them in deliberation processes. He argues that values need to be translated and brokered, that goals and interests need to be visited and revisited: "The differentiation of practical interests around 'unifying' [...] project designs is a consequence of successful enrolment, and a condition of stability and success. But it also requires the constant work of translation (of policy goals into practical interests; practical interests back into policy goals), which is the task of skilled brokers (managers, consultants, fieldworkers, community leaders) who read the meaning of a project into the different institutional languages of its stakeholder supporters."²⁰

This process of back and forth is not linear or even circular but rather fuzzy. In this article, we benefit from a selection of existing educational and research projects that are part of our interdisciplinary research group PortCityFutures, as illustrations of possible strategies toward value literacy. We revisit these projects and analyse their discourse to see in which ways they already, implicitly or explicitly, address values in their process. In doing so, we have two objectives: first, to identify and analyse the tools that are already available to approach values as part of a port city culture or mindset, and second, to assess these tools as possible steps toward teaching and learning value literacy. These steps, in theory, account for the identification of values in different phases of the process, whether that process is a design, a policy or a (development) project. In the next section, we motivate our approach.

Five Steps towards Value-Based Processes in Port Cities

Being part of two larger interdisciplinary programs (Delft Design for Values and PortCityFutures), we take stock of different experiences of developing value-based design methodologies, and of exploring questions of space, society and culture through the lens of port cities. In a selection of projects we have assessed their capacity to contribute to value literacy in different phases of the respective (design or policy) process. Because values are often implicit, we untangle the process into diverse value-related stages: arguing that values need to be identified and collected, visualized and/or conceptualized, and discussed or negotiated, to inform the next step of a value-based process. For each project, we identify the following:

- Which phase(s) within a process does this project represent?
- Who is the object and who is the subject, or: who learns and who teaches?

20 David Mosse, "Is Good Policy Unimplementable? Reflections on the Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice," *Development and Change* 35, no. 4 (2004): 639–71, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0012-155X.2004.00374.x>.

- What is the topic? Is value literacy a means or an end?
- How can we improve these diverse approaches to increase value literacy?

1 - Identifying and collecting values

A value-based approach needs to start with identifying the values that are embedded in the physical spaces and in the minds of the people who occupy these spaces. There are multiple approaches/methodologies to identify and collect values. Within PortCityFutures, for example, we often use rather classic ways of identifying, with anthropologists gleaning values through interviews and fieldwork, and historians identifying values in archives or primary literature.

An example of a research project with an anthropological or ethnographic approach is from anthropology graduate Sarah Sannen, who interviewed inhabitants of Pernis, a village that is surrounded by the port.²¹ Whereas many people in Pernis still work in the port, Sannen states that what they value about their town is not only about livelihood. Rather than having "...a working relationship with the port [...] the relationship with the harbour is centred around ideas of beauty and progress." While these values or feelings may not be measurable or tangible, Sannen argues that they are there in the minds of port city dwellers, workers, policy makers and visitors. They therefore shape urban imaginaries and narratives, but also the built reality of the city.

To identify the values that have landed in this built reality can be a next step in a value-based process. Here, the perspective of the researcher changes from personal stories to objects through observing the built environment. In his teaching, Maurice Jansen organized an *Instawalks* project for the minor Port Management & Logistics at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. Accommodating students with diverse academic backgrounds (economy, business or law), the minor aims to "make the connection between the past and the present in such a way that the younger generation gets engaged and finds a future in the port-city ecosystem". Based on specific themes (like entrepreneurship, cranes, cruise ships, or people's traces through time), each team created an Instagram account, walked around the port city to take related photos, and posted these with an explanatory caption. This way, over three years, 36 accounts have been created that identify how maritime values are represented in public space, and collected them in a publicly accessible place.²² A photo-ethnographic

21 Sarah Sannen, "Maritime Mindsets of Rotterdam's Port Communities," portcityfutures, April 23, 2020, <https://www.portcityfutures.nl/news/maritime-mindsets-of-rotterdams-port-communities-0>.

22 Maurice Jansen, "Port-City Instawalk, an Educator's Approach on Port-City Relationships," AIVP (blog), January 15, 2021, <https://www.aivp.org/en/newsroom/port-city-instawalk-an-educators-approach-on-port-city-relationships/>.

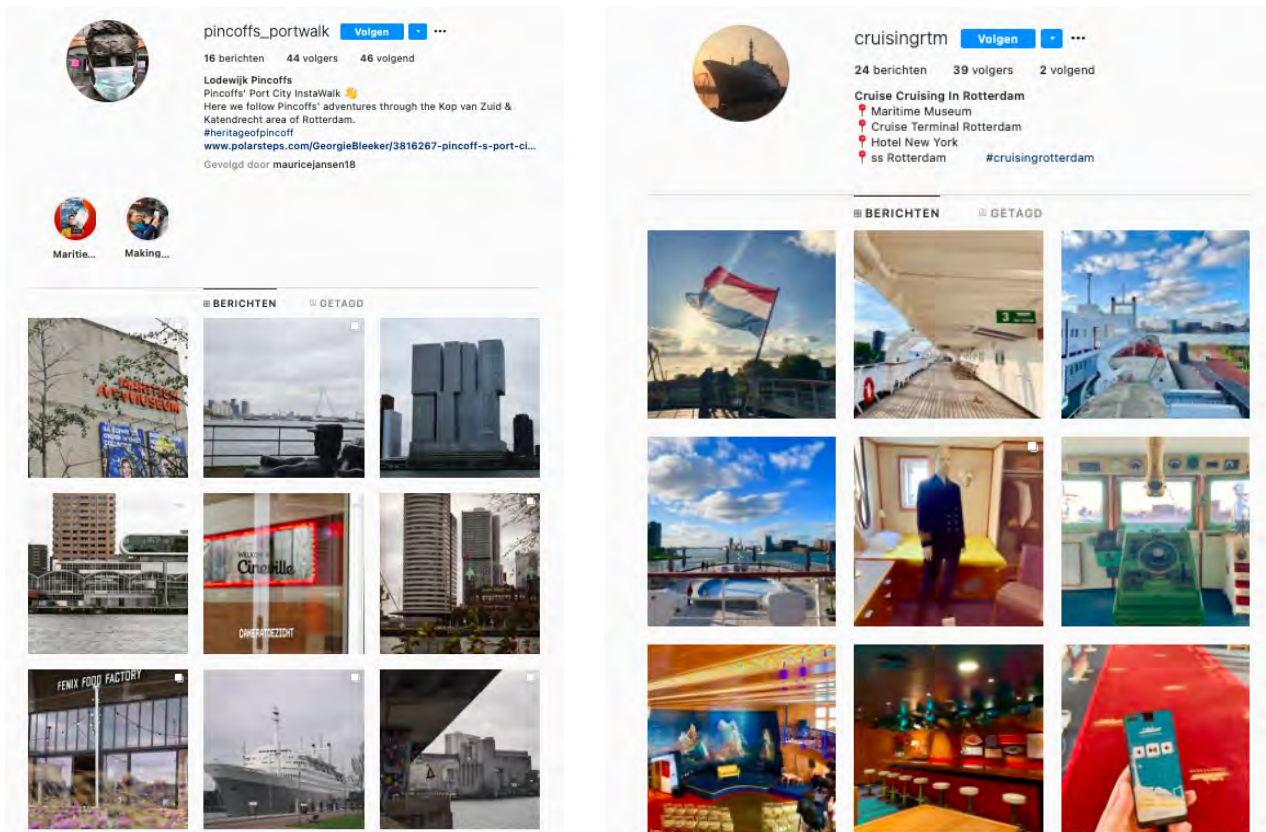


FIG. 2-3 Two examples of Instagram feeds of *Instawalks* in Rotterdam from Jansen's project (https://www.instagram.com/pincoffs_portwalk/ and <https://www.instagram.com/cruisingrtm/>).

approach like *Instawalks* therefore can serve as a tool not only for students, architects and urbanists, but also for policy makers to recognize the existing qualities in a place - particularly one that is related to maritime activities - in order to effectively and appropriately analyze, visualize and debate them. In other words, this can serve as a foundation for developing value literacy among students, but also as a tool to help designers, researchers or policy makers identify values in the built environment [Figs. 2-3].

2- Conceptualizing and/or visualizing values

Because values are open for multiple interpretations, and the demarcation between interest and value is not always clear, it is relevant to reach a certain abstraction and agree on the meaning of a concept with the other stakeholders involved. Besides agreeing on a concept, stakeholders can also come to an abstraction in a more playful way: by drawing. Mental mapping is a relatively easy way to capture a stakeholder's spatial imaginary and therefore the context of their values. While well-known representations of a city (such as paintings, films, or photographs) shape the imaginary of citizens, similarly, the mental images of citizens and decision-makers provide insight into the perception of urban dwellers of their built environment. Kevin Lynch famously defined the image of the city as an overlap of many individual images, and this series of perspectives

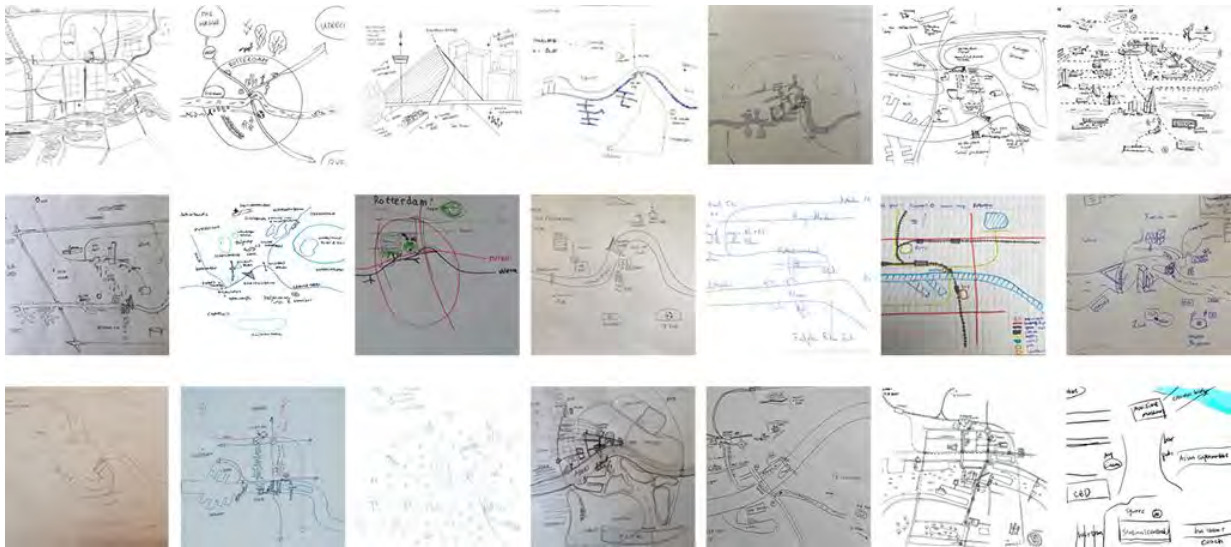


FIG. 4 Selection of the mindmaps of Rotterdam from Harteveld's course. ©Maurice Harteveld.

subsequently provides insight into collective identities of a site [Fig. 4].²³

In line with this approach, PCF's Maurice Harteveld²⁴ asked students to draw mental maps of the city of Rotterdam.²⁵ They often drew port-related icons on those maps, like large chimneys and oil tanks, but generally stayed away from shipping based artefacts and buildings, or people in the city. In his course, Harteveld used mental mapping as a means of connecting histories of cities to future making and "...as a continuation of participatory approaches in urban planning and policies for development".²⁶ What students discover in the maps reflects both the biases and the values of their makers, which makes mental mapping an important tool in identifying and visualizing tacit knowledge and values within development processes.

3 - Discussing and negotiating values

Once the stakeholders in a certain project or process have identified values, tacit or obvious knowledge, and conscious or unconscious biases, the third step in the process is to discuss and negotiate. Here, they decide upon shared or core values, or indicate which values and interests are conflicting. The LDE PortCityFutures group developed an online pilot deliberation with Delft Design for Values (Klara Pigmans, Virginia Dignum, Jordi Bieger) and Tino Mager, to study the opportunities and challenges

23 Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005).

24 Maurice Harteveld, "In the Minds of People. Port-City Perspectives, the Case of Rotterdam," *The European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes* 4, no. 2 (2021): 60-81.

25 Maurice Harteveld, "Mapping Maritime Mindsets: Mental Maps," *PortCityFutures* (blog), July 28, 2020, <https://www.portcityfutures.nl/news/mapping-maritime-mindsets-mental-maps>.

26 Harteveld refers to Sarah Banks et al., eds., *Managing Community Practice* (Second Edition): *Principles, Policies and Programmes*, 2nd edition (Bristol: Policy Press, 2013); Tal Berman, *Public Participation as a Tool for Integrating Local Knowledge into Spatial Planning: Planning, Participation, and Knowledge* (Cham: Springer, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-48063-3>.

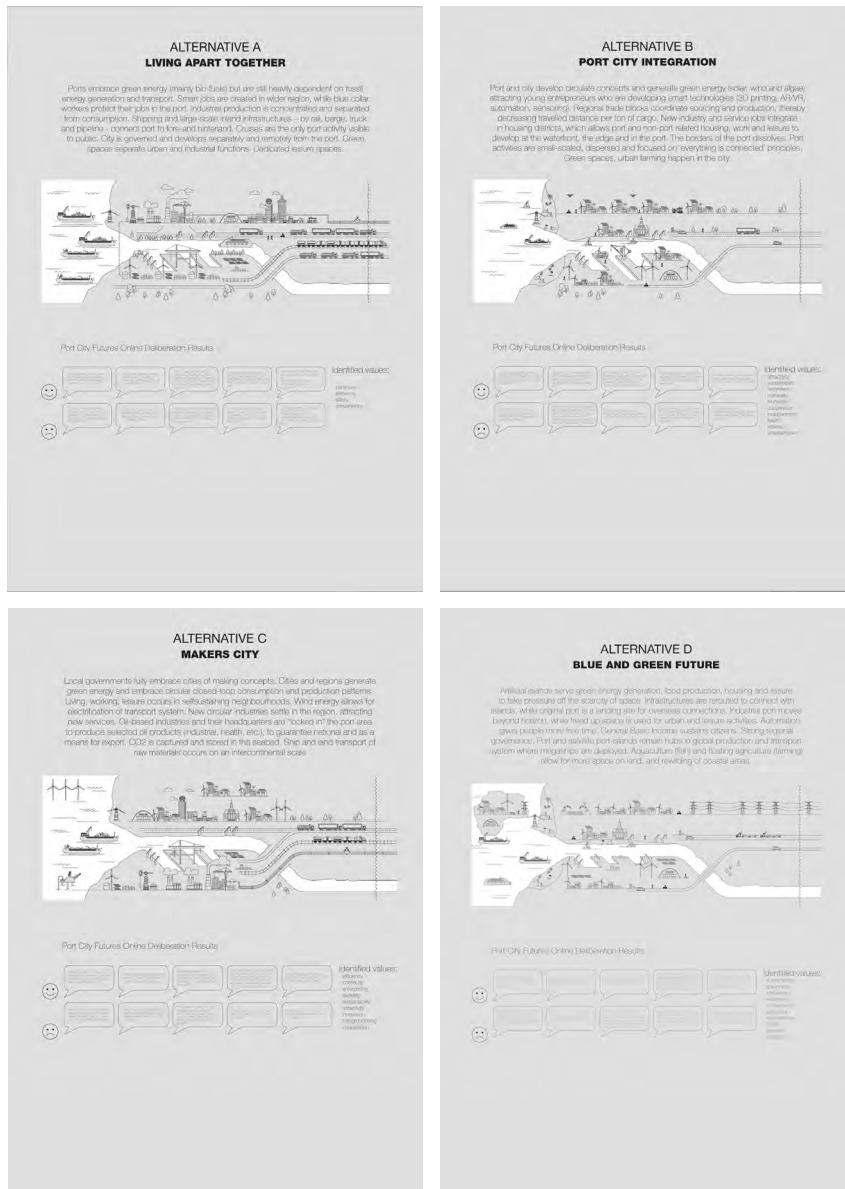


FIG. 5 Alternatives A-D: Four scenarios developed for the pilot value deliberation. The alternatives proposed to participants focused on the future relationship between ports, cities and their regions.

of four scenarios for port city regions in 2050 [Fig. 5]. The drawings tentatively visualized different possible developments and helped stakeholders grasp the choices and their complexities. They also demonstrated the ways in which architecture and urban design can interpret complex interactions and, through visualization, facilitate decision-making. The online tool allowed 42 representatives from port authorities, municipalities and institutions from Rotterdam, Naples, Gdansk, Hamburg, Riga, Bremen, Dublin, Savannah and Philadelphia to participate in the process regardless of their location or time zone. Referring to the developed scenarios, the project's aim was to facilitate the identification of values relevant per scenario and to increase mutual understanding of the various perspectives [Fig. 6]. This way, stakeholders were able to take a step back from concrete conflictual problems, and focus on shared values as they related to select scenarios.

Alternative A assumed separate development for port and city with the port as the main driver of change, embracing green energies for the functioning of the port, but continuing its dependence on fossil energy generation and transport for its customers. Participants in the value deliberation associated Alternative A with values of continuity, efficiency, safety and convenience. They pointed out that this scenario was particularly interesting for port authorities that could continue to work independently of neighboring areas. Others noted that such a scenario could not be sustainable in the long-term as port authorities would need to be better connected to their neighboring cities.

Alternative B envisaged collaboration and integration and shared leadership of ports and cities or their regions. Values associated with such a development included sustainability, innovation, cooperation and health. A focus on circularity and green energy could allow non-port functions to be integrated in some parts of the port area. Such a scenario would, however, mean a loss of port activity and a loss of central functions and headquarters for the port city. Participants pointed out that this would facilitate synergy between port and city, but they feared a loss in economic power.

Alternative C assumed leadership in the energy transition from the city side. The emergence of makers' districts would lead to changing consumer patterns. Such a scenario would ultimately change the functioning of the port. In the meantime, the port would remain locked into the business of transporting and transforming fossil fuel. Participants recognized both continuities and forward-looking sustainable patterns. They saw this as a realistic alternative for the future, but criticized the absence of a true integration between port and city.

Alternative D was the most futuristic. It proposed new developments by the sea to host all the functions that could not find a place in the densely built port city region. New energy generation, food production and housing could all be located on new islands. Such a proposal was in line with green and sustainable development and innovation values. Participants were hesitant about whether this was an opportunity building on the current "flows of goods, energy and waste" or, whether such a proposal required investments that were too high and added little value as megaships were separated from the port.

FIG. 6 Alternatives A-D: Four scenarios developed for the pilot value deliberation. The alternatives proposed to participants focused on the future relationship between ports, cities and their regions.

4 - Elaborating and reflecting on values

After deliberating - for example the scenarios for the port in 2050 - it is important to reflect back to present day value deliberation. An example of the step of reflecting and elaborating is PortPlay, an interactive table designed to support the variety of stakeholders in a port ecosystem to rethink their collaborative futures. It helps participating stakeholders to articulate values and motivate future ideas and thoughts to collaboratively explore future innovation strategies. On the table, stakeholders 'play' with nautical components laser-cutted from wood. It has a chalkboard layer, enabling the participants to sketch a future port. Figure 7 illustrates PortPlay in use, in a setup on a table where stakeholders stand around. PortPlay can be seen as a collaborative play where through the articulation of values, new knowledge is co-constructed and builds capacity during use [Fig. 7].²⁷

PortPlay is an example of the increasing use of 'serious gaming' in port city relations. The technique can serve as a simulation tool to advance understanding of how a port, city or region functions and to increase participation of diverse stakeholders. Port authorities, such as in Quebec and in Rotterdam, have taken the initiative to develop serious games, often with local players, schools and universities. These games can be used to educate children or adults, but also to help professionals gain insight into the long-term effects of their decisions. Master's degree students at Delft University of Technology have designed games to shift values as part of their course assignment, and in doing so design students often take a normative stance, for example by exploring collaboration rather than

27 Garnt Nieuwsma and Ingrid Mulder, "Strategic Innovation Tools Enabling Nautical Stakeholders to Shape a next Level Port," *The Design Journal* 20, no. sup1 (July 28, 2017): S2789-2802, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2017.1352790>.



FIG. 7 PortPlay innovation tool in use ©Nieuwsma and Mulder, 2017.

competition. In this phase, the goal is to reach shared objectives and develop a shared set of values.

5 - Design and intervene in a transition strategy

Before actually designing a new process, or intervening in an existing process, all stakeholders ideally have accounted for values within several stages. The next step is designing with values, whether that design is a decision-making process or an actual architectural interference. Designing future scenarios, we argue, can both help visualize values and activate stakeholders towards new imaginaries based on shared values.

Translating the value deliberations into projects can happen through the development of scenarios or design fictions, but also in the design of concrete processes and projects. Once the values in these processes are visualized, they can be further discussed and evaluated in relation to values in different contexts. In the Master course Architecture and Urbanism Beyond Oil in 2019, for example, students were asked to first study the historically changing relationship between port and city, to then identify relevant port city spaces and their variety of values, and ultimately to design a transition strategy for the Port of Rotterdam beyond oil taking these values into account. The students explored the current state of the port, highlighting existing potentials and possible strategies. They concluded by developing a port vision in a chronological phased plan (2030, 2050 and 2080), showing how the port may adapt to achieve a future beyond oil. Following the overall vision, five projects outlined practical solutions to how this may be accomplished in key areas of the port: Energy landscapes, Ecological frameworks, Remediation strategies & Social dynamics [Fig. 8].²⁸

28 Carola Hein, "Beyond Oil: Designing the Transition," in *Circulariteit: Op weg naar 2050?*, ed. Peter Luscuere (Delft: TU Delft Open, 2018), 79–85, <https://books.bk.tudelft.nl/press/catalog/book/isbn.9789463660549>.

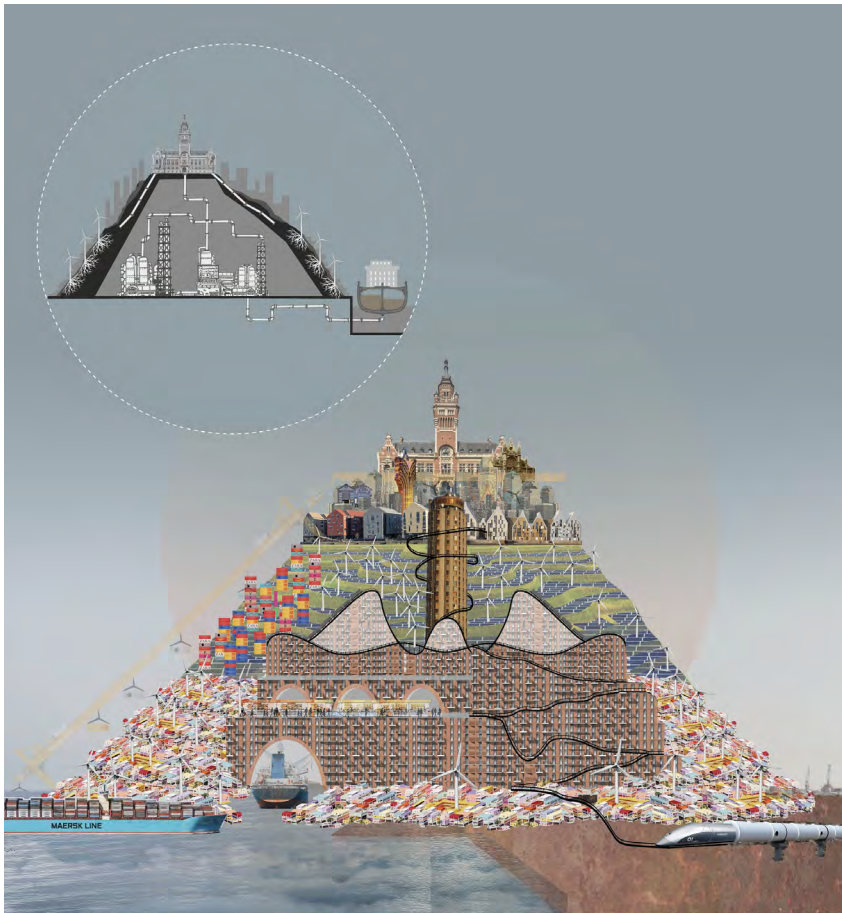


FIG. 8 Example of a scenario beyond oil: design fiction for port and city of Dunkirk. ©Rashid Ayoubi.

The previous examples connected to five steps that, together, can form a comprehensive value deliberation process. However, because processes are hardly ever linear, in the next paragraphs we offer examples of value deliberations within ongoing multi-stakeholder projects, where we intervene to make participants act and reflect on values within their own ongoing (design) process.

Designing a Process for Adaptive Strategies Based on Enhanced Value Literacy

Within the broader context of scientific research, NWO piloted a call entitled *Research through Design* to clarify distinctions and characteristics of design research in relation to the more established fields of science in order to further strengthen research in the creative industry. *Research through Design*, briefly, refers to research where designing is used as the way to produce new knowledge.²⁹ Following the call criteria, awarded RTD projects are expected to add a reflective element via an artifact; in

29 For the Research through Design process, see Pieter Jan Stappers and Elisa Giaccardi, "Research through Design," in *The Encyclopedia of Human-Computer Interaction*, ed. M. Soegaard and R. Friis-Dam (The Interaction Design Foundation, 2017), 1–94, <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/book/the-encyclopedia-of-human-computer-interaction-2nd-ed/research-through-design>.

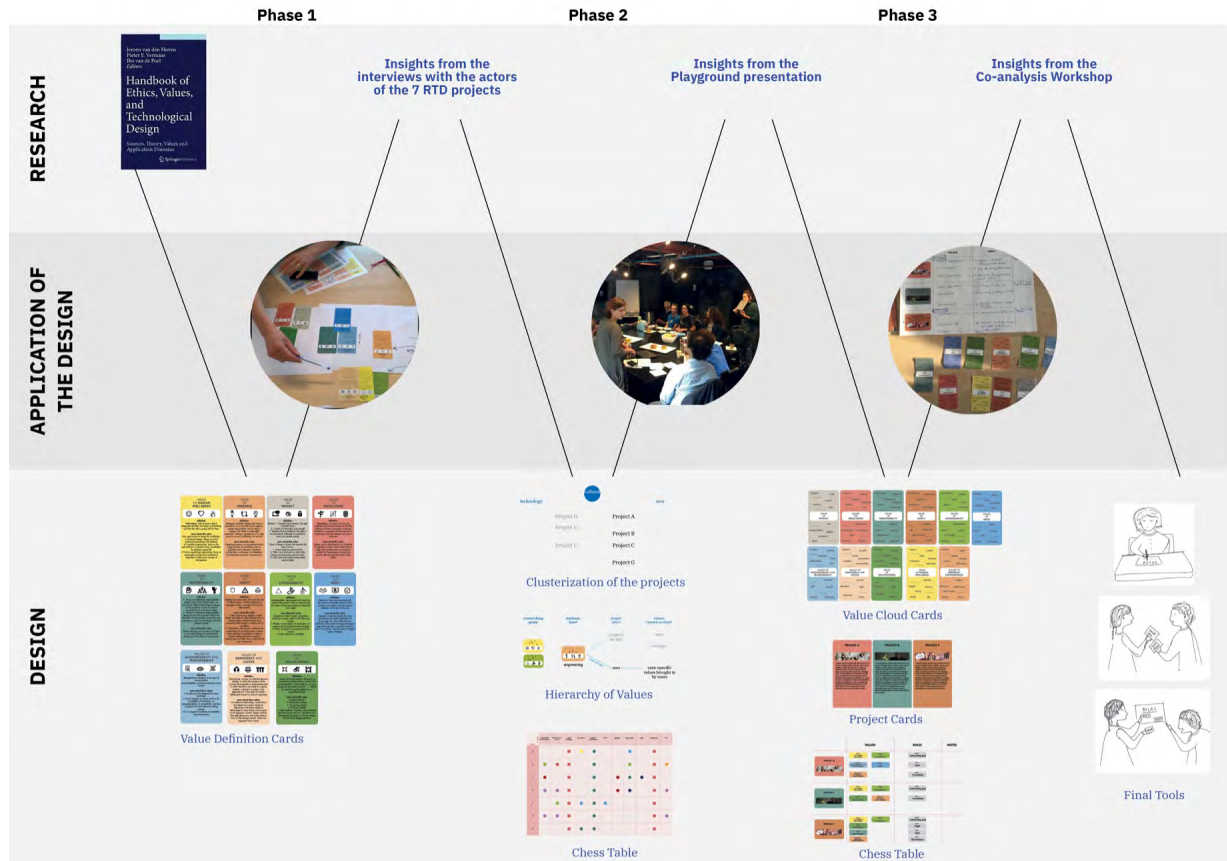


FIG. 9 Process overview for *Research through Design for accounting Values in design*. ©Conversano et al., 2019.

in addition to exploring new technological possibilities they focus on creating and transforming social meaning, public and cultural values, and aesthetics. In other words, the artifacts that are studied and developed during the awarded projects do generate explicit and tacit knowledge, and are a promising resource to make public and cultural values explicit. Consequently, within the context of Delft Design for Values, the project *Research through Design for Values* was born to demonstrate that the adoption of a kaleidoscopic Research Through Design (RTD) approach can act as a catalyst that generates knowledge and insights to stimulate the debate on accounting for values in design research.³⁰

Hereto, the RTD for values project selected seven ongoing RTD projects that were awarded in the NWO call, as a unit of analysis. These selected RTD projects lasted for about two years, and worked in multidisciplinary consortia of at least two universities, one or multiple designers, and at least four user parties (such as municipalities). The selected projects including their RTD process and developed artifact are studied to explore to what extent the explicit and tacit knowledge generated enabled various actors to make public and cultural values explicit. The elaborate RTD process of

30 Irene Conversano, Livia del Conte, and Ingrid Mulder, "Research through Design for Accounting Values in Design," in *Proceedings of the Fourth Biennial Research through Design Conference (RTD 2019) "Method & Critique – Frictions and Shifts in Research through Design"* (Science Center, Delft & Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.6084/M9.FIGSHARE.7855865.V2>.

the RTD for values project distinguishes three phases of research that differ in their focus: 1) understanding the values involved in the RTD projects; 2) share insights to steer peer debate on Research on Values, and 3) co-analyse the data and generate further insights.³¹ For each step, value techniques have been developed, enabling the participation of the project members of the seven RTD projects to articulate and negotiate values to generate future insights [Fig. 9].

Value Definition Cards

The first phase aimed to elicit the values that were at hand in the various RTD projects and to understand which roles the values did play. To do so, Conversano et al.³² developed a set of eleven Value Definition Cards that depicted the “moral values of users and society at large”.³³ Each card held a definition and a set of three selected icons, to understand the values involved in the seven RTD projects. The aim of these cards was to support the participants in identifying which values were included in their projects, and subsequently in relating them to different key moments and/or roles in their RTD process.

Participants circumscribed the given definition of the values on the value cards with other possible meanings than the specific ones derived from the handbook. In other words, the original definition cards asked for appropriation: some participants felt the need to redefine the meaning of the values so as to be more in keeping with their own perception. In the first interview, for example, the Value of Presence was renamed as Value of Empowerment. This modification to the card encouraged the following interviewees to do the same and to challenge the provided definitions. Next values are visualised in order to identify hierarchy of roles and values as well as common patterns and specificities among the various projects.

Value Cloud Cards

The Value Cloud Cards did not provide participants with a given definition, but with the name of the value. A cloud of associated words meant to trigger the participants to question their perception of the eleven values. The value dialogue was then further facilitated with project cards including a written description and an image of three chosen RTD projects. These sets of value techniques demonstrate that intervening in the three moments generated insights and contributed to a reflective attitude of the participants and value literacy, such as:

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Jeroen van den Hoven, Pieter E. Vermaas, and Ibo van de Poel, eds., *Handbook of Ethics, Values, and Technological Design* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2015), 1, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-6970-0.0/0/00 0:00:00 AM>

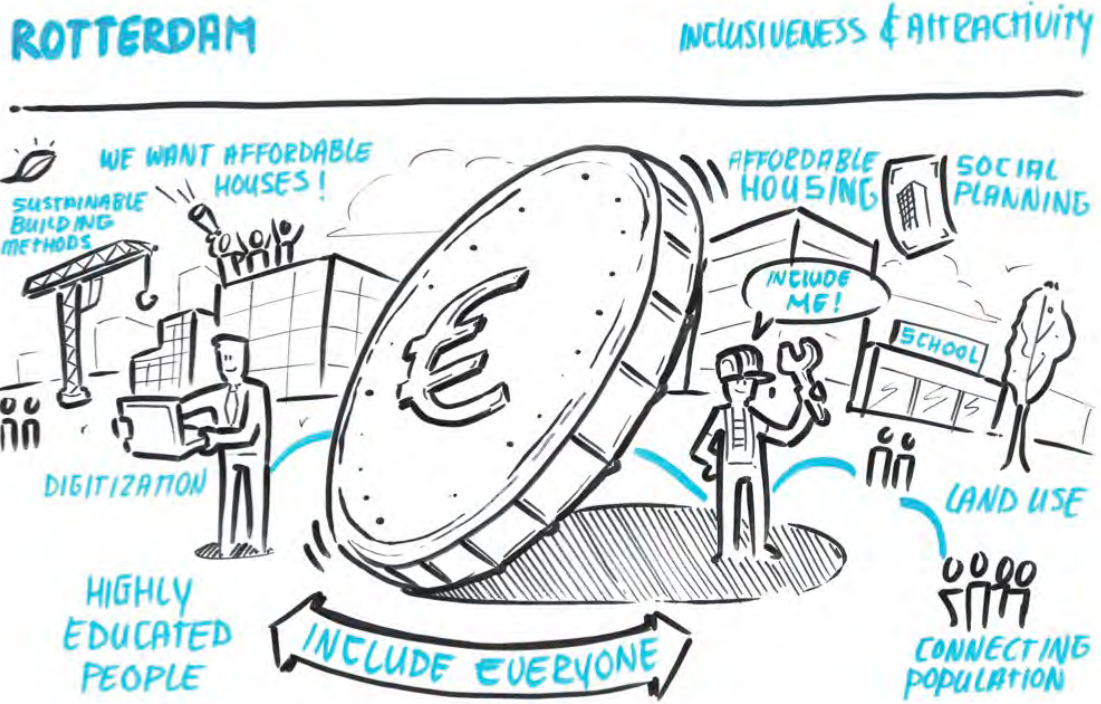
1. *Personal interpretation of values.* The fact that the participants felt the need to redefine the value definition when provided with a specific one, showed that giving space for personal reflection on values interpretation adds explicit relevance and deeper consideration to values
2. *Enrichment of values definition.* The fact that the participants were considering others' interpretations of the values at stake, seemed to broaden the individual perception of the values and brought forward a variety of nuances to the initial meanings.
3. *Alignment of different stakeholders* regarding the roles that values play within the same project. The fact that the participants were invited to point out which roles the values played within the projects, helped them to better articulate values that helped them define a better project vision.

Conclusion

Through the examples in this article, we aimed to identify different uses of values in design processes, and argued that using and integrating different steps can be a promising approach to better align interests and values from different stakeholders in port cities. Whereas the results do not lead to a unified methodology, we have found that there is a need for clearer definition of values, for a smaller scale of exploration (than the port city region), for using concrete examples, and for developing specific design proposals. We are convinced that in order to tackle multifaceted challenges, tacit and implicit knowledge and values need to come to the fore. Once they are identified and visualized, they can drive design processes. Such an approach, however, requires awareness of values from the first moment of research. In other words, it requires stakeholders to become literate in recognizing and identifying values, and in deliberating them with other stakeholders. We argue that a value driven approach to design is not linear, but needs to contain frequent evaluations or feedback loops, so that values are questioned on a continuous basis before they are implemented.

The humanities, social sciences and design-based research can help develop new participatory practices to engage with diverse groups of citizens in a port city region. So-called soft values have long been an important part of port city relations. Historically, economic and spatial port development has been interconnected with the socio-cultural interests of the city, the region and its citizens. Values related to maritime mindsets can help establish the foundation for future-oriented and creative policy and development needed to address the current challenges in port city regions, and for the development of engaged citizens.

Politicians, academics, and citizens in many cities around the world have started to pay close attention to technological innovations and economic



PORT CITY FUTURES



#PORTCITYFUTURES

FIG. 10 Visual report of a value deliberation process during the first PortCityFutures conference in December 2018. Made by Flatland Visual Thinking Agency for PortCityFutures.

aspects of ongoing energy and digital transitions; they generally pay less attention to soft values, such as governance structures, spatial forms or culture. Buy-in from local stakeholders is necessary to facilitate the construction of hard infrastructures needed to improve ports' functioning and to address the side effects of port operations (noise, security, emissions), but also to develop skill sets and technologies for the ports and port cities of the future. We argue that we need to pay more attention to the social, cultural and spatial dimension of port city regions and to that end we opted to develop a pilot value deliberation on the future of port-city relations. A value-based circle of design can be developed into a more generic approach to help facilitate transition processes [Fig. 10].

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MAIN SECTION

A Creative Approach to the Port-City Relationship: the Case of Zones Portuaires in Genoa

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ABSTRACT

One of the goals of 2030 AIVP Agenda is to strengthen port-city relationship by “promoting and capitalising on the specific culture and identity of port cities and allowing residents to develop a sense of pride and flourish as part of a city port community of interest” (6th goal). In order to do that, AIVP suggests to encourage the creation of Port Centres, to provide, by any means, daily news and information on port and city life for residents, particularly young people and school students and to organise temporary or permanent cultural events in port areas. This paper aims at presenting the Zones Portuaires Genoa experience as a device which since 2015 has experimented with new methods for attending these objectives. The text will critically observe some projects that have been carried on within this process and will place them in the framework of a “research in action” approach.

KEYWORDS

Port, Research In Action, Festival, Recognition

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Introduction

Several initiatives exist all around the world, aimed at displaying, showing and promoting local forms of port-city culture, variously interpreted from the emic point of view of their makers as the heritage, identity, and excellence of a territory. These initiatives—port centers, museums, and festivals—are generally characterised by a broad consensus within the local communities and qualified by experts as the “best practices”¹ for thematizing port-city culture. Often, however, more than *thematizing* it, they take the shape of folkloric re-enactments and are aimed at *celebrating* local work traditions, historical activities or heritage, and as a matter of fact are more linked to the past than to the present of the port. In some cases, local city governments also bet “on improving attractiveness by strengthening maritime leisure facilities, cultural institutions and infrastructures [...] in many cases embedded into wider processes of change of image, attitude and identity and a considerable proportion of the public budget for culture is spent on such event and ‘festivalisation’ programmes.”² As temporary events, they catalyse waterfront revitalization³ without necessarily questioning the spatial, cultural and political border between the port and the city or the symbolic role of this pre-assumed port culture for citizens.

Starting from the idea that port-city culture cannot be abstractly assumed as an *a priori* concept, but has to be understood as a particular, site- and time-specific creation, the authors with this paper introduce a creative methodology for critically investigating the idea of contemporary port-city culture(s) while presenting Zones Portuaires experience in Genoa (ZPGE onwards): a reflexive device, shared and co-produced with local communities, which, through the *medium* of art, has been providing knowledge on the subject starting from the local Genoese dimension and opening to a larger scale through comparative projects. Since 2015, the authors have personally been at the initiative of ZPGE by experimenting a technique of action and creation research⁴ which exploits the makings of synesthetic, metaphoric and narrative methods for exploring the symbolic representations and the concepts that port communities adopt for speaking about themselves, their values and social relationships and for their strategic positioning both at the local and at the international scale.⁵ As we will see, an important break between the port and the city is supposed to exist in the discourse of many local Genoese players, and it is linked to the way

1 Patrizia Lupi, “Ti porto in porto. Best practices, culturali e didattiche, nei porti italiani”, *Portus Plus*, 11 (2011): 17.

2 Günter Warsewa, *The Transformation of European Port Cities: Final Report on the New EPOC Port City Audit* (IAW Forschungsbericht, 2006).

3 Simona Corradini, “Temporary Uses as Catalyst for Waterfront Revitalization”, *Portus Plus 2* (2011).

4 Alberta Giorgi, Micol Pizzolati, and Elena Vacchelli, *Metodi creativi per la ricerca sociale: contesto, pratiche, strumenti* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2021).

5 Günter Warsewa, *The Transformation of European Port Cities: Final Report on the New EPOC Port City Audit* (IAW Forschungsbericht, 2006).

many public institutions refer to the port and to its role within the city. In order to understand the reasons and to which extent this is specific to the city of Genoa, the work of ZPGE is focussed on better comprehending the port-city relationship. This relationship is here intended as a prerequisite for grasping the layered port-city culture's sense and the role of public communication, especially an institutional one, in orienting the feelings of belonging and recognition.⁶ While describing their methodology and the role of art as a trigger for letting representations emerge and express in the very port area, the authors point out the contribution of this research to the possible definition of a more general "port-city culture" as well as the pertinence of the use of creative technologies both for epistemologic and pragmatic purposes. As George Marcus says while introducing the proceedings of the meeting *Performance, art et anthropologie* at Quai Branly Museum in 2009: "Performance art delivers spectacle; ethnography now delivers descriptions as concepts about contemporary life as a scene of emergence, of social change toward an anticipated or definable near future. To do so, both need to engage actors as collaborators, create designs out of natural settings, show care for the audience as dynamic, as a public, and be aware of the ethics of staging". The production of knowledge could not be dissociated from the researchers' engagement to actively intervene for improving the functioning of the port-city relationship itself: this is the reason why epistemological and pragmatic purposes were actually aimed at converging. After an historical and theoretical contextualisation, the paper displays the different techniques adopted to involve local Genoese stakeholders in this process of content analysis and action through artistic creation.

Zones Portuaires: from the Festival to the Research Project

Originally, Zones Portuaires (ZP onwards) is a film festival focused on port-city images from all around the world; it was born in Marseille in 2010 thanks to the initiative of Emmanuel Vigne, film-maker holding a movie theater in the industrial site of Port-de-Bouc. Since it moved to Genoa in 2015—first as a retrospective project on the French edition—ZP progressively transformed into an interdisciplinary project aimed at exploring the peculiarity of port cities from a cultural point of view. Due to the respective personal paths of local promoters—the two authors of this paper, general managers of the initiative—the project has both an academic and an engaged approach, which tries to conjugate research activity with an effective action aimed at understanding and sharing port-city culture. As an independent initiative, it is autonomous from that of the Port Authority, as well as from any other local territorial institution, even if it has obtained technical and juridical approval and an active support in the consolidation

6 Charles Taylor, *The Politics of Recognition* (Princeton University Press, 1994).

phase, after some years since the first edition. ZP was implemented in Genoa by UniGE urban studies laboratory “Incontri in città” and the association U-BOOT Lab as the organisations which would have formally led the initiative; then, some other kinds of actors were involved, such as governmental administrations, port services, enterprises and associations. This large participation turned the original “festival” into a more complex device for territorial analysis and active community involvement. It now works to understand and promote the connection between port and city with a long-term research project, articulated in several actions: walks, sailing, guided tours, site specific productions of artistic exhibitions and performances, conventions, informal meetings. The scope and effectiveness of these actions have changed over time. While the climate of trust developed over the years allowed access to environments, data, and contacts that were initially unreachable, expectations regarding results have also become more ambitious in the involved communities, up to the general aim of recovering the disconnection between port and city in Genoa. This separation is taken for granted in the discourse of the most of the stakeholders the authors met. Since the beginning, they expected ZPGE to contribute to blurring it, as a prerequisite of their support. This put the researchers in an ambiguous position⁷: should they adhere to this purpose, and to which extent? The text explores this experience of recovering port-city continuity in a reflective way: with concrete examples to observe the functioning of the device implemented together with port communities and its outcomes, trying to grasp its scientific, cultural and social aspect in an integrated perspective. The diachronic dimension allows to understand how the different stakeholders shifted from a passive role to a stronger engagement in the process and, then, in the conceptualisation of a port-city culture.⁸

The Port-City Break in Genoa

From the administrative point of view, Genoa and its port became two separate entities at the founding of an autonomous port consortium in 1902, which officially marked the “formal break between the city and its port.”⁹ But if we look at the same object from an identitarian and cultural perspective, these two dimensions have long worked in a symbiotic, precisely until a few decades ago, when each family still counted a dock worker, sailor or ship owner as a relative. The “break” which port

7 In the article “Le « je » méthodologique. Implication et explicitation dans l'enquête de terrain”, Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan explores the gains and the limits of such methodological positioning. Coherently with his approach, the authors acknowledge its epistemological potential and assume their involvement in the project as a non-ambiguous positioning.

8 For example, Port Authority's and Coast Guard's contribution was initially just delivering authorisations, but now it can also consist in the co-creation of performative actions aimed at promoting port-city relationship.

9 Felicitas Hillmann, “Big Ships on the Horizon and Growing Fragmentation at Home Genoa's Transformation of the Urban Landscape,” *Erdkunde*, 2008, 305

communities speak about as well as its effects, has to be found in more recent times. The progressive mechanisation of activities and an Italian urban vision that considers city and port as separate realities has deteriorated the connection in governance and daily practices, even if not from a cultural and symbolic point of view. The following section will explain this apparent contradiction.

The evolution of intermodal logistics has increasingly linked the port to the productive world of global industry rather than to the commercial world of the city. Workers in the port have decreased, partly as a result of the mechanisation of various tasks^{10 11} and partly because shipping companies are now more likely to employ their own staff for tasks that were previously attributed to the local workforce.¹² The Genoese people's knowledge of port work has faded; familiarity "from the sea's point of view," whether experienced by oneself or communicated by a close relative or acquaintance, has been lost. From this point forward there is a feeling of some form of loss, of a vanished public recognition. The role of port workers, which remains central to Genoa's economy, is not at all obvious to a large part of the population and humiliates the pride of some professions, which have historically been involved in political struggles and claims of primary importance in the city's memory. For example, it is generally well-known the role that Genoese dockers, called "camalli" played in the events of 30 June 1960, which then led to the fall of the Tambroni government.¹³ The event is remembered and celebrated every year by members of the Compagnia Unica as well as by anti-fascist militants in Genoa.

About twenty years later, when Genoa became interested in the process of urban and image transformation, administrators re-used the city's port identity for benchmarking. However, their focus was not placed on port work. In order to express the city's historical vocation for international openness, port identity was strategically recalled as a tool for city-marketing,

10 Maria Elisabetta Tonizzi, "Il porto di Genova: 1861-1970," *MEMORIA E RICERCA*, no. 11 (2002). Maria Elisabetta Tonizzi, *I Numeri e La Storia Del Porto Di Genova* (Unità Organizzativa Statistica, 2004).

11 Marco Caligari, "La ridefinizione del concetto di tempo: i portuali di Genova di fronte all'introduzione dei container (1969-1989)," *Storia e problemi contemporanei*. 13 (2013).

12 "The bridges used to be named after shipowners, and the shipowners were the big families of the city - explains a retired port worker in an interview - today we work for the multinational firms". Workers have got used to commonly referring to their superiors with expressions such as "the Japanese" or the "the ones from Singapore".

13 On June, 30th 1960, Genoese dockers were on the front line of the public protests against the congress of neo-fascist party MSI, planned in Genoa on the following day, and against the inclusion of this party in the coalition of the Christian Democrat prime minister Fernando Tambroni. This event was the first of a series of public protests that spread out all around Italy up to the collapse of the government, in July 1960, which led to a shift to the left in Italian politics until 1990s. The episode is a central piece of the anti-fascist memorial heritage of the city and a source of proudness also for contemporary dockers.

mainly through the usage of “mega events”¹⁴ and periodic events¹⁵ “as a resource for substantial regeneration.”¹⁶ Moreover, the transformation was not limited to the symbolic plan: it regarded instead both architectural and urban planning interventions. The Old Port of Genoa, *Porto Antico*, the Darsena area as well as the Galata Museum were adapted for institutional communication purposes. The International exhibition in 1992 was dedicated to Christopher Columbus and geographical explorations. The European Capital of Culture theme 2004 was “the voyage” and focused on the spaces, logics and figures of Genoese maritime history. The current strategic planning of the Municipality has, among its main axes, that of “Capital of the Sea”, for which a dedicated event has recently been established: the Blue Economy Summit, since 2018, with a dedicated public place for both public and private “blue” activities,¹⁷ the Genova Blue District, since 2021. The port has been included in the speeches of political representatives, institutions and the business world, without any explicit reference to its workers. In a process of *inverse filiation*¹⁸ the narrative construction woven by the local institutions (and especially the Municipality) into the public sphere over the last forty years through these events, has thus relied more on the instrumental use of the functional past instead of the present knowledge and narration of those who inhabited and animated the port during that time. That is why people from both sides of the frontier now perceive, deplore and even denounce a division between the port and the city they suppose did not exist in ancient (but not precisely defined) times.

A Matter of Communication?

The subject of “division” between the city and the port, variously called “break”, “separation”, but also “oblivion” and “conflict”, emerged as the

14 Chito Guala, “Per una tipologia dei mega-eventi,” *Bollettino della Società geografica italiana* 7 (2002).

15 Some historical initiatives are the International Boat Show, since 1962, or the Genoa Shipping Week, born in 2013 from the merger of Port&ShippingTech and Shipbrokers and Shipagents Dinner.

16 Günter Warsewa, “The Role of Local Culture in the Transformation of the Port-City,” *Portus* 23 (2012): 1–13.

17 Blue Economy Summit is a national event that has been organised since 2018 by the Municipality of Genoa and dedicated to the opportunities given by the maritime sector for growth and development of the territories, employment and permanent professional training. During the overall week conferences, round tables, interviews and talk shows are scheduled and, since 2020, broadcasted in live streaming. It is part of Genoa Blue Forum initiatives, promoted by the Municipality of Genoa, the University of Genoa, the Chamber of Commerce in Genoa, the Liguria Region and the Associazione Agenti Raccomandatari Mediatori Marittimi (Association of shipbrokers and agents).
For more info on the event: <http://www.besummit.it/>

18 Gérard Lenclud, “La Tradition n’est plus Ce Qu’elle Était.... Sur Les Notions de Tradition et de Société Traditionnelle En Ethnologie,” *Terrain. Anthropologie & Sciences Humaines*, no. 9 (1987): 110–23.

common feature of all the kick-off meetings we organised.¹⁹ This led us to the reflection on the meaning of a Genoese port identity, which is part of the recent and current public discourse on the city, although it is not frequently analysed.²⁰ The desire to be known and understood was presented to us by the various professional categories. At a first glance, their need for visibility could apparently be solved by better communication: an area to which the maritime and shipping world in itself is not all unfamiliar. The communication carried out by large groups, however, responds first and foremost to the logic of commercial marketing and is aimed primarily for the international market. Thereby, it focuses on a specific activity, service or product sold rather than the structure that makes it possible. Directed to potential clients, on a local scale it is practically non-existent, with the exception of patronage or solidarity initiatives set up to give the brand prestige and to improve the image of the companies that are often at the centre of conflicts with local communities. Conflicts concern, for example, environmental and noise pollution due to the oldness of port equipments,²¹ to the passage of heavy vehicles that provide loading and unloading of goods, or the placement near the built-up area of deposits of materials considered excessively dangerous.²² In most cases complex solutions are required for these problems which cannot be implemented by a single company or operator, but need coordination among terminal operators, direction and extraordinary investments by public, port and city institutions. Therefore, many terminal operators and port companies prefer to adopt green-washing strategies and very rarely concern either their real and concrete daily activity or the workers.

Nevertheless, when they complain about the lack of a participative dimension within communication, the workers do not address these sectors, which are focused on tasks that have always been relatively distant from their everyday work. Nobody was charged of talking about them and their work, yet the interest in them by the “other side”—that is, inhabitants, institutions, local stakeholders—was real. They were seriously considered as interlocutors by social and political players and people could even engage

19 From this point onward, the authors will use the first person “we” for speaking about the actions they have personally led as general managers of Zones Portuaires project for achieving both the scientific and the pragmatic purposes as previously illustrated. The researchers’ kinds and methods of involvement in this process claim for this explicitation (see also footnote n.7).

20 The studies conducted on the port dimension of the city are mainly limited to the economic and logistic fields (see in particular the works of Hilda Ghiara and Enrico Musso of CIELI - Italian Center of Excellence on Logistics, Transport and Infrastructure from Genoa University), industrial history (central are the texts of the historian Marco Doria) and of labor (Caligari, 2013, 2014), of urban planning and architecture (Gastaldi, 2017), but after the geographical reflections of Massimo Quaini (e.g. 1978, 1998) or Adalberto Vallega (1984, 1992), rarely (Gazzola, 2010) in more recent times has the identity and symbolic aspect of the city-port relationship been problematised; let alone outside the university world.

21 For example, significant is the protest of the inhabitants of the Di Negro-San Teodoro retro port area against exhaust fumes which are emitted by cruise ships and ferries, because in absence of electrified docks, even when moored they need to keep their engines running to power the internal electrical system and therefore air pollution particularly matters.

22 For example, the protest against the placement of the petrochemical hub under the Lanterna, Lighthouse of Genoa, in 2015

into large-scale mobilisations for supporting them in the case of a conflict.²³ Today “the city”—generically defined in opposition to the port—is almost unaware about what happens beside the port customs, that have become narrower. Urban and port spaces have become distinctly more separated and, once common, everyday interaction has become a rare event.

Testing New Tools for Communicating Port-City Relationship

In establishing the action framework of the project, the aim was to avoid a bottom-up approach in telling the workforce, what would have been a sort of “museification” either of the workforce itself, or of its technical gestures,²⁴ and would have eventually turned into a form of “popularization.”²⁵ Instead, if we wanted, as engaged researchers, to reply to the demands that workers expressed, we had to explore port-culture as a living matter, rather than put it in danger through looking for authenticity or exclusivity. Our work, then, presupposed that port culture has the same dynamic nature that UNESCO attributes to intangible cultural heritage and should be continuously respected instead of being “crystallized”. From the first dialogue occasions with the port workers, initiated with the aim of involving them into the festival’s cultural programming, one of the main objectives of Zones Portuaires in Genoa was defined as the development of a better meeting place between the city and the port. Instead of speaking *about the port* as researchers or curators, the authors preferred to organise a public place for discourse, where workers could express themselves as the direct authors of their telling and so interact with other groups by *co-productive acts*.²⁶ Different kinds of audiences would then have been authors of this renewed relationship together with port workers, since they were qualified by the latter as “stone guests” of the feast. Of course, this exposed the telling to the risk of misunderstandings and incomprehension, but it was the only way to assume the already existing “freedom of reception”²⁷ of each proposal.

23 The role of the workers’ family and friendship networks is evident as they took, for example, part in the extensive protests for the protection of the professions that affected the city in spring 1955 and were key players in the involvement of civil society.

24 Michael Herzfeld, *The Body Impolitic: Artisans and Artifice in the Global Hierarchy of Value* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics and the Real Life of States, Societies and Institutions* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

25 Anna Grimshaw and Amanda Ravetz, “The Ethnographic Turn - and after: A Critical Approach towards the Realignment of Art and Anthropology,” *Social Anthropology* 23, no. 4 (November 2015): 419, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12218>.

26 Joni M. Palmer, “The Resonances of Public Art: Thoughts on the Notion of Co-Productive Acts and Public Art: Resonances of Public Art,” *City & Society* 30, no. 1 (April 2018): 68–88, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.12154>.

27 Sylvia Girel, “1981-2011, Les Dispositifs En Faveur de l’art Contemporain: Entre Logique de Démocratisation et Processus de “Festivisation” Accès Différentiel et Expériences Plurielles Pour Les Publics, Vers Une Reconfiguration Des Pratiques Dites “Culturelles”,” 2014, <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01108853/document>.

ZP in Genoa became then the frame for the inquiry of new technologies of empowerment that could cross different worlds and develop this “city port community of interest” that cultural and urban planning now place at their horizon.²⁸ In order to do that, we decided to combine formal moments of reflection, in academic and institutional contexts, with informal meetings, in which the subjects involved would have the opportunity to test and express new narrations and interpretations through active participation in cultural events and art-based projects. This took place outside the constraints of the political²⁹ and academic discourse in the strict sense, but in a space capable of hosting confrontation talks. The aim was to initiate reconstructing cultural narratives of the port communities from a *place-based* perspective,³⁰ capable of reflecting the “internal” perception that these communities have of their own histories and places, often distinct from the “external” narrative, built to communicate the port to the outside world as a homogeneous brand. These internal narratives are capable of restoring the heterogeneity of values and meanings in which the groups that make up the port community do not necessarily recognise themselves in a homogeneous way, but which, put together in a shared narrative, can contribute to the construction of sustainable, symbolic and relational perspectives for the future.

Therefore, the most suitable tool seemed to be the *festival*: a moment that allows local communities to take a break from the routines of daily life and envisage new perspectives. In this moment, the physical and symbolic spaces of encounter and interlocution, academic research, cultural experimentation, opportunities for socialisation and participation intersect with defined cadences, interspersed with long periods of active involvement of port communities in creating content through discussions with artists and researchers. The results elaborated during the year are presented in front of the city and institutions at each edition of the festival and activate new impulses for the project development, not just in a dedicated place (a Port Center, a museum), but in the very port area (that is, *zones portuaires*). This includes, for example, the appreciation of dismissed buildings and areas, often concentrating communities’ memory, with the aim of developing a “new approach to heritage management [able to] well produce new governance and, thereby, create opportunities for new port–city coalitions that can align economic and environmental objectives with the sociocultural motives underpinning the goals of heritage preservation.”³¹ But what is peculiar of ZPGE experience is the use of the very living port:

28 See AIVP 2030 Agenda, particularly 6th goal.

29 Sara Grenni, L. G. Horlings, and K. Soini, “Linking Spatial Planning and Place Branding Strategies through Cultural Narratives in Places,” *European Planning Studies* 28, no. 7 (2020): 1355–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2019.1701292>.

30 Ibid. 1359

31 José M. Pagés Sánchez and Tom A. Daamen, “Using Heritage to Develop Sustainable Port–City Relationships: Lisbon’s Shift from Object-Based to Landscape Approaches,” in *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage*, ed. Carola Hein (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 385, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-00268-8_20.

the festival creates a long-term path that uses “artistic practices as generative and not cosmetic actions”, in which the “extended temporal presence is the prerequisite for rooting: it is a slow work of chiselling and stitching in tension between distance and proximity, between locality and exogenous imaginaries.”³² Within six years, the festival has evolved in its methods and forms, not always being publicly recognised by the involved public entities. The companies and port workers, followed by the Port Authority and the Coast Guard office, have gradually become more and more proactive in the phases of conception and realisation of the cultural projects.

The most effective way we found out for pursuing the shared objectives is the one that allows users direct knowledge of the port through physical access and meetings with port workers, also in the form of cultural events that allow a different vision of it by creating unexpected narratives and images.³³ Attempts to develop new cultural forms of expressing what is going on in the port in all its complexity were therefore articulated in a process of active listening to this world that was not limited to our research interests but defined in content and form together with the involved operators. The dichotomy between researcher and witness was transformed into a mutual relationship based on a common goal to be pursued with different ways of expressing or “practices of making”³⁴. No one of the involved parties has abandoned his point of view: we as researchers continued to develop the interpretation and the understanding while the workers continued to communicate their demands—some with marketing—others with political struggle. All together we experimented with new styles: that of collectively organised action *in situ*. In this sense, the festival was a fully realised and established “device”: in the Foucauldian sense of system, realised in connection,³⁵ but also by the process of production of subjectivity³⁶ of which each participant is invited to become the author. The aim of ZPGE cannot be defined as an achievement of an ethic dimension of cultural mediation, understood as a one-way transmitted acculturation or instrument, but rather as the intention to creatively imagine actions capable of reopening “obstructed passages” and reconnecting visible and invisible levels of reality.³⁷ Keeping this in mind, the structure of the festival has changed over the years, adapting its programming to

32 Alessandra Pioselli, “Comunità Contemporanee è un progetto per scoprire la ricerca artistica in connessione con i territori,” *cheFare* (blog), 2020, <https://www.che-fare.com/comunita-contemporanee-la-ricerca-artistica-in-connessione-con-i-territori/>.

33 In spring 2020, we conducted an audience study on the first five editions of the Zones Portuaires festival that took place in Genoa. The study shows the development of a greater interaction between the different types of participants as a result of the adaptation of performative and artistic ways of expressing, as well as being informative.

34 Tim Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203559055>.

35 Michel Foucault et al., *Dits et écrits, 1954-1988.*, 2017.

36 Gilles Deleuze, “Qu’est-Ce Qu’un Dispositif?” (Michel Foucault. Rencontre internationale, Paris: Le Seuil, 1988).

37 Lidia Decandia, “Towards a Polyphonic Urban Score,” *City, Territory and Architecture* 1, no. 1 (December 2014): 12, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40410-014-0012-3>.

the demands arising from the constant dialogue with the involved port communities and seeking new ways to communicate them, thus letting emerge new aspects of the Genoese port-city culture.

Opening Extraordinary Windows on Ordinary Routines

A first tool was the extraordinary opening of port spaces which are usually inaccessible to the public, through forms of access that have changed from more traditional visits to forms of self-representation and narration of port communities through the design and implementation of cultural and artistic projects over time. Hence this approach has also often revealed difficulties, disagreements and tensions. The port world is a complex and embedded world, in its economic and social dynamics as well as the physical structures of spaces, their management and permeability. The ones who work in the operating spaces are physically active for many hours throughout the day in a dimension perceived and experienced as a parallel and mechanised city that cannot afford to stop working. The adaptation to the work organisation in the port and as a consequence the flexibility in terms of ways and communication has thus become the essential characteristic of a project whose aim is to understand and help the outside world comprehend this—apparently—unrelated world. Creating something permanent between the urban fabric and the port remains exceptional, in being aware of and respecting the rhythms of the work activity. For this precise reason, it is not configured simply as an action of re-use of physical space, functional only to the events themselves, but as an opportunity to actively involve individuals and communities in the construction of highly site-specific projects, capable of catalysing the attention of the public in new ways and informally (and therefore potentially stronger) conveying knowledge of the port outside its walls. Central to the research has then become the dimension of experimentation with possibilities, as a collective poetic construction and not as a simple form of “disclosure” or “communication”.

A Contextual Field Choice: an Artistic Approach to Interpret the Port

When we started this process we realised that the focus on the port space by cultural operators and artists is not new in Genoa. We already were aware of the existence of some examples of artistic production and creation, but many others we have discovered during the process. From a historical point of view, Genoese culture has repeatedly turned its attention to the port and its communities, and has often done so through the photographic, narrative and theatrical production of authors who have had a strong personal connection with the port city.

One of the main artistic languages that has been used for exploring the port of Genoa is photography. In 1964 the Society of Culture of Genoa asked Lisetta Carmi to realise a reportage: the outcome of the Genoese photographer's work was the travelling exhibition entitled *Genova Porto*, which documented and testified to the working conditions of the dockers. Photographer Mario Dondero, who was also a proud member of the Unique Port Company, after his shooting of Genoa from the 1990s onwards, in 2012 began a long reportage which led to the publication of a photographic book with the title as harsh as it is complete, *Il Porto*. The exhibition has been rearranged several times over the years and was also part of the fifth edition of ZPGE in 2019. It was exhibited at the Galata Museum and compared with the more recent photographic project *Refusal* by Danile Correale, which depicts the folded arms of the workers of CULMV company, in an exhibition born from the collaboration between ZAP (Zones Art Portuaires, curated by Francesca Busellato) and TEU (Twenty Foot Equivalent Unit - Martina Angelotti and Anna Daneri in collaboration with the Department of Education – Genoa University). This project thus opened the doors between the world of photography and contemporary art as well as between the festival audiences and the port workers and created a space for dialogue in a museum location, familiar to some and less so to others. Was it possible to reproduce this approach also elsewhere?

Something similar also exists in the theatre world. In 1969 Luigi Squarzina and Vico Faggi produced the play *Cinque Giorni al Porto* (Five Days at the Port), which is about the dockers' strike that took place around Christmas 1900. It was produced by the Genoese theatre, Teatro Stabile di Genova, directed by Ivo Chiesa and staged in the Sala Chiamata del Porto, the place historically designated for the call of the Genoese dockers, for the daily assignment of tasks at the docks. In 1999 and 2000, the theatre Teatro della Tosse transformed the Diga Foranea—breakwater of the Port of Genoa—into a temporary stage for two plays, respectively called *Odisseo, Ulisse o Nessuno?* and Aristofane's *Birds and other utopias*, directed by Tonino Conte with a stage design by Emanuele Luzzati.

But while photography as a documentary and journalistic medium has never stopped investigating and communicating the port's needs to the outside world, experimentation with the performing arts in the port is only carried out in sporadic episodes, until it ceases completely, partly also because of the greater difficulties introduced by the most recent safety regulations.

In 1992, Renzo Piano's urban redevelopment project for the Old Port of Genoa in occasion of "*Colombiadi*", International Exhibition Genoa '92, tied the historic centre back to the sea, in contact with the water together with a pinch of port. But if the urban waterfront became the city's privileged stage for hosting shows and events, it also relegated the operational port

to a mere, albeit fascinating, backdrop. To what extent is it possible to rethink this spatial and identity relationship today? To answer this question, we chose to experiment with the artistic and performative methods.

Artistic Installations

A few examples will be presented in order to explain how creative methods let emerge some forms of knowledge about the port we hardly would have been able to get differently, and how they can contribute to the development of a shared port-city culture.

In 2018 we decided to respond with Zones Portuaires to the invitation expressed by JR Artist in 2011 during the TED Prize,³⁸ with which he initiated Inside Out/The people's art project: a global initiative transforming messages of personal identity into large format artistic installation. The aim of the global project is to give a face to members of invisible communities, or in the most diverse ways on the margins of their societies. The suggestion seemed to be consistent with the need for greater public recognition expressed by the port workers. The photographic project *Le Facce del Porto* was then developed, in collaboration with the photographer Simone Lezzi, aimed to discover work done by the people in the port. The faces and stories of the port workers were depicted on one hundred portraits, printed in a two-by-three metre format and affixed to the inner surface of the dam that protects the port from the open sea. The immediate purpose of the port installation was the community's greeting to arriving and departing ships, with the goal of revealing the human dimension of port work and restoring public recognition to it, in an era of increasing mechanisation and the weakening of manual functions within the port [Fig. 1].

The way the installation was conceived with the workers was itself a response to this demand of public recognition: the close-up framing of the face, the same for each subject, and the use of black and white in the prints, in line with the indications of the Inside Out project, make the uniforms and work clothes look homogeneous, while the horizontal *façade* of the seawall places everyone—visible and less visible workers—on the same level: terminal operators, dockers, pilots, moorers, boatmen, employees of the Port Authority and the Coast Guard, forwarding agents, workers, ship repair officers and shipping agents. In line not just with the objective of JR's global platform, but also with some workers' demand, the perception of roles and functions were overturned: each portrait contained a story that had the same weight as the one represented by the portrait next to it. It was the protagonists themselves who told the public first-hand about them during the boat trips, which were part of the 2018 edition of the festival in order to see the installation up close. These visits

38 JR, *My Wish: Use Art to Turn the World inside Out*, 1299202320, https://www.ted.com/talks/jr_my_wish_use_art_to_turn_the_world_inside_out.



FIG. 1 Inside Out project on the port's dam, ZPGE18 (ph. Simone Lezzi)

were the occasion for observing the self-displaying discourse port workers made in a public situation, in front of a specific audience: something they never have the opportunity to do otherwise. Moreover, their discourse was directly submitted to questioning and even negotiating, and was forced to adapt depending on the different audiences, often attracted by the artistic proposal itself and hard to be involved without it. This dialogue revealed identitarian representations from both of the sides and moulded new forms of awareness of the port within the audiences: it contributed to develop a port-city culture that a pure scientific and "distant" enquiry would have produced just in theoretical, mediated terms and would not have easily shared with a large audience, even with the best purposes of dissemination.

It took one year to create the portraits and some difficulties were involved: in some cases, the top management of the firms more accustomed to public exposure of their image, took the acceptance of their employees, who were often intimidated or distrustful, for granted. As the sensitivities of everybody were different, some workers refused, others insisted on being proudly present alongside categories which were considered "antagonistic". This showed us how port workers identify themselves in different communities and place them in a complex system of alliances and antagonisms.

Site-Specific Performances

In 2017, we also started to conceive some site-specific performances in different operational areas of the port. These were co-produced by the concessionary companies of the spaces who, in fact, have been curating since then together with the artistic direction of the festival the conception and direction of each event, which in turn actively involved the terminal workers, the Port System Authority and the Coast Guard in all

the conception and implementation phases - for example by asking collectively: which kind of port structure is more representative of your work? And why? What can we do, technically, with a tugboat (with a crane, with a silo...)? Performances exploited technical potential of port structure as imagined, indicated and definitively acted by port workers. Besides being very communicatively powerful, the message of the performance had then an important impact in a ritual perspective. It is capable of affirming new shared symbols and restructuring the relational logic between communities in a generative way.

The musical performance *Marakeb/Navi*, curated by the musician FiloQ, drew its attention to a place on the edge of the port and the city which is visible from the urban fabric but inaccessible outside the operational framework. As the owners, *Rimorchiatori Riuniti* (Reunited Tugs), proudly like to underline, it is the oldest dry dock in the Mediterranean Sea made of stone. In order to realise this performance, the basin was filled at different levels by the operators. Some of the ship sirens sampled in the port echoed within the basin, where the sound took on different tones and characters. The technical construction methods of artistic production were an integral part of the story and placed the content developed for this purpose by the specific professional category at the centre of the message, as well as the artistic form it takes.

In the same year, the eVenti Verticali company performed an acrobatic dance on the metal surfaces of the vegetable oil storage silos of the SAAR terminal, according to an agreed choreography, while the audience watched the performance from a boat. As the participants were told, the show would not have been possible, if the captain of the Tanker AS Omara which arrived that day at the terminal pier earlier than expected, had not agreed to temporarily unmoor it, and if the mooring crew, with the authorisation of the Port Authority, had not volunteered to clear the water from the lines to allow the boat carrying the audience to approach.

Since then, the management of the SAAR terminal has often granted its spaces for unprecedented use.³⁹ Following the same principle, Boosta, keyboardist of the Italian group Subsonica, reopened for one night the Stazioni Marittime urban promenade,⁴⁰ with his *Ode to the Moon* which he performed on the piano in 2019.

These experiences show how the operators, in their goal of bypassing the port-city break they felt and expressed, appropriated the ZP device and found in it a form of public legitimisation of their work and routines, respectful of the unpredictability of time in the port - the primary reason why flexibility is a fundamental feature of its relationship with the city. In

39 In 2018 Gnu Quartet and FiloQ performed the show *Nautofonie* and in 2019 *Open Ports* was a sound interpretation with which the Neapolitan group *Almamegretta* ideally linked the ports of Genoa and Naples.

40 Designed for the city in 2017 and closed since 2013 for security reasons following the enactment of increasingly stringent anti-terrorism regulations.

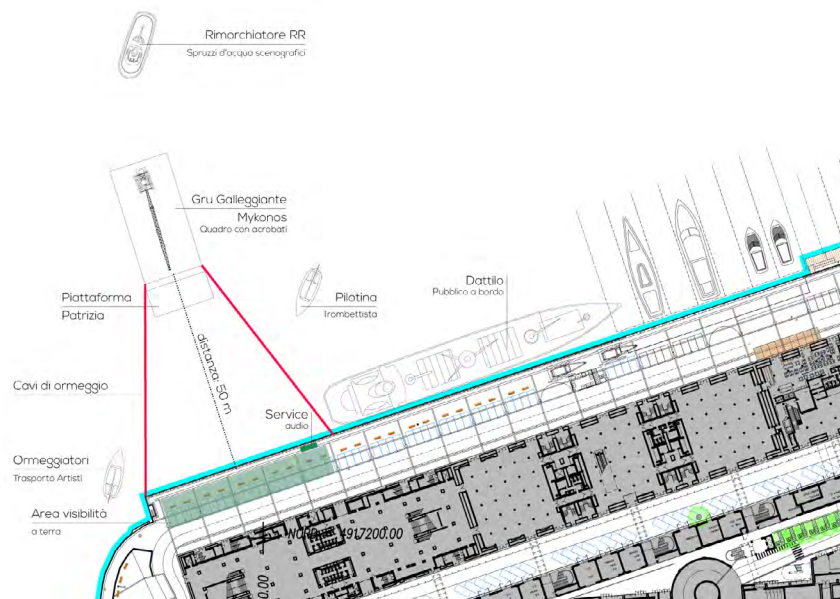


FIG. 2 Scheme of the involvement of port operators in the performance *Orizzonti*, ZPGE19

the organisation of artistic and performing actions, technical and authorisation restrictions that initially appeared insurmountable were resolved thanks to the will and skills of the workers themselves, who were motivated in their efforts because they were the authors of the process and no longer merely the subjects of an investigation and a story to be told by others. Innovative forms of governance and community empowerment were then experimented through performative acts: the show *Orizzonti*, produced in 2019 on the occasion of the simultaneous opening with Genoa Shipping Week, allowed this active involvement of port operators in the creation, in all its phases, of a performance addressed to both citizens and to other port operators and communities, with no distinction of target.

Coordinated by the authors, the team consisted of an artistic director, a director and several acrobats working side by side with pilots, moorers, tugboats, the Port Authority and the Coast Guard in order to realise the project collectively, from the conception to the realisation. The show involved a series of acrobatic evolutions on a suspended metal structure which the artistic direction of the festival proposed to hook up to a floating crane pontoon. The comparative assessment of the possibilities has led to knowledge of the history and conditions of various structures of this kind: some have been discarded because of technical requirements, others because of unavoidable difficulties in involving the reference companies, others because of legal-administrative constraints. The final choice was the *Mykonos*, a floating pontoon with a white crane, the tallest in the port. The company owning the crane, like others, initially resisted the proposal, but with the mediation of the involved shipping agents, finally agreed to lend the monumental equipment for this purpose. Moving and positioning the pontoon required the presence of a tugboat and a mooring company, while the acrobats and the musician would have to be ferried to the scene on board by a pilot boat. It was decided that each operational



FIG. 3 Preparing the Orizzonti show: the Guard Coast on the Dattilo ship, the Mykonos crane with the acrobats, a tugboat, a mooring boat (ph: MEB), ZPGE19.

movement would contribute, highlighted by sound and light, to the creation of the choreography: pilots, moorers, tugs will be co-protagonists of the show [Fig. 2].

Not even the Coast Guard was entirely convinced: the area where the performance should take place is the stretch of water in the Old Port of Genoa, from where a large number of regular and cruise ships set sail from 6 p.m. onwards. The movement of the waves would not have made it possible to guarantee the safety of the artists suspended from the sixty-metre-high chariot. A reduced time frame was therefore chosen, within which, barring delays and unforeseen events, all ships should have left. This was not enough to guarantee safety for the Port Authority, which therefore opted for a temporary blockade of maritime traffic in the entire port of Genoa. The staff therefore dictated the timing of the performance, suspending movements in the port from sunset until the end of the show. The result would have been unimaginable in 2015: the audience watched the performance from the dock and on board of the Coast Guard ship Dattilo, which was moored next to the *Magazzini del Cotone*, the old cotton warehouse; at the end of the show, the sirens of pilot boats, tugboats, cranes and ships sounded in unison. The company owning the Mikonos ship offered its availability for future productions [Fig. 3].

A similar result, in terms of involvement, was achieved in 2020. In order not to resign to the impossibility of maintaining a continuity of action and an appointment that has become regular and eagerly awaited over the years, to deal with the particular situation caused by the Covid-19 health emergency a performance for the whole city was conceived in agreement with the Genoa Harbour Master's Office: the shipping companies welcomed musicians on board of their ships who sampled the frequency of

the ships' sirens beforehand and use them to create a musical score that was performed by the same ships on 9th October 2020, for the opening of Zones Portuaires. It was then up to the entire city of Genoa to resound at the port's voice.

Conclusions

As we have seen, the official discourse on the port-city culture in Genoa stresses the commercial more than the cultural and human dimension: everyday, every month, and every year, it celebrates in numbers successful results by displaying new records in terms of goods and passengers stream. Besides a vague form of pride it may generate in port workers, it comes out as the ultimate reason for the port-city break some workers used to speak about. Still this official discourse is a unilateral representation of a very complex world, which does not account for everyone. As anthropologist Brian Larkin says, "The act of defining an infrastructure is a categorizing moment. Taken thoughtfully, it comprises a cultural analytic that highlights the epistemological and political commitments involved in selecting what one sees as infrastructural (and thus causal) and what one leaves out."⁴¹ By considering ports as infrastructures, the same could be said about them. The way we speak about the port, and specifically about the port as a central item of the Genoese identity and culture, has a direct influence on the local sense of belonging and to the shape communities assume in a dynamic and relational system. The analytic approach developed through the experience of ZP project leads us to affirm that there is no pre-existing port-city culture to be "revealed" as a mysterious or hidden material object, there is instead a discourse to let emerge.

This paper had the goal of focusing on the use of artistic practice as a research technology, which is therefore configured not so much as a process of creating a work of art in itself, but rather as the realisation of context-specific art projects aimed at bringing out new heritage and contents about the port-city culture. If port-city culture is not abstractly assumed as an *a priori* concept, but understood as a particular, site- and time-specific creation, it can not be defined without the active involvement of the participants,⁴² who are urged to become authors of the process of reading and interpreting places in their physical dimension and social relations.

The art-based research processes have the capacity to open up spaces for imagination, to explore existing narratives and to generate new ones⁴³ which, because they are developed outside of institutional venues, can be freely and constructively critical of the development and transformation

41 Brian Larkin, "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (October 21, 2013): 330, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092412-155522>.

42 Knowles Gary J. & Ardra L. Cole, Arts-informed Research. In L.M.Given (ed) , *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, Sage (2008): 32-35.

43 cf footnote 28

plans they establish. Besides museum experiences, the attempt of ZPGE working as a “combined and connective” action⁴⁴ with inhabitants, industrialists and workers in the port, public and private institutions, is to ensure that these practices succeed in impacting on the reflections of public institutional policies in the elaboration of shared planning strategies for the transformation of the territory.

44 Alessandra Pioselli, “Comunità Contemporanee è un progetto per scoprire la ricerca artistica in connessione con i territori,” *cheFare* (blog), 2020, <https://www.che-fare.com/comunita-contemporanee-la-ricerca-artistica-in-connessione-con-i-territori/>.

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Maria Pina Usai, architect, is attracted by the dynamics of interaction between landscape, architecture, art and society. She deals with strategic planning for the sustainable development of the coastal landscape. Collaborator of the Coastal Conservation Agency of Sardinia of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia, co-founder of U-BOOT Lab, a multidisciplinary group focused on research in action on highly vulnerable landscapes, co-founder of MEDSEA Mediterranean Sea and Coast Foundation, she is also artistic director of Zones Portuaires Genova and PhD student at DICAAR / University of Cagliari - Sardinia.

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PRACTICES

The Maritime Mindset: A Conceptual and Practical Exploration of Mapping Port Cities

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ABSTRACT

Centuries of trade have left their traces in the culture and society of port cities. This paper explores the usefulness of the concept “maritime mindset” to recognize these traces, and analyses it from different disciplinary perspectives. In the second part, it proposes the practice of “deep mapping” as a methodology of identifying and documenting expressions of maritime culture and trade in public space. In conclusion, it addresses some questions that are crucial when addressing a maritime mindset, such as whether it is a top-down or bottom-up mindset, which spatial scale it entails, and whose values and interests the mindset represents. Ultimately, we argue that (deep) mapping can play a role in producing a more layered spatial, social and cultural understanding of the complex nature of port cities.

KEYWORDS

Mapping; Port Cities; Culture; Identity; Maritime Mindset

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The Maritime Mindset: A Conceptual and Practical Exploration of Mapping Port Cities

Due to their position on the edge of water and land, port cities face unique challenges that require constant innovation. At present, these challenges include sea level rise, international legislative demands to radically lower CO₂ emissions, and social tensions stemming from 'superdiverse' demographics.¹ It no longer suffices to see a port city merely as an economic engine that can be adjusted through technological innovations. We argue that in order to tackle multifaceted challenges and arrive at sustainable solutions, economic and technological knowledge needs to be accompanied by a deep understanding of relationships between space, society and culture.

The Leiden-Delft-Erasmus University consortium's PortCityFutures Centre (www.portcityfutures.nl) is well equipped to gain such an understanding, as it consists of anthropologists from Leiden University, designers, architectural and urban historians from Delft University of Technology, and economists and historians from Erasmus University Rotterdam. Together, they analyze relationships between space, society and culture within port city territories, from different viewpoints and multiple disciplines. This multidisciplinary offers its own challenges, however, as scholars of diverse disciplinary backgrounds use different concepts and methods. Moreover, the center aims to reach out to practitioners, which even further complicates communication. It is therefore crucial to be precise about words, concepts and meanings. Affiliated researcher Beatrice Moretti, for example, emphasizes the need for a glossary or dictionary of words defining and relating to port cities. "Much like when talking of love," she argues, "discussing the port city relationship requires careful understanding of what words actually mean. The continuous dialogue between water and land and the dynamic landscape between port and cities entwined in global networks necessitates a careful understanding of changing terms of port and urban infrastructures and functions."²

Not only are words important in the relationships between port and city and between researchers and practitioners; words and language also influence and shape the environment - and vice versa. The PortCityFutures subgroup Mapping Maritime Mindsets, which consists of PhD and post-doctoral researchers from the disciplines of design, history and geography, has been addressing how various economic, social and cultural relations within port cities leave their mark on spatial structures and the urban fabric. Since these structures are of human manufacture and, in

1 Peter Scholten, Maurice Crul, and Paul van de Laar, eds., *Coming to Terms with Superdiversity: The Case of Rotterdam* (Cham: Springer, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96041-8>.

2 Beatrice Moretti, "Port City Discourse: A New Vocabulary for Research and Action," *portcityfutures*, March 31, 2021, <https://www.portcityfutures.nl/news/port-city-discourse-a-new-vocabulary-for-research-and-action>.

turn, influence life within the port city, this research group uses the term “maritime mindset”. This concept encompasses a specific mentality or culture and a key element in what Carola Hein views as characteristics for that which enables port cities to be resilient.³ This conceptualization, however, demands a definition that is multidisciplinary and suitable for both academics and practitioners. Evaluating the concept’s usefulness requires answering several basic questions: What is a maritime mindset? To what extent and in what ways are port cities characterized by a maritime mindset? Have port cities, throughout their history of transnational connections and industrial developments, generated a particular stance and mentality in inhabitants and governing entities that have shaped their urban fabric?

In this article, we aim to clarify the meaning of the maritime mindset by using the written equivalent of a roundtable discussion. To come to a more nuanced understanding that further develops the concept for port city-related research and decision-making processes, we each reflect on the concept from our own research perspective. In the second part, we introduce the practice of mapping as one way of integrating social, cultural and spatial tools for multifaceted port city questions. We can only imagine, design, plan and assess the future of port cities by taking stock of their complex maritime urban histories, and mapping is one way of doing so.⁴

1. Defining the Maritime Mindset

For **Carola Hein**, port cities are a particular type of city. Located at the edge of sea and land, they have long been nodes in global flows of goods. Their spaces, institutions, and tacit knowledge have developed often over centuries to facilitate shipping. Diverse public and private stakeholders of all classes have often come together to facilitate shipping and maritime practices. The combination of maritime and urban interests can lead to creative planning for resilience, particularly when port and city authorities pursue the same strategies. Conversely, social unrest, strikes, and other social actions often disrupted shipping practices and led to social adjustments. Awareness of ships, shipping and water was long part of individual and collective imaginaries among larger parts of the population. The concept of the maritime mindset and the values that adhere to it are embedded in the actions of institutions and other local actors - including citizens - and are inscribed in spatial patterns, sometimes over centuries.

3 Carola Hein, “Port City Resilience: (Re-)Connecting Spaces, Institutions and Culture,” portcityfutures, March 17, 2020, <https://www.portcityfutures.nl/news/port-city-resilience-re-connecting-spaces-institutions-and-culture>.

4 Vincent Baptist, “Deep Maps and Time Machines: Exciting Times for Collaborative Research on Port Cities,” portcityfutures, November 24, 2020, <https://www.portcityfutures.nl/news/deep-maps-and-time-machines-exciting-times-for-collaborative-research-on-port-cities>.

Over time, this maritime mindset has become less evident. The buy-in for port and shipping activities has diminished in many cities as ports are automated and detached from historic locations. The renewal of waterfronts helped maintain a certain awareness of the maritime past and builds on historic forms, but often ignores historic water and shipping practices. A lack of awareness about the implications of water-related practices is highly problematic at a time of climate change-related sea-level rise and changing water patterns. At the same time, maritime and shipping activities can be problematic, causing opposition against port- and shipping-related practices (dredging, infrastructure for logistics, new warehouses). In order to maintain or even stimulate water awareness, and to stay connected to the maritime past, it is necessary to re-negotiate what the maritime mindset entails, and how it can inform creative practices in present day port developments.

In order to better understand the long term development of the maritime mindset, **Thomas van den Brink** researches actors involved in maritime trade such as transporters, traders, brokers and processors of commodities. A dominant drive is an actor's inclination to make profit by increasing volume, reducing expenses and risks, or - in the case of public actors - stimulate maritime trade to increase wealth for citizens, although the fruits are often unevenly distributed. A fundamental characteristic of this mindset could be the ability to create new opportunities and implement novelties. Another distinct aspect of the maritime mindset is an actor's traditions, rituals as celebrations of past maritime successes or future fortune, like the baptism of a ship, a maritime festival or the building of an iconic office or monument. A port city, in this context, can be identified as the spatial clustering and expression of actors within this network.

The maritime commodity trade, however, bears a constant risk of becoming obsolete and uncompetitive, so operating in a commodity ecosystem requires continuous investment. This very phenomenon has made **Vincent Baptist** wonder whether port cities might well be unique among cities in that they vehemently try to cling to and confirm their own status. The persistent threat of industrial obsolescence, at least for large industrial port cities, can be one explanation for this, while the urban inferiority complex that many 'second cities' suffer from might be another, especially with cities like Rotterdam or Marseille.⁵ If this is the case, however, then the construction of a maritime mindset can well be considered a self-fulfilling prophecy, a defensive act to boost the distinctiveness of a port city by simply strengthening one's belief in it. In this respect, it becomes crucial to unravel the specific mechanisms, both bottom-up and top-down driven, that enable this process.

5 Jerome I. Hodos, *Second Cities: Globalization and Local Politics in Manchester and Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011); Rodrigo V. Cardoso and Evert J. Meijers, "Contrasts between First-Tier and Second-Tier Cities in Europe: A Functional Perspective," *European Planning Studies* 24, no. 5 (May 3, 2016): 996–1015, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2015.1120708>.

To understand these mechanisms, **Tianchen Dai** suggests viewing the notion and theory of ‘mindset’⁶ from the perspective of psychology, where this term has been widely explored and used. The psychological study of mindsets focuses on the individual and examines the self-conceptions people use to structure the self and guide one’s behavior. The ways one’s beliefs are shaped can greatly influence how one thinks and behaves.⁷ Meanwhile, one’s mindset is very much related to personal characteristics and intelligence, which is why it is often discussed in relation to ‘motivation’ and ‘self-regulation’. A maritime mindset, then, can describe personal attitudes, motivations and intentions regarding the maritime environment (or the urban environment connected to the sea). This definition can serve to complement Carola Hein’s argument suggesting the intimate link between the maritime mindset and values shared among diverse groups of public and private actors. Clarifying the discrepancies and overlaps between individual mindsets is the key to deliberate a collective mindset, which is shared by diverse actors and can tackle emerging maritime issues based on consent.

Despite their differences, people do often perceive the world in similar ways, says **Hilde Sennema**. Here, we must take a closer look at the word ‘mindset’: how the mind is set determines how people view or perceive the world. In his book *Art and Illusion* (2002), renowned art historian Ernest Gombrich explains that the mind is set to perceive images in a certain way, with certain expectations. As an example, he uses puppet theatre. As the spectator gets used to the lesser-than-life sized puppets, they startle when they see the hand of the puppeteer, which in relation to the dolls appears to be a giant: “[...] for a moment at least, we had to adjust our perception, since the scale of the puppets had become our norm”.⁸ Perception, our ‘filtering device’ or ‘mental set’, Gombrich argues, is crucial to the human activity of sense making or attaching meaning. Taking this into consideration, we approach the field of semiotics, the study of signs and sign-using behavior. Seeing ‘a city with a port’ through a mind that is set on viewing it as a maritime city or a port city, can also change one’s attitude towards it.

While Hilde and others consider the maritime mindset as a mental attitude or culture, **Yvonne van Mil** argues that a mindset is also a way of acting - action driven by a certain mindset. From that perspective, the entire spatial concept of the port - the intersection of water and land, port infrastructure, storage facilities, etc. - can be seen as an expression

6 Katharina Bernecker and Veronika Job, “Mindset Theory,” in *Social Psychology in Action: Evidence-Based Interventions from Theory to Practice*, ed. Kai Sassenberg and Michael L.W. Vliek (Cham: Springer, 2019), 179–91, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13788-5_12.

7 Carol S. Dweck, “Implicit Theories,” in *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, ed. Paul Van Lange, Arie Kruglanski, and Edward T. Higgins, vol. 2 (London: SAGE, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446249222>.

8 Ernst H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, 6^o edizione (London and New York: Phaidon, 2002).

of the maritime mindset. Referring to the semiotics Hilde mentions, the physical signs, systems and signposts⁹ of this mindset represent the ideas and processes that shaped the built environment of the port city, yet the ambitions and processes itself are far from local and the scope of the maritime mindset does not stop at the boundaries of the port either. To better understand the maritime mindset and the way it reaches into the surrounding landscape, we need to examine the port - and thus the maritime mindset - at the scale on which it operates, here loosely called the port city territory, or as Hein also calls it, the port cityscape.¹⁰ Reading the spatial signs and systems of the cultural landscape of the port city as the semiotics of the built environment¹¹ helps us to better understand the mindset of the culture itself.

Linking to Gombrich's idea of shifting scales and Van Mil's call for a spatial approach, **Yingying Gan** found that the focus of the maritime mindset could be different on different scales. At the global scale, the economic, social, political, and technological development of the world can be linked to the growth of localities like port cities. However, on the national scale, the key role of port cities or the reasons for the establishment of ports, should be considered differently. Here, the four main causes of port cities (as categorized by Wang, 2010: self-development, newly discovered or developed land, colonized countries, and midway stations or passages for shipping) can relate to a different development with a different mindset.¹² At the local scale, it therefore would be interesting to pay more attention to the networks that are represented within a port city, and the spatial impact they exert.

2. How Mapping Can Help

This spatial impact in cities, regions and other places in maritime networks, is one of the most fundamental ways to combine the many directions in which the maritime mindset can express itself. After all, the way in which different phenomena cluster together in port cities, or the surrounding region, is what determines their unique cultural disposition. As a method that focuses on documenting spatial relationships, mapping makes it possible to combine multiple themes and disciplines. It

9 Nadia Alaily-Mattar, "Port Cities, Architecture and the Return to Water," *portcityfutures*, November 30, 2020, <https://www.portcityfutures.nl/news/port-cities-architecture-and-the-return-to-water>.

10 Carola Hein, "The Port Cityscape: Spatial and Institutional Approaches to Port City Relationships," *PORTUSplus* 8 (2019), <https://portusplus.org/index.php/pp/article/view/190>.

11 Donald Preziosi, *The Semiotics of the Built Environment: An Introduction to Architectonic Analysis* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1979).

12 César Ducruet and Sung-Woo Lee, "Frontline Soldiers of Globalisation: Port–City Evolution and Regional Competition," *GeoJournal* 67, no. 2 (February 21, 2007): 107–22, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-006-9037-9>; Jean-Paul Rodrigue, "Transportation and the Geographical and Functional Integration of Global Production Networks," *Growth and Change* 37, no. 4 (December 2006): 510–25, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2257.2006.00338.x>; James J. (王缉宪) Wang, *Interaction and Development of China's Port Cities (中国港口城市的互动与发展)* (Southeast University Press (东南大学出版社), 2010).



FIG. 1 Map of the South bank of Rotterdam, ca 1930, with Warehouse Santos marked yellow. Via Kadaster.nl.

enables us to see relations that otherwise stay unnoticed. Conversely, it helps to deconstruct or confirm narratives - in both the collective memory and in historiography - that have developed or are created to obtain or maintain a certain status.

Here, we are particularly interested in deep mapping.¹³ A deep map goes beyond traditional mapping methods and leads to a better comprehension of the complexity of space-time interactions. In the 1990s, the term garnered some initial popular interest through the book *PrairyErth: A Deep Map* (1991) by the American historian and travel writer William Least Heat-Moon. In this book, Least Heat-Moon undertakes a vast survey of the Kansas plains to show that the state's landscape and history are not merely related to its spatial, tangible characteristics, but also pertain to experiences, languages, thoughts, memories and expectations. In this sense, a deep map becomes a map of a particular place, rather than a space, that unearths and makes comprehensible the intricacies embedded in a certain locality. The deep mapping approach suits the subjective, culturally embedded, yet often intangible perception that defines the relationships between space, society and culture that result in specific places [Fig. 1].

In the process, however, we have run into certain difficulties applying the original ambition of deep mapping to the concept of the maritime mind-set. The tradition of mapping equally deals with geometrically objective

13 David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris, eds., *Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1zxxz2>.



FIG. 2 Coffee warehouse Santos in Rotterdam. Photo by Hester Blankestijn via Rotterdam Make It Happen

and measurable entities. Measuring and calculating space is also a strong element of maritime culture reflected in practices of triangulation, map making, and determining a ship's location at sea. A deep map should do justice to this side of maritime traditions as well. Meanwhile, mapping the maritime mindset goes beyond geometric 'objectivity' and aims to grasp expressions of shipping and trade, their meanings for the everyday life of port city workers and citizens, and the signposts that have been put in place to maintain the position of a certain place within maritime networks. The multidisciplinary nature of our group allows the map to become truly 'deep', with observations, historical materials and knowledge that interacts and makes the whole more than merely the sum of its parts [Fig. 2].

These parts, then, are specified on layers of a specific location or geographical area. Each layer represents a different theme or perspective and is created by a researcher from a specific discipline. In our current work-in-progress on a deep map of the historical Santos coffee warehouse in the port city of Rotterdam, for example, each of us is collecting data within their research theme. Van den Brink collects data on the commodity chains and companies, Sennema collects sources on the relationships between these companies and individuals within the city, Van Mil on the different spatial scales where the coffee trade took place and on Santos as a 'signpost', and Baptist on the movement of workers around the building and within the nearby pleasure district of Katendrecht. These sources can be geodata, but also photographs, artworks, company documents, or even touristic postcards. Bringing these data together requires coordinated language, which is Dai's task: she attunes different meanings and concepts by creating a glossary. Moreover, she analyzes the value attached to this building as a national monument. In this way, we expect to identify variables that help in creating a mapping methodology [Fig. 3].



FIG. 3 Café Pretoria with warehouse Santos in the background, 1929: a deep map allows to chart the movements of users of a certain building. Photo by F.H. van Dijk, Gemeente Rotterdam (Stadsarchief) CC-0.

Our ideal is to apply deep mapping in such a way that it results in discovering new spatial, social and cultural patterns by combining specific one-dimensional datasets that relate to specific themes. We thus hope to integrate different themes, disciplines, scales and scopes, and stimulate debate between scientific disciplines and experts on what makes a maritime mindset. The outcome of such a methodology is a granular assessment of the context of a certain space or an artefact, making intangible aspects tangible. This allows us to see beyond narratives in history books, and therefore shed light on the development of - in this case - port cities and other places within maritime networks. This functionality, moreover, enables interdisciplinary collaborations that combine different approaches. Finally, deep mapping is an imaginative way of reaching out to a broader audience - as is the case with research projects such as the European and Amsterdam Time Machine, and A Deep Map of the English Lake District for instance - and potentially add data collected by citizens themselves.

Conclusion

One conclusion to our roundtable is that the maritime mindset (as both Baptist and Van den Brink note) often relates to the maintaining of a competitive position within the maritime world. The fear of losing this position and becoming obsolete due to developments in maritime trade and industries is an important driver for port city-related or maritime policies. This focus on maintaining positions and status, however, often leads to a top-down set of values and narratives that does not necessarily have the best interest of the citizens of a port city in mind. The maritime mindset, therefore, is neither intrinsically good nor bad. A collective mindset, which is a mosaic of individual mindsets, does require a coordination of concepts in order to be able to tackle emerging challenges. This requires a certain flexibility as well. As we saw with the example of Gombrich's puppeteer, a mindset is not actually 'set', but recognizing a certain mindset is necessary to be able to distinguish between different meanings, scales and contexts.

To be able to identify, recognize and reflect on the characteristics of a maritime mindset, we have come up with a set of clarifying questions, as a first step to a methodology. Instead of absolute dichotomies, these questions seek a position about dualities on a gradual spectrum:

1. Whose mindset? (individual or collective)
2. Who decides? (top-down or bottom-up)
3. Who benefits? (business or elite interests, common good)
4. Which scale? (local, regional, national, global)
5. To what end? (self-interest and/or self-image)
6. With what consequences? (desirable or undesirable, and for whom)
7. Tangible or intangible? (are the "expressions" of the mindset buildings and artefacts, or stories, values and narratives)

The questions whose mindset it actually is, and for whom a certain mindset works, are crucial to determine what the mindset is or should be. It is one of the most open questions within this spectrum, and needs constant evaluation. Mapping can help do this: in analyzing the history of a certain place, but also through involving groups and individuals that are less likely to appear in the dominant histories of maritime trade. We believe that our approach can play a role in producing a more layered spatial, social and cultural understanding of the complex nature of port cities. If used correctly, it can serve as an open and democratic tool to reflect on port city policies, practices and the built environment. A discussion about mapping can bring people around the same table, but also potentially include the tacit knowledge of citizens and practitioners.

Hilde Sennema studied Art History and specialized in post-war urban planning and governance. After working in the heritage sector, she started her PhD research at the Erasmus University with Paul van de Laar. Her topic is the public-private governance network that modernized and rebuilt the port city of Rotterdam between 1930 and 1970. Her dissertation is co-supervised by Carola Hein (TU Delft) and business historian Ben Wubs (EUR). For the inter-university Center for Port City Futures, she is blog editor and member of the coordination team. Besides her research, she has been working as a publicist for among others *Vers Beton* and *Het Financieele Dagblad*.

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Thomas van den Brink has been a member of the PortCityFutures group since 2020. In his PhD, he develops a deep mapping approach to identify port city culture through the lens of commodity ecosystems. He was educated as a historical geographer at Utrecht University and specialised in landscape history at the University of Groningen. He also did a minor in archaeology and followed courses on heritage and space at the Vrije Universiteit. After graduation he continued to research the relation between time and space at Wageningen University and TU Delft and by carrying out projects with his company: *THOM - Telling History with Original Maps*.

Carola Hein is Professor of the History of Architecture and Urban Planning at Delft University of Technology. She has published widely and received a Guggenheim and an Alexander von Humboldt fellowship as well as other major grants. Her books include *The Urbanisation of the Sea* (2020), *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage* (2019), *The Routledge Planning History Handbook* (2017), *Uzō Nishiyama, Reflections on Urban, Regional and National Space* (2017), *Port Cities* (2011), *The Capital of Europe* (2004), *Rebuilding Urban Japan after 1945* (2003), *Cities, Autonomy and Decentralisation in Japan* (2006), and *Hauptstadt Berlin 1957-58* (1991).

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PRACTICES

Landscape Perspectives for the Port-City Relationship. Reporting from the Workshops of Taranto, Brindisi and Bari

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ABSTRACT

This article delivers the report of a cycle of three workshops dedicated to urban water and port city landscape, which took place in Taranto (2018), Brindisi (2019) and Bari (2021). These experiences, co-ordinated by Prof. Michael Jakob and Ing. Arch. Maria Cristina Petralla, aimed to analyse the current status and design the future of these territories, focusing on their landscape elements. The coexistence and overlapping of different spatial uses and conflicts have been investigated, between development and protection. Common elements and differences of each port city's cultural heritage were evaluated, in order to develop a coherent landscape-oriented approach that can lay the foundations for an inclusive and resilient re-design process. After a short overview regarding the water culture and maritime mindset of each case studies and the specificities of each workshop, the article reflects on the role of participative workshops as practices enabling collaborative decision-making and fostering the recognition of the port cityscape as a driver of shared development perspective.

KEYWORDS

Water Cultural Landscapes; Port City Heritage; Community Engagement; Participative Workshop; Southern Adriatic and Ionian Seas.

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Introduction

The Apulian cities of Taranto, Brindisi and Bari, facing the Mediterranean Sea with heterogeneous and distinctive characteristics, hosted as case studies the editions of a research workshop cycle, organised and coordinated by Prof. Michael Jakob – Professor at HEPIA Genève, Politecnico di Milano, Accademia di Architettura USI Mendrisio and EPFL of Lausanne – and Ing. Arch. Maria Cristina Petralla – landscape architect and former lecturer at Oslo School of Architecture and Design and Politecnico di Milano – with the contribution of Prof. João Nunes – PROAP and Accademia di Architettura USI Mendrisio – and Arch. Anna Maria Curcuruto – member of the Sea Resource Partnership Body promoted by Port System Authority of Southern Adriatic Sea,¹ as expert in spatial planning and urban plans drafting.

The epistemological statute of the workshops consisted of a landscape approach to the territory, understanding its history, reading critically its present and contributing to its future, by re-designing the interaction spaces between city and sea. Thus, the common premise lies in the interest for urban landscapes and their water cultural heritage, as potential value. Further, motivations were, on one hand, the stakeholders' commitment to support theoretical research with an operational mandate aiming to offer external perspectives on local dynamics and decision-making processes, while integrating ongoing initiatives; on the other, the intentions to experiment an unconventional, a-hierarchical and itinerant workshop model, setting up an interdisciplinary and international best practice.

The core topics explored during the three workshops have been: the port-city border and the water-city interface; the reciprocal influence of port and urban transformations; and the integration of a landscape architecture perspective within this development. These aspects were addressed according to Taranto, Brindisi and Bari peculiar maritime mindsets and port-city cultural heritages, starting from the relationship with the waterfront. The workshops were structured as one week-long activities with reflective insights feeding into the creative design processes [Fig. 1].

1 Public body aimed at guiding, planning and coordinating the system of ports of Bari, Brindisi, Manfredonia, Barletta and Monopoli. The Authority was established by Legislative Decree no. 169 of 4 August 2016 "Reorganisation, rationalisation and simplification of the regulations concerning the Port Authorities referred to in Law no. 84 of 28 January 1994, in implementation of Article 8, paragraph 1, letter f), of Law no. 124 of 7 August 2015". "Autorità di Sistema Portuale del Mare Adriatico Meridionale," ADSPMAM, accessed December 22, 2021, <https://www.adspmam.it/>



FIG. 1 Exploration by sea between the Mare Piccolo and Mare Grande of Taranto, Photo by Amina Chouairi.

The Evolution

Taranto, una Passeggiata. Paesaggio e Acqua was the first workshop held in Taranto in May 2018. Solely researching on site for ‘the true meaning of things’, this earliest edition was the most reflective and analytical one, strongly influenced by the strength and, great sensitivity of the place. This approach, aiming at understanding the city and its delicate dynamics, has prepared the ground for the methodological approach developed within the following editions.

The four days were dedicated to four districts of Taranto and their challenges: *the Old City and the Water* deepened the water element in the citizens’ mental map; *the Seas of Taranto, the Rediscovery of Places* explored Ex Torpediniere, Direzione Munizionamento Buffoluto, Villa Capecelatro and Cheradi Islands; *the Other Mar Piccolo* investigated the nature, reclamation and uses of the Galeso River; *Tamburi: So Far, So Near* reflected on the historical relationship with the two seas (Mar Piccolo and Mar Grande), while distancing the port-city identity from the Navy’s presence, and on the value of the collective memory of people and places.

Brindisi. Porto e Confine, second edition held in May 2019, was the occasion to undertake a more specific investigation, still through the lens of sensory and phenomenological knowledge of places. The comprehensive analysis focused on the port as ‘subject’ and ‘object’, and the many levels of investigation were contextualised in the particular tripartition of the port, subdivided into outer, middle and inner harbours.

The reading focused on the port as ‘subject’ and ‘object’, in accordance with its particular tripartition, subdivided into ‘outer’, ‘middle’ and ‘inner’. Through historical phases of development and decay, the city of Brindisi is now aspiring to shape its future and needs in balance with the port, healing the wounds of a recent industrial past [Fig. 2].



FIG. 2 Traditional rowing in the inner harbour of Brindisi. Photo by Silvia Sivo.

During the workshop, the port phenomenon and its relationship with the city was defined in its conceptual, material and immaterial contours, giving sense to its limits. At the same time, the port-city border was decoded, looking at from both land and sea spaces – public and private ones – and disclosing its representations in the mental map of the community that lives it every day and of those who cross it for the first time. This ‘line’, as synthetic materialisation of dynamic relationship systems, is nothing but a complex and constantly evolving representation of the port itself, intrinsically linked with transport and trade innovations.

Ti Porto a Bari, the third workshop held in Bari in September 2021 during the *BiArch - Bari International Archifestival*,² implemented the design philosophy with a more intervention-oriented approach. The aim was to achieve an original, inclusive, resilient and socially equitable design interpretation, integrating functional planning and operational interventions in the port with landscape architecture, starting with the green, blue and grey infrastructure. The chosen approach tried to give depth to the pragmatic needs combining them with a layering of values and arguments, by designing along and across the borderline between the urban tissue and the port areas, and highlighting the relational dynamics between the different actors involved.

The main aspect of investigation was the mutual claiming of space between the Bari port – which has been surrounded by the city but represents a separate body of it – and the urban surrounding – which ask for a direct contact with water by experiencing the multiplicity of waterfront uses as shared maritime identity. The design of the borderline between

2 Winner of the “Festival of Architecture” competition promoted by the Italian Ministry of Culture’s Directorate General for Contemporary Creativity. “Biarch - Bari International Archifestival,” accessed December 20, Biarch, 2021, <https://biarch.org/>.

three peculiar port areas and the urban fabric and communities addressed the reexamination not only in terms of its overlapping of meanings and values, but also regarding the planning, the development, and the commercial and public uses areas, in order to tackle contemporary conflicts and challenges of coexistence of local and regional issues.

The Workshop Process: Premises, Methodology, Approach, Objectives and Outcomes

The main assumption of the workshops' design philosophy lies in the conviction that the appropriate perspective for bringing continuity and coherence to Taranto, Brindisi and Bari the port cities' interaction is the landscape one. In fact, applying a landscape vision favours a flexible time-frame by meaning the project as an evolving continuum, rather than a result fixed *a priori* and rigidly crystallising the change at the moment of realisation. Moreover, the landscape perspective implies another essential aspect: the transformation can only be meant as a whole. It is not possible to isolate the Old Cities from the other spatial components – such as the 19th-century centres, the industrial areas, the military enclaves and the hinterland itself – nor to act in terms of punctual operations, because the object of intervention is a living system, in which the overlapping of urban conditions, infrastructures, water system management, soil protection, biodiversity, human activities and so on have to be dealt with together in an extremely complex open context. In the long run, landscape is what survives in a given area.³

According to this intellectual position, the research questions address on one hand how to investigate, rethink and re-designed, from a landscape architectonic perspective, the relations between urban contexts, waterfronts and port facilities; on the other hand, how tangible and intangible elements of fragmentations – military areas, port facilities, obsolete spaces and undervalued historical landmarks – play a role as connectors and drivers of a continuous and dynamic port cityscape.⁴ More in detail, three peculiar sub-questions were discussed, in order to frame and seize more site-specific related issues:

- How can the city of Taranto re-constitute the millenary relation with its seas, processing the collective repressed induced by the presence of the navy and the steel industry?
- How can the city of Brindisi re-establish the coherent limits connected with the portuality and its relationship with the sea?

3 Michael Jakob and Maria Cristina Petralla, "#OpenTaranto: il paesaggio va costruito insieme, non sprechiamo l'occasione!", *Giornale dell'Architettura*, September 18, 2017, <https://ilgiornaledellarchitettura.com/2017/09/18/opentaranto-il-paesaggio-va-costruito-insieme-non-sprechiamo-loccasione/>.

4 Carola Hein, "The Port Cityscape: Spatial and Institutional Approaches to Port City Relationships," *PORTUSplus* 8 (December 29, 2019), <https://portusplus.org/index.php/pp/article/view/190>.

- How can the city of Bari re-discover the continuity and openness of its waterfront, from the Old City to San Cataldo, coexisting with the evolving port infrastructure?

Despite the specific place of interest, the three workshops intentionally share a common methodology, aiming to answer the research questions and sub-questions proposed:

- The multiplicity of gaze: each participant brings his or her own 'piece of truth' and specific knowledge. This multiplicity can vary by experience – students, PhD students, professors, professionals – and expertise – architects, artists, engineers, photographers, landscape architects, writers, filmmakers, biologists, agronomists, journalists, and fishermen, inhabitants, local politicians, port operators, etc. – contributing to an open contamination and mutual learning environment.
- The horizontality: the research and design process is shared and elaborated by all during the workshop days. Everyone is encouraged to express his or her position, respecting the different professionalisms and skills, and to enhance each one's specificity. The promotion of a-hierarchical and transversal activities is similarly fostered.
- The centrality of learning-by-doing: acknowledging the importance of 'walking' through places.⁵ The careful *in situ* study of a place's characteristics, in order to understand it through the look and the perspective of those who inhabit and manage it, leads towards the critical reflection on planning tools.
- The holistic landscape approach: the study of the place's characteristics and components – climate, hydrography, topography, soil composition, vegetation, urban tissues, socio-economic trends – leads to a diachronic and interscalar understanding capable of conceiving the project as a palimpsest for future implementation.
- The intangible but not ephemeral outcomes: the widespread dissemination of new inputs. Despite the workshops' conception cannot imply a definite result *a priori*, the declared intent and outcome is to disseminate on different levels, such as the disclosure of specialised concepts and themes to a wider public and local citizens. At the same time, the restitution of contents to local authorities and promoters of the workshop becomes crucial, in order to enhance the rethinking of current actions in a systematic way and according to a long-term temporal perspective, thus taking on both a symbolic and pragmatic value.

The workshop format resulted as a research practice and methodology, since the theoretical reflections were conveyed in the study of domain-related case studies. This perspective helped in exploring relevant factors, providing means for understanding complex environments and relational

5 "L'urbanistica si fa con i piedi" as one of the most representative phrases by Italian urbanist Bernardo Secchi.

dynamics, and identifying non-obvious items to either participants and local actors prior to starting the workshop process. Simultaneously, the workshop provided an open platform in which participants and the local actors worked together and interacted with the places. In this way, the development of the activities proceeded according to an evolutionary dimension, allowing all those involved to overcome the limits of the individual perspective and thus to understand the mutual and collective experience [Fig. 3].



FIG. 3 Moment of discussion between participants and local experts in Taranto Vecchia, photo by Paola Iacobellis.

The overall leading objective of the workshops was to achieve an original, inclusive, resilient and comparative interpretation of the port city interaction as the main topic investigated. According to this aim, the suggestions were translated into coherent reflections and design proposals, in order to foster co-planning spatial and institutional approaches to port city relationships and integrate the traditional sectoral planning through a landscape approach.

Another main objective was to encourage local citizens to participate in the life of the port, to raise awareness on the maritime heritage among the local communities and to show the importance of setting up channels of communication and interaction on the territory. Therefore, the workshop was designed as a vehicle of dissemination of port culture at different levels, also involving port managers, operators and workers as guides during the explorations and surveys and as ambassadors for the initiative. As a result, all the participatory activities contributed in creating a sense of belonging to the different port and city communities, providing local citizens and students with the opportunity to experience the multiple facets of the port ecosystem.

This outcome was also triggered by an integrated communication program throughout the workshop, with a coordinated visual identity redesigned in every edition (posters, informative brochures, advertising in local newspapers and sector press). Likewise, dedicated informative channels and social media were a permanent support, together with press conferences and several press reminders providing information on the workshop evolution and public events.

The Participatory Dimension: Stakeholders and Communities Engagement

In accordance with its co-evolutionary character, landscape architecture was intended as the result of an active and constant dialogue between the numerous bodies and people directly or indirectly involved in the port and city interaction, that pursue different goals and promote conflicting functions. Therefore, a concrete mission of the workshop was to engage all the stakeholders belonging to the spaces of the waterfront, the port and on neighboring urban and rural territories. The participatory approach was aimed at promoting the 'restorative' quality of the landscape architecture project, and enhancing a collaborative framework for landscape re-conceptualization.

The need for a different approach, oriented towards care and restoration, was meant as necessary also for the understanding of the human component of the landscape, which is conceived in a systemic key and, according to a long-term temporal perspective, assumed on both a symbolic and pragmatic value. The different three case studies contexts appeared paradigmatic in this perspective, and have served as stages of reflection on this aspect.

The Taranto, Brindisi and Bari workshops have created the opportunity to engage apparently very distant realities and institutions, supporting the single contributions to the upgrade towards a bigger picture. Since the very beginning, the projects have been the result of intense collaborations among various partners, organizations and associations, local communities and participants, which can be summarized in three main categories plus one.

- The Partners, which have supported the workshops both administratively and financially,⁶ by providing the Participants with adequate working spaces and means, support, hints and suggestions.

⁶ The Partners were: Comune di Taranto, Comune di Brindisi, Comune di Bari, Regione Puglia, Ambasciata di Svizzera in Italia, Autorità di Sistema Portuale del Mare Adriatico Meridionale (AdSP MAM), Confindustria Brindisi, Associazione Nazionale Costruttori Edili (ANCE) - Bari and Barletta-Andria-Trani.

- The Organizations and Associations, which have contributed with professional and local knowledge to the public program of the workshops,⁷ training both the Participants and Local Communities about governance strategies, upcoming actions and policies.
- The Local Communities, which have highlighted hidden potentialities and tangible issues of the places investigated, and could be metaphorically referred to as the workshop's magnifying glasses, able to direct the Participants and the Organizations and Associations' attention towards new food for thought.
- The Participants, representing not only the protagonists of the activities, but the actual 'agent for the territory'. Students and scholars have determined the workshops' success and contributed through their cultural backgrounds, professions and affiliations, to give coherence, heterogeneity and interdisciplinarity of the final results.⁸

In particular, the public events – collective inspections, debates, open discussions, final exhibitions – were one of the pivotal elements of the workshop and its design philosophy. During the workshop program, all the three editions were characterised by these conversational moments, as opportunities to put together and compare the ideas collected during the walks and, above all, to confront directly with the people and expert professionals in the area. The events and conferences were open to the public, as were the exhibitions and presentations in significant and widely frequented places – the Castello Aragonese in Taranto, Palazzo Nervegna in Brindisi, the Cruise Terminal in Bari [Fig. 4].

In concrete terms, these moments have enhanced the most varied interventions possible and promoted a culture of quality confrontation, characterised by proactivity and constructiveness. Thus, the analysis of physical space was flanked by the reflection of the relationship spaces, especially concerning the transformation from challenge to opportunities, the examination of the flexible coalitions of actors in different power positions, the sharing and exchange of knowledge between competent professionals and people with experiences.

7 The Organizations and Associations were: Fondazione Gianfranco Dioguardi, Legambiente, AIAPP - Associazione Italiana di Architettura del Paesaggio, INU - Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica, Ordine degli Architetti, Pianificatori, Paesaggisti e Conservatori della Provincia di Brindisi, Ordine degli Ingegneri della Provincia di Brindisi, Ordine degli Architetti, Pianificatori, Paesaggisti e Conservatori della Provincia di Bari, Ordine degli Ingegneri della Provincia di Bari, Inarch Puglia, Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le province di Brindisi e Lecce e Città Metropolitana di Bari.

8 According to the principle of non-verticality, with "Participants" were considered both the effective students who have contributed to the workshop, the experts guested and the organisation team. The Participants were affiliated with: Politecnico di Milano, Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio, HEPIA - Haute École du Paysage, d'Ingénierie et d'Architecture de Genève, HEAD - Haute École d'Art et de Design de Genève, Accademia di Brera, The Oslo School of Architecture and Design, Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro, Politecnico di Bari, Università Ca' Foscari, Master in Pianificazione e Progettazione Sostenibile delle Aree Portuali at Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II.



FIG. 4 View of the public exhibition in Palazzo Nervegna of Brindisi, photo by Amina Chouairi.

Conclusions

The three editions in Taranto, Brindisi and Bari saw the workshops as 'open texts', with an approach on the territory that favoured dialogical and experimental methodologies based on collaboration, involving the local actors in sharing this approach. This chosen attitude has combined the heuristic – professionals must return to study *in situ* – and ethical – professionals and citizens are together responsible for the good development of the territories –, the scientific – academics are expected to spread and synthesize the scientific research – and aesthetic – the artistic gaze is not ancillary, but essential – aspects.



FIG. 5 Moment of participatory site inspection along the waterfront of San Cataldo in Bari, ph. Sara Quartarella.

Through a balanced programming of experiential activities, research-based patterns, technical insights and participatory interviews, a crucial framework was composed, in order to acknowledge the port-city interface, connections and their tangible and intangible elements as ‘commons’ for a shared sustainable development path. The conceptual suggestions and design traces brought together visions about the shape and scale of spatial and relational impacts, places of conflict and opportunity for these port cities.

All the editions highlighted, in varying degrees, how the workshop itself dealt with two fundamental issues: the need for new theoretical, methodological and scalar approaches for governance, and the emerging role of landscape in harmonising the existence of contemporary uses and the disclosure of the ports’ and maritime heritage. Hence, the promotion of the port cityscape awareness as a driver of a shared development perspective acts as a trigger to bringing together the different actors involved in the decision-making, and the confrontation between these ones and those communities who are usually at best informed of, and more often suffer, such decisions.

The co-design environment has shown how a collaborative approach can identify bottlenecks and steer challenges towards management forms that avoid the frictions typical of traditional institutional systems. The role of the border between port and city as a cultural identity element bonding communities to places helped the recognition of shared values and to focus on the emergence of possible conflicts. This approach fosters the management of heritage resources in dynamic and constantly changing environments – according to the Unesco Historic Urban

Landscape recommendations –⁹ to which all future interventions and development choices should be redirected [Fig. 5].

Looking ahead, the possible implementations and impacts of the workshops could actively contribute firstly to systematise collaborative dynamics between the port and city actors; in second place, to propel administrators and decision-makers to a solid community outreach, enabling them in building a public imagination and wide consensus in operating socially. Lastly, the application of the landscape architecture potential in the planning and design, with an enabling role in enhancing the actors' agency thanks to a deeper interpretation of the territory, could improve the governance of situations of extreme complexity such as port city regions.

9 The Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape is a "soft-law" to be implemented by Member States on a voluntary basis, and not replaces the existing doctrines or conservation approaches. Rather, it is an additional tool to integrate policies and practices of conservation of the built environment into the wider goals of urban development, in respect of the inherited values and traditions of different cultural contexts. "Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape," UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed December 20, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/hul/>.

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Silvia Sivo is an engineer and architect, has a II level Master in Sustainable Planning and Design of Port Areas at Federico II University of Naples. In recent years she has been collaborating with the Southern Adriatic Sea Port System Authority for the drafting of the System Strategic Planning Document and regarding the Port City School, a training programme on the governance of port cities. She is currently a PhD student in Regional Planning and Public Policies in IUAV University of Venice, and a member of the international team of the PortCityFutures research programme (Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Universities).

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Figures and illustrations

The photographs and drawings included in this article were taken and produced during the workshops by the participants and organization team.

PRACTICES

Harbouring Creativity from the Channel to the Black Sea

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ABSTRACT

The article tells the story of three Port-Cities: Le Havre (France), Taranto (Italy) and Turku (Finland). Creative development strategies turn the cities' port into a key element for a new urban identity, one that is more connected to creative heritage and culture and less with industrial exploitation. Through interviews with local actors, the narration of such strategies acquires a privileged point of view that embraces creativity, innovation, as regenerative forces for these strategic assets.

KEYWORDS

Creative Practices; City-Sea Relationship; Port Culture; Cultural Heritage

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Creation and Existence - Le Havre

“A man is always a teller of tales, he sees everything that happens to him through them; and he tries to live his own life as if he were telling a story. But you have to choose: live or tell.”¹ So opined the protagonist of Sartre’s novel *Nausea*, written when the philosopher lived and lectured in Le Havre, a French port city on the English Channel. The city itself, according to Le Havre’s Executive Director Cornélia Feindeisen, has chosen to live, and it’s happy to save the story until afterwards.

That’s part of the industrial culture that comes with a major port, Feindeisen says: “If it hasn’t been created yet, then it doesn’t exist.”² For that reason, Le Havre opts to concentrate less on visions of its future and the achievements and accolades it will collect, and more on its experimental approach to improving local wellbeing and planetary health. “It’s like the adventurers in the previous century who were discovering the world. When you go out to the sea, you never really know where you are going to end up.”

History and Future - Turku

Turku, Finland’s oldest city and its one-time capital, also sees the sea as a metaphor through which to engage with its future. The city’s planned transformation of its port, specifically the Linnanniemi area, is to include a Museum of History and the Future, slated to open in 2029, “when Turku reaches the age of 800,”³ explains Mervi Lehto, Programme Manager of the Waterfront Department of Turku.

In Turku, too, the local authority was not looking to dominate the story of its own future. Instead, the city launched a competition asking for ideas from locals and others around the world. “The starting point,” Lehto explains, “was the planned new joint terminal building for the two shipping companies, which would significantly free up space for the development of the whole area.”

With the two companies using a single terminal building, the future would see extra space that could be transformed into ‘place’.

Sea and Space - Taranto

In Taranto, the local authority has waged a battle for more port space against an unlikely contender – the Italian army. “We have great plans to redevelop the entire area,”⁴ explains Valeria Villani, Personal Assistant to

1 Jean Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions Paperbook, 1964).

2 Interview with the author, 17 June 2021

3 Interview with the author, 3 June 2021

4 Interview with the author, 23 June 2021

the Mayor of Taranto. Happily for the city, the contest for space did not have to come to blows but rather is the subject of negotiation with the very obliging captain of the local division of the navy.

“Taranto has more or less 24 km of coast,” Villani explains, “A lot of this space is now occupied by the navy. We have a huge arsenal.” The city has requested that the navy move along the coast a little so that it can develop the big plans it has for the blue economy, including through tourism and water sports. “We want to mend the relationship between the citizens and the sea, which is our best asset and our best resource,” declares Villani.

In 2026, Taranto will host the Mediterranean Games, so the city is putting in a lot of work to create a local team that will launch a slew of regeneration projects throughout its territory, particularly revamping, building and expanding sports facilities and infrastructure. The effort to reach a new harmony with the sea has even led the city into collaborating with local universities to develop a new local sanctuary for dolphins.

Art and Encounter - Le Havre

Like Turku, Le Havre is hovering around a big birthday. In 2017, the city celebrated its 500th anniversary with a new festival that has been held annually since then – ‘Anne Terroir.’ “We imagined a spectacular anniversary ceremony lasting several months,” Feindeisen recalls. Only because of the great popularity of the first iteration did the event take hold as an annual affair.

During this festival, the local administration works with a creative director to fill the city with contemporary art. This art stands in its own right, but it also has the function of activating the existing culture and heritage of the port and its surroundings. In what Feindeisen describes as a series of planned encounters, “the whole city becomes a free contemporary art exhibition.” Art from previous years builds up into a permanent collection, while every year new local and international artists are recruited to enrich the city with their work.

Much of the artwork is saturated with the rich metaphors provided by the city’s port status. Feindeisen remembers a huge statue on the cliff, gazing out over the sea, and a sculpture of a seagull perched behind the museum. For the duration of the festival, one artwork appears every week to reside temporarily at a previously undisclosed location in the city. “It’s like a game for the inhabitants to find it,” says Feindeisen, “Sometimes they discover places they don’t know or remember thanks to the exhibition.”

Some artists also create their works through participatory engagement with the local people, with one artist’s intervention bringing people together to re-think a harbour landmark by constructing an enormous castle out of cardboard.

Competition and Castles - Turku

The castle in Turku was a focal point for many of the 127 entries into its competition for a reimagining of the port area. The winning submission came from the Lithuanian-led team 'After Party' with the work Kolme Palaa. This entry held to the tradition of the port by offering a landscape that would facilitate locals and visitors, and one that would strengthen links both with hundreds of surrounding islands and with the deeper mainland of the country, making the city a vector for engagement.

The through-line of sustainability in this and many of the other proposals recognised that the low-lying area is very vulnerable to the effects of climate change and included mitigation measures like storm-water protection and longer-term ideas for reducing local emissions.

"The proposals showed that urban development is much more than just architecture," says Lehto, "it is also, for example, the creation of possibilities for people to watch the sunset." In the video of the award ceremony below, you can enjoy not only an explanation and visualisation of the winning design, but also a very in-depth treatment of the area, the concerns and considerations of the judging panel, and an overview of the best ideas, the different visions, and what united and divided them.

Lehto notes that many of the ideas that were entered into Turku's competition saw a similar tripartite division: The Forum Marinum, the local maritime museum packed with old vessels and knowledge about ship-building techniques and engine-smithing; the waterfront surrounding the castle, almost as old as the city, which has been occupied, sieged, burned and bombed yet still stands proud; and the headland which contains the port itself.

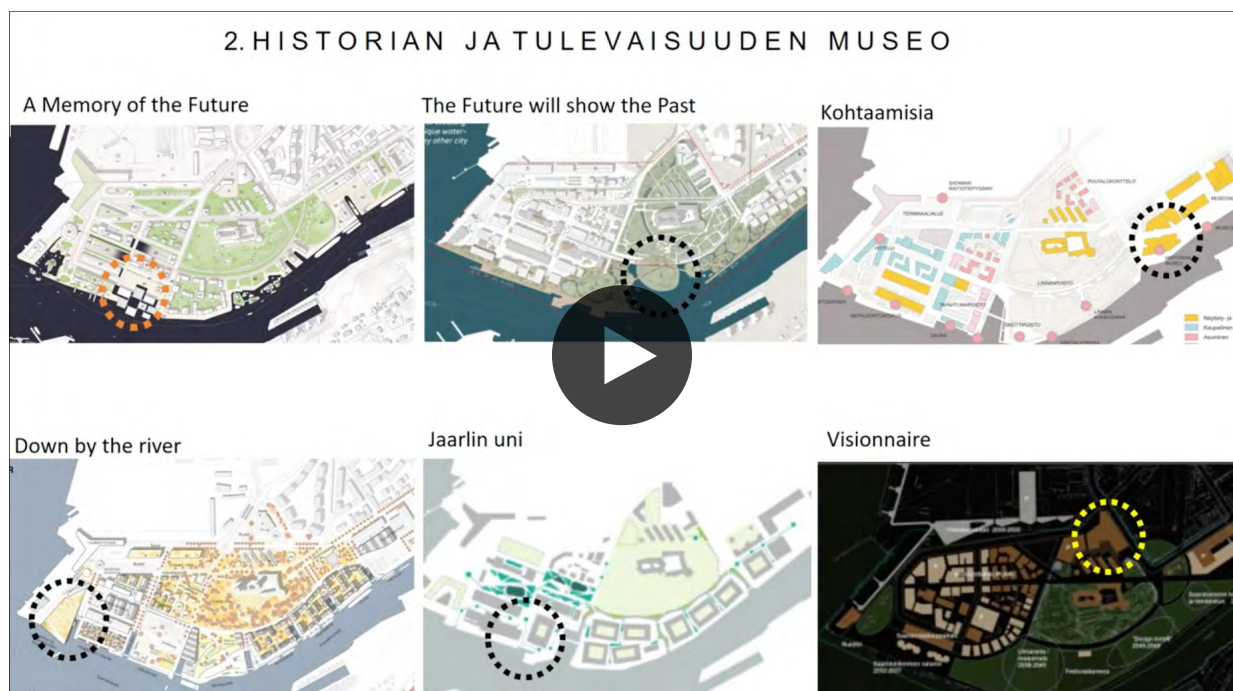


FIG. 1 video of the award ceremony of the competition for a reimagining of the port area in Turku.

Diversification and Division - Taranto

“You have to imagine Taranto as divided in three parts,” Villani elucidates, “We have the sea, then we have this big steel factory, and then we have these huge parts of the coast occupied by the navy.” While negotiations are underway with the navy, the factory represents a tricky point in the city’s self-image, and in its future. This is not just any factory, but the largest steel processing plant in Europe.

“For the Italian nation Taranto can be a paradigm,” Villani insists, “for that a city that is completely based on a factory can change its future.” Nevertheless, this shift will not be one that is easy to occasion. As for many port cities, the presence of heavy, pollution-intensive industries is a heritage that is difficult to recon with. Such industries are often directly controlled by, or represent major sources of revenue or much-needed materials for the state. Further, they are often major employers in the area. “It’s not simple,” Villani confesses, “a lot of people want to shut down the factory because in Taranto we have a huge range of cancers. But on the other hand, our steel factory is the biggest one in Europe and 20,000 inhabitants of our city work there. So, we need to have a plan B in place. We can imagine a future with a factory that uses hydrogen, or electric energy, but definitely not any more fossil or old minerals.”

The city hopes to use the spirit of creativity to kill two birds with one stone: diversifying local employment opportunities by becoming the site of a technology hub for start-ups looking to produce alternative materials that could replace emissions-heavy titans like steel and cement.

State and Cement - Le Havre

As a port city, Le Havre’s local administration also has to deal with enormous organisational edifices in its effort to modernise. “We are very industrial,” Feindeisen explains. “There is still a culture and a heritage that is quite top-down – there are big companies and huge planning projects from the state.” Because the port is run by the state, the city’s interventions are beholden to national-level decisions.

Managing this requires a constant dialogue, a dialogue which also opens the way for the city to make room for burgeoning bottom-up projects. Likewise, the port’s work on competitiveness, resilience and becoming a ‘smart port’ have been avenues for the city to enhance its own agility and participatory practices. For example, a local entrepreneurship programme run by the city seeks to encourage entrepreneurs working on ecological resilience and connecting big industries with local actors in agriculture and ecology. As the port-driven industries are often quite polluting, the city needs to be extra innovative to balance out their carbon footprints to keep its totals down and guard the air and water quality for locals.

“The big industries need innovation,” Feindeisen says, “and it’s very hard for them to innovate by themselves, because they are not agile, so they are more and more depending on start-ups.” For example, the city is pushing a project on low-carbon cargo sailing which delved into sailing heritage to make new use of an old idea: sails. “The company has constructed huge cargo ships which are also driven by sails, not only motors, which significantly reduces the carbon.”

Another local company is working on a proof of concept to make cement with a 90% lower carbon footprint than the standard, and an even lower cost. Because innovations like this have the potential to negatively affect the use and price of existing cement stocks and industries, there would normally be a risk of one such mammoth company buying out this start-up and discontinuing it – as famously happened with oil giants and the electric car. For this reason, the city sees it as very important to nurture and encourage projects like this and give them explicit political support. The port provides the perfect spot for this start-up, not only because of the encouragement from the local administration, but also because of its need for shipments of sand to produce its product.

According to Feindeisen, Le Havre’s mayor sees it as “a duty for us to experiment, to say what is the port city of tomorrow. Because we are not perfect. We will not succeed in everything. But if we can show the way in certain sectors we can maybe do it for our city and for other cities too. We are very conscious that we are not pioneers, we are very far from where we would like to be but there is lots of work to do so that makes it interesting.”

Gateway and Memory - Turku

Turku is also employing experimentation to further its carbon goals and strengthen local culture and heritage. Through the Interreg-funded project Hupmobile, the city is working with partners from Finland, Germany, Estonia and Latvia to develop a more holistic approach to the planning, implementation, optimisation and management of integrated sustainable mobility in Baltic Sea port cities. In collaboration with other cities, Turku has come up with a plan for a new railway that will create better links with the passenger harbour in Castle Town, and a joint cooperation and development model for the Turku port area, a master plan and mobility plan, all informed by data from traffic studies the city has carried out.

Through better and more sustainable connections, the city aims to make the Linnanniemi area, “a hub of year-round urban culture, where you can simultaneously experience history, the sea and the archipelago,” says Lehto. To develop this ecosystem, Turku is programming temporary cultural events and pop ups throughout the area.

“The port is a gateway to the city and gives a first impression of it,” says Lehto, “It’s not just goods that come through there, but also passenger

traffic.” Turku wants to use culture and heritage to develop co-operation between both existing and future cultural institutions as well as the port’s shipping companies – and with locals and visitors to the area.

One of the ways that the city engages locals is through soliciting online feedback. This is done both in regard to local plans like the mobility masterplan, and also to capture intangible heritage. “We encourage people to share their memories regarding the Linnanniemi area on Turku Museum Centre’s contemporary documentation website,” Lehto explains. “If you have visited our beautiful city,” he beseeches the reader, “please add your personal memories of Turku on the museum’s website at <https://nykydoku.prikka.fi>.”

Lehto fondly recalls how the collection of intangible heritage for this site enriched his own experience of the city he loves: “Meeting the harbour master Kari Riutta and interviewing him for the contemporary documentation project is a memory that really stands out. His office in the passenger pavilion was beautifully old-fashioned and Riutta seemed to really appreciate it and the history of the port. Unfortunately, he passed away just months after the interview. It was a great loss – he was a true gentleman.”

Childhood and Horizon - Taranto

In *Nausea*, Sartre’s protagonist more than once contrasts his protagonist’s mire of apathy with the gaiety and wellspring of hope presented by children at play on the cusp of the sea in the fictional city that stands in for Le Havre. In Taranto, too, the city is embracing a parallel with its own ambitions for enhanced creativity, possibility and hope with the simple joy and experimentation of childhood.

Villani remembers one thing that struck her when she first arrived in Taranto: “I thought, okay, there are no spaces for young people.” Now, she says, the mayor is working to create new spaces for youth, from skateparks to football fields. “This year we inaugurated the first playground in Taranto, where the kids can have their space,” she says proudly. Villani confesses that the playground is not just a gift to the children, but to all the people of the city. “For us,” she confesses, “the fact that now you can really see these children, playing in a safe space every time of the day.”

The playground project met some resistance from those that felt that, with the Covid pandemic, the budget should be allocated elsewhere. However, the mayor stood firm and stressed the need to see into the future – and what better way to do that than to see its protagonists at play?

The city is also investing a lot in local artists, musicians, actors and other creatives to enliven local culture and creativity. “If you want to change your career,” Villani says, “now is the time to use your passions, your talent. Now the municipality is really trying to give things to everyone, also to include the entire society.”

The city, which has recently joined the Eurocities network, stresses the importance of looking outside for inspiration too. "I think that it will really work and people will see how Europe will be in the future and how with Europe we really are going to build something up," Villani concludes.

Whether in Le Havre, Taranto, Turku, or in between, creativity is dropping anchor in Europe's port cities. The currents of youth, of culture and heritage, of creativity and creative industries are tossing about the hulls of the once immobile legacy industries, making cracks through which new waters can rush. The beckoning horizon remains a real and figurative seam that binds the lofty ambitions of these cities, their administrations and local people to the practical principles of urban planning, city-craft and innovation, calling them to adventure just as it has to countless voyagers to and from these port cities since ancient times.

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Anthony Colclough holds an MA in creative writing from Sarah Lawrence College (NY) which he has been putting to good use unlocking the stories that lie beneath innovative policy and practice for the last 10 years. He works at EUROCLITES on projects in the fields of mobility, smart cities, culture, environment and social affairs. This cross-cutting role allows him to create the hooks and see the links that open cities' stories to the world.