"Marseille-Provence: European Capital of Culture in 2013", the double socio-economic face of a cultural labeling policy

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Abstract: This paper will be focused on the territorial labelling process which occurred in 2013 on Marseille-Provence territory (MP13). Indeed, this case is particularly representative of the development policies and issues ensuing the cultural title's awarding. Like Glasgow in the past, Marseille has been seriously impacted by numerous crisis against which it tried to struggle thanks to culture and creativity. For politicians and urban planners, the "European Capital of Culture" label represents a big step towards social, economic and urban renewal. We would show how Marseille was able to get this specific title (especially by valorizing its own territorial weaknesses). Then, we will see in what extent this label's awarding is linked to impressive urban transformations and what are their connections with neoliberalism. However, beyond the spectacular urban transformations which contribute to positive economic and touristic results, the MP13 event has also faced some drawbacks. Indeed, it clearly failed to integrate the poorest people or neighborhoods and wasn't really able to valorize the local artists who often defend anti-conformist ways of cultural expression.

Keywords: Cultural Labeling Policy; European Capital of Culture; Marseille; Social Segregation; Cultural City.

"Marseille-Provence: Capital Europeia da Cultura em 2013", a dupla face socioeconômica de políticas de rotulagem cultural

Resumo: Este artigo tem como foco o processo de rotulação territorial que ocorreu em 2013 no território de Marselha-Provença (MP13). Com efeito, este caso é particularmente representante das políticas de desenvolvimento na área cultural e questões decorrentes. Como Glasgow no passado, Marselha tem sido seriamente impactada por inúmeras crises contra a qual tem lutado, a partir da cultura e criatividade. Para os políticos e planejadores urbanos, a distinção de "Capital Europeia da Cultura" representa um grande passo no sentido social, econômico e de renovação urbana. Assim, é relevante mostrar como Marselha foi capaz de obter este título específico (especialmente pela valorização de suas próprias fraquezas territoriais). Mostramos aqui, em que medida esta distinção está relacionada às grandes transformações urbanas e quais são suas conexões com o neoliberalismo. No entanto, para além daqueles elementos que contribuem para resultados econômicos e turísticos positivos, o evento MP13 enfrentou alguns inconvenientes, pois, na verdade, não foi possível integrar as pessoas mais pobres e bairros que não foram capazes de valorizar os artistas locais, que muitas vezes defendem outras vias de expressão cultural.

Palavras-chave: Políticas Culturais; Capital Europeia da Cultura; Marselha; Segregação Social; Cidade Cultural.

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Introduction

Since the emergence of both globalization and metropolisation processes, the concurrency between the territories has seriously increased. We are currently facing the generalization of both capitalist's principles and consumption society at a worldwide scale. These evolutions force us to reconsider the city as a brand-new object which referred to any other consumption good (HOULLIER-GUIBERT *et al.*, 2018). Nowadays, cities can be sold, bought and duplicated almost everywhere in the world. The former image of the city as an emancipating place for individuals, a meeting point between different social classes, a privileged place for public debate or the ancestral area which has seen the birth of both democracy and republic (BURGEL, GRONDEAU, 2015) is no longer the only one. Indeed, the city now has got a price, owns its proper resources and is able to generate revenues and incomes. Sometimes, cities are even bankrupt and face deficit.

For the winning ones, the aim is to maintain a high position in the world urban hierarchy (SCOTT, 2001) as well as trying to become a global city (SASSEN, 1991) or a franchised territory (MANGIN, 2004) and, at the same time putting forward their own differences in order to stay competitive and attractive. These features are the main objectives of all international cities today, probably because they are eager to polarize capital, firms, investments, and also creative and high-professional groups (FLORIDA, 2002; 2004).

This ultra-competitive context is often used by politicians to serve the idea of a "labeled territory" policy which is put in place at any scale considered (locally, regionally, nationally and even "supra-nationally"). The main pattern of this policy is to focus on the valorization of the city's image in order to stand out. To illustrate this, one can speak about several labels such as the "branded cities" (IVESON, 2012), the "smart cities" (GIFFINGER, 2011) or the "creative cities" (LANDRY, BIANCHINI, 1995; VIVANT, 2009). At a more local scale, territories can also be designed as "Flower town", can received "European Capital of Culture" title or can developed some PDO's whose role is to be mediators between the citizens or the companies which are susceptible to be attracted and their territorial representations. Eventually, the common aim of all these cities' labels is to valorize a town, a village or even a local specificity to reinforce its attractiveness.

The territorial labelling process can be defined as a distinction between several territories (FILOZ, COLOMB, 2011). The ultimate objective of this process for the city which applied it, is to get some certificate proving that the urban area has become a center of interests regardless of the field considered (culture, tourism, gastronomy, innovation…). This new competition between cities passes through the creation of brand-new slogans, logos and advertising campaign. This will then confer a new qualitative and symbolic aura to the city which uses it for enhancing its own international visibility in a context where recent economic, technologic or demographic changes have increased territorial competitiveness (BERG, BRAUN, 1999). From this point of view, the territorial labelling process can be compared to a promoting technic (DUMONT, DEVISME, 2006) close to the urban marketing ones (PROUX, TREMBLAY, 2006) the aim of which is to impulse socio-economic development as well as urban transformation and modernization. Most of the time, the territorial image is not really positive before starting the territorial labelling strategy and some territories may even face deep and multiple crisis. Furthermore, this territorial

process takes lot of time as it needs the agreement of several local stakeholders who must share a common vision about the future urban project (FILLOZ, COLOMB, 2011) and this is only possible after long and multiple procedures (GOGENDEAU, 2014). Noting this unbridled race to attractiveness, one chooses to analyze one specific label *i.e.* the title of "European Capital of Culture".

Moreover, since the beginning of the 90's, some new examples put forward successful urban transformations. It is the case of Glasgow which received this title in 1990 and which used it for an extreme urban recover. Through this example, the "European Capital of Culture" label appears more and more as a real tool to impulse economic and urban resilience within territories in crisis.

Through this label one can also notice the growing interest of politicians and urban planners for the field of culture. Indeed, culture is now considered as a local and urban development's tool (BERNIE-BOISSARD, 2010) which would create new urban cores and would allow to rethink the architecture or the general organization of several neighborhoods. For some authors (LLOBET-ESTANY, 2007), the development of culture and creativity within city centers is very positive as it permits to prime new forms of social interactions through the concept of social creativity.

The cultural action also allows this kind of social changes (BERESTETSKY *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, culture is more and more considered as a real territorial resource linked to unavoidable urban resilience (LANDEL, PECQUEUR, 2009; SINAÏ, 2015).

Considering this, the label of "European Capital of Culture" was created in 1985. Originally, this title was more honorary than anything else (the best proof here is the very low budgets allocated to the labelled cities at the beginning). But things definitely evolved with the labelling of Glasgow in 1990. Here the objectives and issues arising out of the title's awarding were deeper and wider. The label was considered as a new lever for urban regeneration and economic recovery in a city heavily touched by de-industrialization and a massive departure of its inhabitants. In Glasgow, the decision makers have not only defended small cultural initiatives. Indeed, they took the "European Capital of Culture" label as a real opportunity serving urban renewal especially by working on urban wasteland which are facing intense crisis (JEANNIER, 2006).

Moreover, this title has also reinforced the city core's economic mutation throughout the emergence of services and high technologies as well as big cultural projects like the New International Concert Hall's inauguration (GOMEZ,1998). At that time, a lot of positive slogans such as "There is a lot of Glasgowing on", "Glasgow's Alive" or "Glasgow's Miles Better" comforted the desire of transforming the city's image to become a new centrality within Europe. The Glasgow's renewal is now considered as a study case largely analyzed by geographers but also by European politicians who have totally reconsidered the label since 1990. Then, the labelling process concerning the specific title of "Europe Capital of Culture" is deeply associated with a resilient strategy especially for the territories which are facing crisis.

However, Glasgow is not the only one example of this successful recovery. In France, the city of Lille received the title in 2004 and the decision makers assured that one euro invested in the field of culture yielded six euros of touristic expenses. This economic fact convinced more and more politicians or planners who try to manage troubled metropolitan areas.

But this "magical recipe" for priming territorial development through the label "European Capital

of Culture" is not always positive even if it is highly and internationally duplicated. Indeed, in Glasgow the urban facilities built thanks to the title's awarding could be analyzed as a general will for radical change through deep transformations of social organization (Bilbao Metropoli 30, 1992) and economy.

Otherwise, the real benefits are not so high excepting in the touristic field which has known a real economic growth. Eventually, Glasgow didn't become a powerful economic territory. On the contrary, the employment rate concerning services barely increased with the label (GOMEZ, 1998). To sum up, even if it is true to say that the "European Capital of Culture" title was a real opportunity serving Glasgow's transformation and improving its international image, it is nonetheless wrong to speak about a strong economic recovery arising from the adoption of such a territorial strategy.

And even worse, this label's awarding deeply modified the urban sociology to the benefit of the firms and the upper-classes. Therefore, the lower-classes and the poorest people are the "victims" of this big cultural event.

The ambition of this paper is to question the territorial labelling processes in order to understand, through the example of the Marseille label «European Capital of Culture», how the local decision makers use - and sometimes abuse – of some apparently dynamic sectors such as culture, creativity or innovation which are supposed to transform a territory in crisis into a strong economic and urban power, to the detriment of the poorest populations (KEIL, BOUDREAU, 2010).

Studying the "European Capital of Culture" label through the case of Marseille-Provence 2013

Marseille: a suffering city trying to revitalize

For years Marseille was considered as a real gate between Western and Eastern world (GARNIER, ZIMMERMAN, 2006) or a door between Europe and Africa. This specific location influenced its strong economy dynamism during the 60's especially thanks to its leading position as one of the most important harbors within Europe.

Moreover, until the beginning of the 70's, Marseille was a growing and powerful industrial spot and was considered as a rich and diversified place (CHASTAGNET, TEMINE, 1991; MOREL, 1999). However, the decolonization process as well as the two successive oil shocks (in 1973 and 1979) or the technological evolutions of port's infrastructures, quickly stopped this virtuous circle and ruined Marseille' positive image. Consequently, the urban territory was severely touched by economic crisis which particularly impacted the famous "industrial-port system" making the whole city vulnerable (RONCAYOLO, 1963; MOREL, 1999; GARNIER, ZIMMERMAN, 2006; DAGNET, PLANQUE, ROMAIN, 2007).

Thirty years later, when Marseille applied for the "European Capital of Culture" title, it is always truly concerned by deep socio-economic difficulties visible through a triple crisis *i.e.* socio-economic, urban and cultural.

Concerning the socio-economic problems, the best argument which illustrates it, is the high unemployment rate which was about 18,5% in 2015 against 13.7% for the French national average in 2015

(Source: INSEE[3], 2017)), more than 48,000 RSA[4] beneficiary households in 2017[5] as well as a high number of single-parent families (50,355 in 2015 or 12.9% of families (INSEE, 2017)). Moreover, according to INSEE, in 2015, the city's poverty rate is 26.1% against 17.2% in Bordeaux, 19.4% in Toulouse or 14.6% in Lyon[6] (INSEE, 2017).

At the same time, the city is totally fragmented (VIARD, 1995; LANGEVIN, 2007) between the southern neighborhoods which are spared by crisis and where the average annual incomes are globally high and the northern ones which cumulate problems (see Maps 1 and 2).

Map 1. The inequality of poverty rates between northern and southern districts in 2015
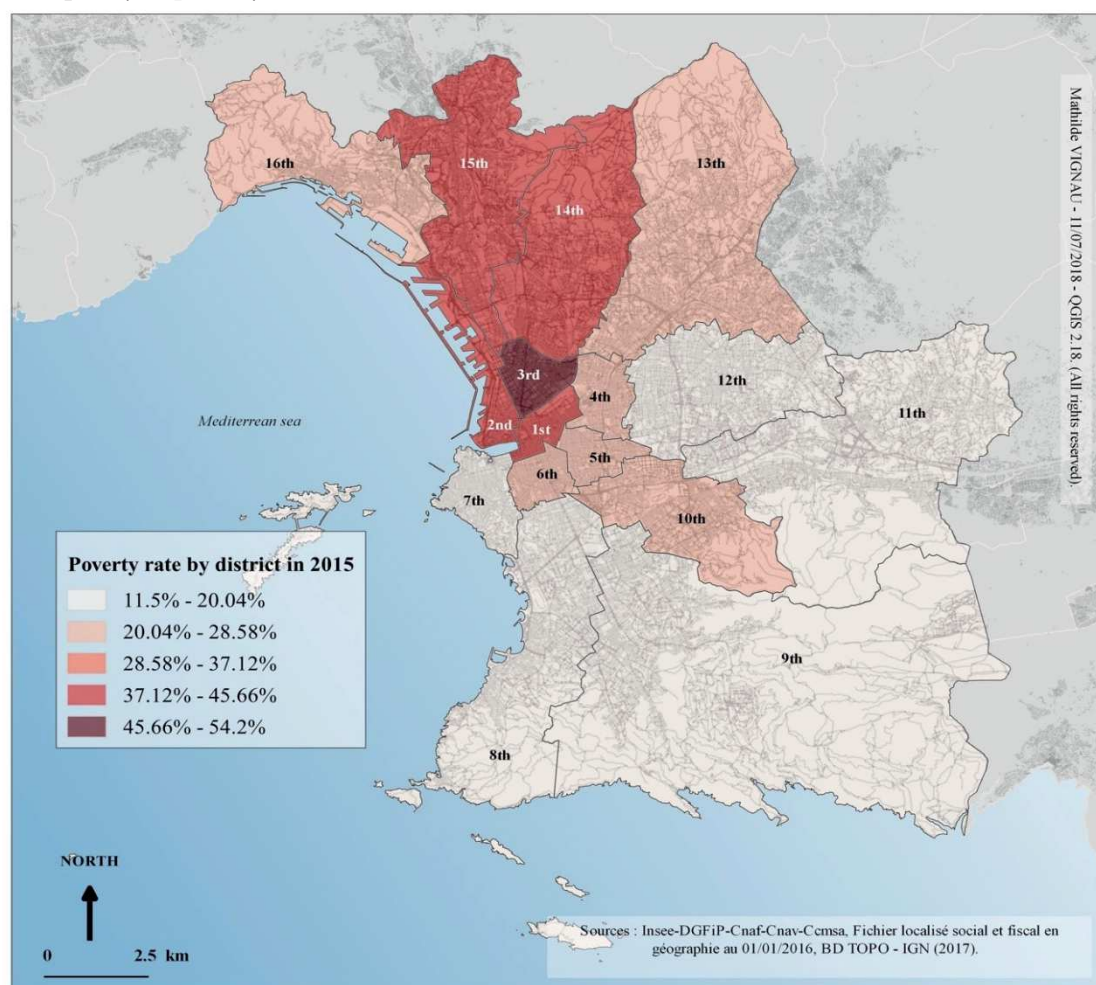

Concerning the urban situation, the assessment isn't better, far from it. In fact, either at regional or national scales, Marseille is alternately presented as a dirty city (LEFORESTIER, 2010; La Voix du Nord, 2014), a violent place (SUPERSAC, 2012; CHALARD, 2015) or the first gridlocked area in France

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[3]   INSEE corresponds to the French national organism for statistics and data.

[4]   RSA stands for « Revenue de *Solidarité Active* » (i.e. Active Solidarity Income) and corresponds to a French income given to some poor households.

[5]   The data concerning the number of beneficiaries of the Active Solidarity Income in 2017 in Marseille comes from the DATACAF website. CAF is the French Child Benefit Office.

[6]   Marseille, Bordeaux, Toulouse and Lyon were the competitors cities for hosting the European Capital of Culture in 2013. Compare to Marseille, the three other cities are not facing deep economic decline or crisis.

(GRENAPIN, 2013; Lefigaro.fr, 2015) which suffered from a lack of accommodations (there are indeed lots of sleep distributors judged for their illegal businesses in Marseille' tribunals (PIEL, 2012)).

Each of this problem reinforces the bad image of the city which is globally seen as an under-organized territory. Furthermore, the lack of cultural amenities is another issue in Marseille. There were only few famous cultural facilities to boast the local artistic dynamism before 2013 (GRESILLON, 2011) therefore one can speak about a cultural crisis in this city.

Map 2. Comparison of the unemployment rate in each of the sixteen Marseille's districts
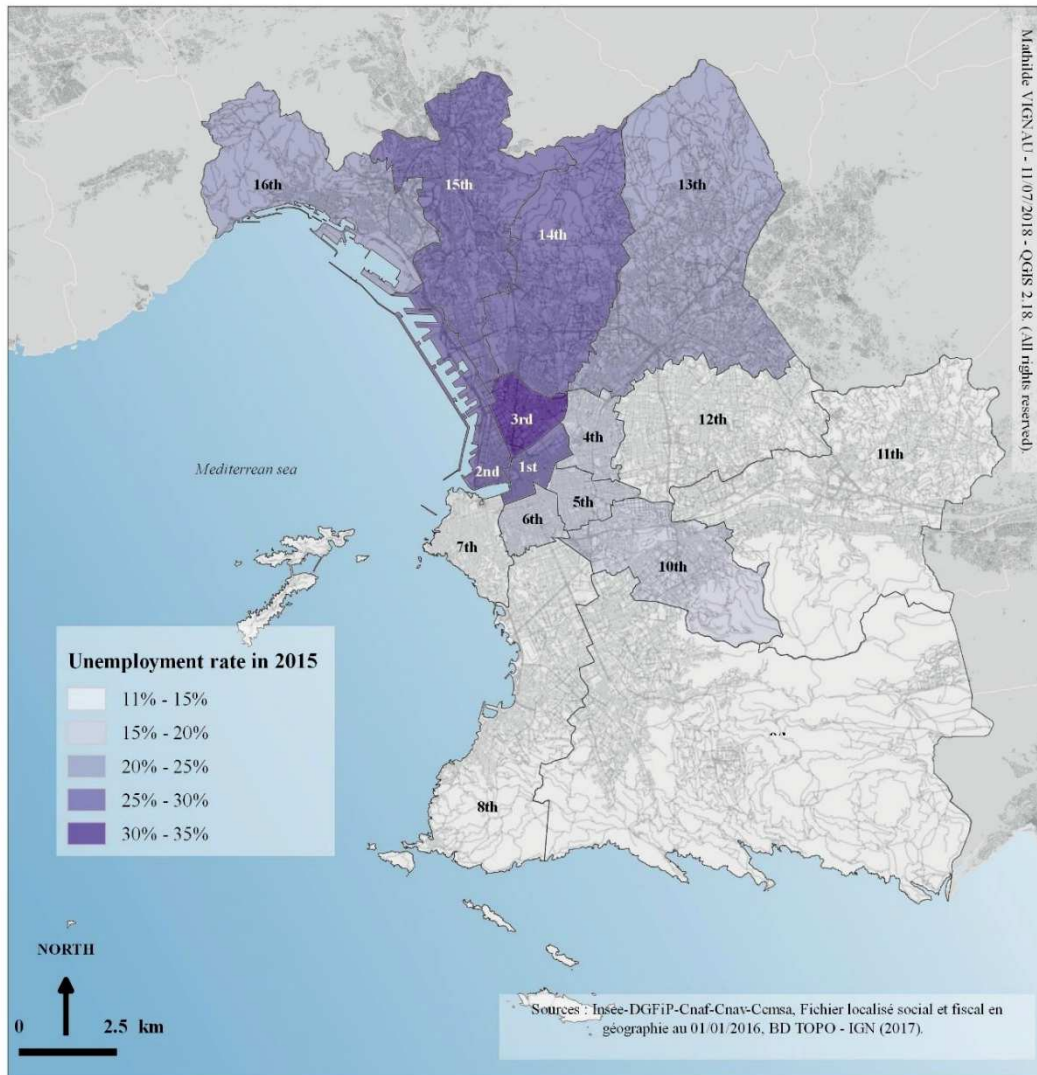
Facing the accumulation of all these difficulties, the decision makers have chosen to apply for obtaining the "European Capital of Culture" label since 2004. The main aim of this territorial initiative was to revitalize the urban territories and more precisely those which were deeply in crisis. For the stakeholders in charge of the candidacy, it was really important to use this label to focus on the poorest neighborhoods (at least it was one of the main points underlined in the political speeches referring to the territorial labelling process).

For winning the title, the team who defended Marseille's candidacy adopted an original strategy based on the description of Marseille' weaknesses. Indeed, the decision makers didn't hesitate to speak about the deep gap between Marseille and the other competitors (*i.e.* Lyon, Bordeaux and Toulouse). In a paper published in the French journal entitled "Méditerranée", Bernard LATARJET (the first director of the association Marseille-Provence 2013) explained the reasons why the city finally gets the title whereas the three other competitors had far better profiles. Explaining that Marseille was the city which most needed this label, he declared in 2010:

> Lyon, Toulouse, Bordeaux are far better [than Marseille], they are one step ahead. They don't need the title as much as we do. [...] So, Marseille is belated, the territory faces massive difficulties, Marseille isn't the best candidate, and this is why it needs to be helped more than the others (LATARJET, 2010, p.28).

The "European Capital of Culture" label's awarding

In 2008, Marseille and 97 other associated towns finally obtained the title of "European Capital of Culture". This reward was then considered as a lever for a larger development operation whose total budget for programming reached 92.7 million euros (this sum included: programming, communication, general organization fees and did not include the facilities' charges).

This funding has been taken in charge up to 84% by the territorial collectivities and, in a lesser extent, by the E.U. Another part has been financed by big public groups (EDF (i.e. national electricity supplier), SNCF (i.e. French rail network), La Poste (French Mail), Air France – KLM...) or private ones (Orange (i.e. a mobile phone group), Société Marseillaise de Crédit (i.e. a bank)...).

And the last part of this funding came from private donations and philanthropy. The important presence of private stakeholders can be linked with neoliberal practices which include more and more partnerships between public and private sectors.

In order to manage such an event and budget, the association called : "Marseille Provence 2013" has been created and directed firstly by Bernard LATARJET (from 2006 to 2010) and secondly by Jean-François CHOUGNET (from 2010 to 2013).

This labelling process, unseen until then in Marseille, has been organized around several cultural, social and urban initiatives thanks to an ambitious program as well as huge urban transformations. The official programming was composed of three distinctive periods which successively took place from January to May, from June to August and from September to December.

The first one, entitled : "*Marseille-Provence accueille le monde*" (i.e. Marseille-Provence welcomes the world) put forwards the idea of travelling and the links between Marseille-Provence territory and the rest of the world. It corresponds to the emergence of new cultural buildings (e.g. Villa Méditerranée, J1, FRAC museum...) which constitute the first material proofs which impulse a new cultural and creative dynamism within the city-core.

The second period, entitled : "*Marseille-Provence à ciel ouvert*" (i.e. Marseille-Proven open air), highlighted the arts and more particularly painting through various exhibitions dedicated to the most

famous painters who crossed the territory and contributed to its artistic history (i.e. Cézanne, Matisse, Van Gogh or Dali). This second phase also corresponded to the moment when the MuCEM (Marseille' most famous museum) was inaugurated (On June 7th, 2013).

Then, the third period of the year was called : "*Marseille-Provence aux mille visages*" (i.e. Marseille-Provence: a thousand-faces territory) focused on the famous people who lived there by highlighting multiculturalism and diversity (especially through gastronomy).

These three periods had been reinforced by some big events which reunited lots of spectators (e.g. the opening ceremony). From the very beginning of this labelling process, the most important point developed in the official speeches and general programming was the need for social integration and cultural democratization. Indeed, in the official application file written by the developers, one can read that they wanted to :

> […] mobilize the largest publics by exploiting the traditional creativity and popular events in Marseille, to implicate the inhabitants within projects via some creative workshops sessions along with associations and educators, to conceive a program accessible to everybody in the city and focusing on some social priorities and struggles (against illiteracy, for developing intergenerational approaches, by including hospitals, prisons and by going directly in the neighbourhoods) (MP13, 2007).

Including everyone to this big event was presented as a strong and powerful argument in the application file. The idea defended below is the fact that cultural and creative activities could revitalize some neighbourhoods. Especially those which were in deep crisis.

It is for example the case with the cultural and artistic initiative called "Jardins Possibles" which was put in place within Saint-Barthélemy (14th district). Indeed, this cultural action which consisted in the creation of a brand-new shared garden amid high-rise buildings, was largely rejected by the dwellers and above all, by neighbourhood associations which wrote an open letter by November 2012, explaining the reasons why they withdraw from this artistic initiative. For them, such a project was way too expensive (more than 400.000 euros was dedicated to a short-live initiative) and could not be considered as a real and lasting cultural policy. In their letter they formally declared that the artists who participate to the "Jardins Possibles", only are: "[…] transparent intermediaries, agents of the enchantment of urban renewal occupying the inhabitants of abandoned neighbourhoods" (SEVIN, 2013). By the fact, they underline the instrumentalization of culture and artistic spheres.

Finally, these feelings about some cultural projects put in place within Marseille appear to be the first criticisms of "Marseille-Provence 2013" (aka MP13). All in all, they underlined the fact that notions such as, diversity and integration didn't exceed the stage of speech.

Concerning the urban evolution, the "European Capital of Culture" year and label have had real and deep impacts on Marseille' transformation. Indeed, a lot of new facilities were built (often *ex nihilo*) and have contributed to reinforce or create emblematic cultural areas. The main aim beyond this "urban metamorphosis" was to make the city more attractive culturally and economically speaking. Through all these changes, the politicians and urban planners wanted to rise the touristic visits and create new job opportunities.

The title's awarding was considered as the key for constructing big museums and cultural places (see Photographs 1 and 2), a lot of them being located on the waterfront (as it is for instance the case with the MuCEM, the *Villa Méditerranée*, the *Musée Regard de Provence* or the *Voûtes de la Major*).

Photographs 1 & 2. *Villa Méditerranée* and MuCEM.

Source: Mathilde VIGNAU - 2016.

Moreover, other famous places such as the *friche de la Belle de Mai* (a former tobacco manufacture located in the 3rd district and which has been transformed into a creative area) or the Cours Julien sector (in the 6th district) which is a famous place for underground culture and street-art have been reinforced by the label receiving funds (the friche de la Belle de Mai get a 23 million euros budget to lead some transformations) or public notoriety.

In terms of budget, the total cost of this vast cultural renewal labelling process was about 600 million euros (only for Marseille) (Sources: CCI, MP13, EUREVAL, 2014). It was taking in charge by the state, the city of Marseille, the PACA region, the Bouches-du-Rhône regional council, some other towns or agglomeration communities and private foundations. This high budget was quickly comforted by positive economic results.

The first one was linked with the touristic flows increase. Indeed, the city hosted more than 10 million touristic visits in 2013. Consequently, the results are particularly positive for the restaurants and hotels (the attendance has increased of 8% and the hotels of Marseille-Provence territory had hosted 21% more foreign tourists in 2013) (Source: CCI Marseille-Provence *et al.*, 2014).

The event's success was also visible through its large mediatisation especially at a global scale (all in all, there were around 11.000 quotes referring to the cultural event among which 19% appeared in the foreign press and 15% in the national one (Source: CCI Marseille-Provence *et al.,* 2014).

Finally, all the urban evolutions due to the territorial labelling process have significantly reduced Marseille' cultural underdevelopment (GRESILLON, 2011). From this point of view, several artists or cultural workers explained to us during interviews how great and positive was the event MP13, for Marseille. Concerning this idea, Dominique BLUZET, the current director of "Les Théâtres"[7] declared

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7   « Les *Théâtres* » is the name given to a cultural infrastructure which reunites four different theatres between Marseille and Aix-en-Provence. In Marseille, the Théâtre du Gymnase and Théâtre des Bernardines are part of it.

:" With the European Capital of Culture, people's opinions about Marseille, changed. We were able to accomplish something, and we were probably – in the history of all the European capitals of culture – one of the five or six biggest success."[8]

Nevertheless, there are not only positive points and the policies adopted to host this big event hadn't really taken count of the poorest people. Even worse, they have accentuated the spatial inequalities.

A limited event concerning the social objectives

**The low integration of the poorest people and districts**

If one tries to summarize the MP13's year, one can say that the poorest people and districts in Marseille have been the biggest losers of this cultural event. Indeed, there are two types of socio-economic effects which could be study here as limits.

First, the exclusion of Northern neighborhoods which hadn't really been integrated to the big cultural facilities built in the city-core. Second, Marseille's social fragmentation, far from being solved, has increased.

The biggest cultural amenities have been built mostly in the city core (see Maps 3 and 4). The other parts of the whole territory without being totally excluded from cultural initiatives, stay largely disconnected and marginalized. The neighborhoods least concerned by territorial labeling are among the most impoverished boroughs from an economic point of view (see Maps 1 and 2). So, all in all, the speeches which defended culture as a future developing lever were partly wrong if we consider the socio-economic situation of the poorest areas for which the title's awarding barely changed anything.

8   Extract from the interview given on 7/3/2017.

Map 3. Location of the main places and events during Marseille-Provence 2013 (MP13)
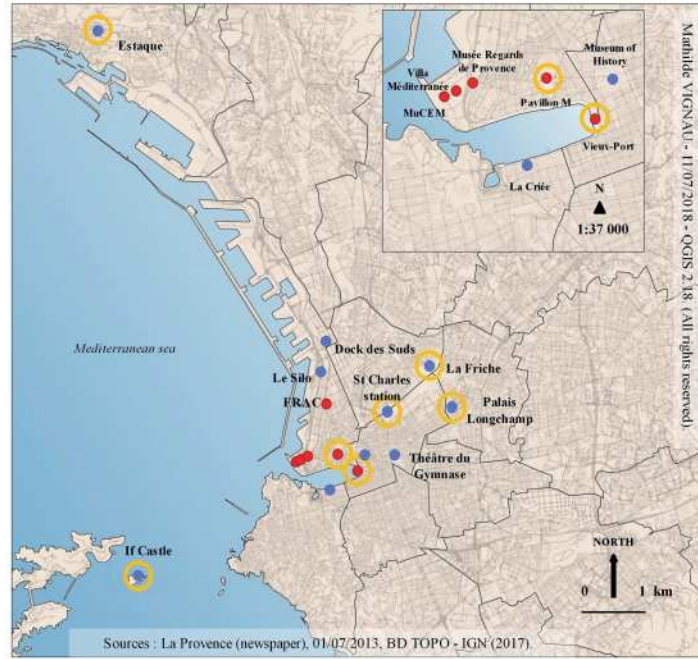
Main creative places in Marseille during MP 2013

- ● Buildings built or transformed since MP 2013
- ● Buildings built before MP 2013
- ○ Location of the most famous cultural events during MP 2013

Map 4. Location of all the places which welcomed a cultural event for MP 2013's opening day
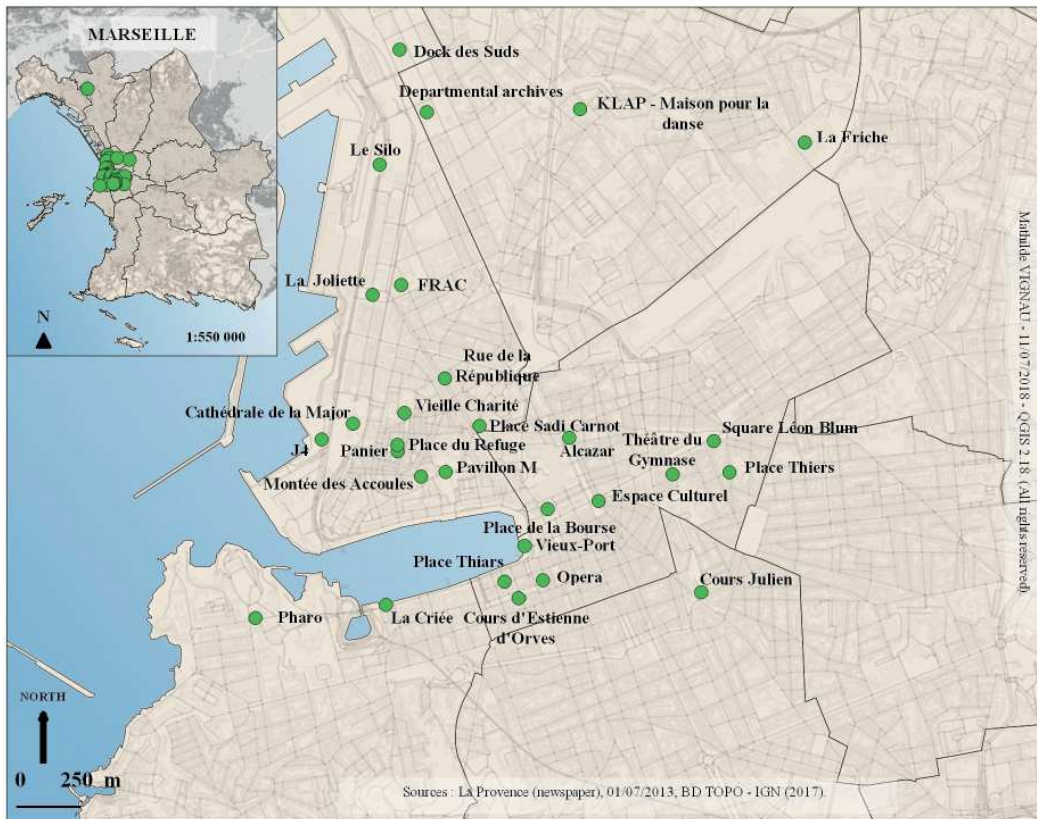
Finally, MP13 could be analyzed as an "economy-friendly" tool only at a very local scale (the one of the already dynamic city-core). Moreover this socio-spatial dichotomy is reinforced by the fact that the people who lived in the poorest districts didn't really accepted the small cultural initiatives which were proposed to them. Otherwise another problem emerged from the urban transformations in Marseille and more precisely within its core. Indeed, the cultural facilities newly built there provoked a high rise of the housing prices. In that sense, Marseille' city center moved upmarket with the label's awarding. This is particularly interesting because this neighborhood was originally one of the most impacted by crisis and socio-economic problems such as: unemployment, aging process or demographic decline (LANGEVIN, 2007). The will of reorganizing the city follows the desire of developing a real urban centrality whose its central aspect didn't go over physical and geographical frame. With the MP13 event, Marseille' decision-makers create a new and recognizable center (which is now more attractive from an economic and touristic point of view). This was especially possible thanks to the old harbor and Joliette's areas' transformations (see Photographs 3 and 4). But this urban change could also be linked with neoliberal planning. Indeed, one noticed the ostentatious absence of public benches within this new so-called "public agora". This translates the will of moving the poverty aside from the city-core. Indeed, this large public area was built as a passing-place rather than a real public space where people can stop for a while.

Photographs 3-4. Evolution of the Vieux-Port

Source : Mathilde VIGNAU - 2013

Around the old harbor, the spaces have been ordered according to several urban functions. In the Joliette's district the space dedicated to car decreased a lot in order to facilitate the pedestrians' access to the MuCEM and the *Villa de la Méditerranée*.

In the Western part of the city, the *Rue de la République* (one of the most important city street) is now considered as a gentrified and franchised space (JOURDAN, 2008). Indeed, one can find lots of international brands (e.g. Starbucks, H&M, Desigual…) there. These shops are supposed to correspond to new customers' habits. Today this street highly symbolizes Marseille' renewal as well as the progressive neoliberal urban planning. At the same time, not so far from the *Rue de la République*, the *Belsunce* district - which was originally one of the poorest of the whole city-core - didn't change that much with the title's awarding. This sector wasn't taken in count by the urban planners or investors and still stays poor today.

So, the urban metamorphosis of Marseille' districts is based on a strong social division as well as a territorial gap which is strengthened by the increase of neoliberal policies (e.g. the high rise of video watching within the city) (VINZENT, 2013). This added to the severe condemnation of begging (MAISETTI, 2014, 2015, 2017) or the omnipresence of brands, logos and ads everywhere in the city-core.

From this point of view, the label "European Capital of Culture" highlighted the question of land use conflicts concerning the emergence of new and cultural amenities.

On one hand, these new facilities were able to valorize some areas but, on the other hand they jeopardized the poor people by transforming the socio-economic profile of their living places.

Speaking about this, one can think that MP13 policies are clearly different from the original objectives defended to obtain the title.

An international event without mobilizing local artists or popular cultures

The second limit of this territorial event is the low integration of local artists in the official program. Once again, in the application file, Marseille' decision-makers put forwards the importance of local artists and popular cultures during the "European Capital of Culture" year. However, if we study the whole cultural program, one can notice the general absence of the local artistic scene. In response to this, lot of associations or artists' collectives (e.g. "*La Rabia del Pueblo*", "*article 13*", "*La confédération syndicale des familles de Marseille*", "*le point de bascule*", "*l'Affranchi*") criticized the official cultural program during 2013. Some of them even spoke about Marseille as a "bursting capital" which increased more and more social inequalities and which participated to the standardization and institutionalization of culture.

For the local artists, the main problem of MP13 event was the fact that some cultural initiatives were organized without considering the original socio-economic situation of a given area. They also denounced the exclusion of the poorest who constitute quite a large percentage of Marseille' total population.

Moreover, the official programming totally forgot to integrate the hip-hop subculture which is both very popular (socially speaking, this kind of culture is accessible to anyone) and famous (there are lots of street-art or hip hop dedicated-spots in Marseille). Even if Marseille could be compared to the US Westcoast in terms of hip-hop culture, nothing was officially done to valorize this local cultural wealth. The anecdote often told thereupon is the fact that, on June 21st of 2013 (French national day for celebrating music), Marseille' most famous hip-hop band called "*IAM*" was performing in…Central Park, NYC. On this subject, Laurent CARENZO[9] declared in 2017 :

> The two failures of Marseille-Provence 2013 in terms of programming, was the music - where we missed the thing, totally -, and the integration of the northern districts. [...] For music, I think that the sensitivity of B. LATARJET was not very strong, he has probably named people who did not know how to do it.[10]

To struggle against this, two alternative festivals have been organized during MP13 year. They were a tangible proof of the local artistic scene's resistance which denounced the progressive standardization of

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[9]   During MP13, Laurent CARENZO worked for the CCI MP (Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Marseille-Provence) and along with "Marseille-Provence 2013" association.

[10] Extract from the interview given on 6/9/2017.

culture and creativity within cities. The organizers of these alternative festivals obviously mobilized local and popular artists.

The first one was called "*Marseille 2013 off*" and emerged in 2004 (the year when Marseille officially confirmed its candidature) when three friends decided to create "Marseille 2013" website in order to attract local artists and cultural projects' developers within the city. They bet on the label's awarding by Marseille (four years before knowing the final choice) with a real desire of making Marseille' artists and cultural potential visible (COCQUET, 2013). But, unfortunately, once the city finally got the title, the organizers of the official event didn't consider this initiative anymore stating that it finally didn't fit with the official program.

As a response to this, the "Marseille 2013 off" initiative was created, developing its own logo and programming to concurrence the main event. Several big initiatives occurred thanks to this first alternative festival. Stéphane SARPAUX, one of the initiators of the festival «Marseille 2013 off» explain: " it is because MP 2013 refused to work with us that we made an off. [...] We never made an off in a political position saying: «the capital of culture is shit, etc., etc. [...].»[11]

The second one entitled "*Alter off*" was created in 2012 thanks to Louis ALESANDRINI who defended the alternative culture in Marseille-Provence territory. The first objective of this project was to rethink the notion of an "off festival" in a city. For achieving this, Louis ALESANDRINI, helped by an artistic collective, organized various debates about the local or regional artists' implication and around the notion of cultural ethic. Indeed the "*Alter off*" organizers thought that neither the official programming nor the "*Marseille 2013 off*" festival corresponded to the cultural and creative ideal towards which Marseille-Provence territory should tend to. By planning their own cultural events, the organizers of the "Alter off" festival wanted to denounce the marketing policies largely used to communicate about a conformist cultural big event. But, above all they wanted to show up from where came the funding of the two apparently concurrent initiatives (i.e. MP13 official event and "*Marseille 2013 off*"). Indeed, they reported that both events were partly based on private funds. If this is not very surprising concerning the official event, it clearly breaks up with the ethical principles valorized by "*Marseille 2013 off*" (which perceived important funds from the "*Banque Populaire*" (a French bank) (CREZE, 2013a). Louis ALESANDRINI explained :

> I followed the evolution of the in, off, and when I saw that the off became more and more in and that all the programming of the official did not consider the cultural wealth of Marseille, I thought, I created the Alter off [...] »[12]. Being opposed to this kind of financial helps, the "Alter off" organizers only used donations and above all choose to develop low-cost cultural projects along with the local artistic scenes. According to them, this general policy created : "a real "off festival" which really [shew] the cultural potential and diversity in both Marseille and the PACA region (Source: marseilleprovence2013alteroff.org).

Conclusion

To conclude, the former points underlined the fact that culture and creativity are now seen as powerful tools for urban planning and city development. The criticisms that have been formulized throughout this paper, put forwards how a big cultural event as well as major urban transformations could

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[11]   Extract from the interview given on 7/6/2017.
[12]   Extract from the interview given on 6/8/2017.

be used to radically change a city-core which is often prey to crisis.

All in all, the decision-makers' strategy is clear : they above all claim for a title by underlining a lack of funds to invest in the city and enhance public spaces. Thanks to the territorial labelling process which, by many aspects, looks like neoliberalism, they finally started a real and deep urban metamorphosis.

The main negative point here is that most of the time, the private sector is closely implicated in urban projects to the detriment of the social concerns. Indeed, through the example of "Marseille-Provence Capital of Culture 2013", we shew that urban transformations, despite its massive and impressing dimension, have exacerbated the segregation especially towards the poorest. Finally, whereas the official speeches valorized suburbs and neighborhoods which were facing huge socio-economic problems, most of the cultural initiatives took place within the most dynamic areas.

All these cultural initiatives are far from the "right to city" ideal (LEFEBVRE, 1968; HARVEY, 2009) which defines urban space as a priority to accelerate positive social changes. Here, on the contrary, the territorial labelling process through the "European Capital of Culture" title has reinforced the neoliberal principles which clearly don't fit with most of the inhabitants' way of life. Eventually, even if it was one of the main arguments used in the application file, the concept of socio-justice wasn't part of all the cultural projects created during MP13.

The opponents to this global cultural event still denounce the territorial transformation which is often linked with a "upmarket process" (ROUSSEAU, 2014) applied in a street, a neighborhood or even several districts without taking count of the local specificities.

All in all, MP13 could be consider as a paradox because the decision-makers in Marseille-Provence territory wanted to obtain a distinctive label which highlights the attractive territorial differences whereas this label contributes to standardize the city.

To sum up, the "European Capital of Culture" label could be considered as a "poisoning gift" in a territory which used cultural and creative policies as a Trojan horse serving strong and sometimes insidious urban neoliberalism.

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