BOOK REVIEW

Luigi Fusco Girard, Tüzin Baycan and Peter Nijkamp (Eds.)

*Sustainable City and Creativity – Promoting Creative Urban Initiatives*

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In the global world – constantly in the pursuit of competitiveness, cities respond this challenge in various ways, which can transform their microstructures and macroimage as well. The responses are characterized by a strong focus on innovation and creativity that are regarded as competitive assets, able to improve the urban economic and social performance. This orientation is largely addressed in the research area – be it in economics, geography, architecture, urban planning, etc., inspired by Florida’s vision on the creative class, creative industry and creative city.

The volume on *Sustainable City and Creativity*, edited by Luigi Fusco Girard, Tüzin Baycan and Peter Nijkamp has a special place in the large collection of studies devoted to creative cities, offering an original, comprehensive, multi-faced perspective on the theories and concepts, principles and practices addressing urban sustainability and creativity, as a solid background for the policies in this field. The contributions belong to renown scholars, highly appreciated in the international scientific community, who have collaborated for bringing together topics that gravitate around fundamental issues pertaining to human sustainable city, entrepreneurial urban economy, urban cultural landscape and creative milieu and planning instruments for creative cities. These are, in fact, the key foci of the four parts of the volume, admirably assembled in a valuable scientific product.

In *Part I*, which concentrates on principles and perspectives of creative and sustainable cities, the debate is placed in a system context, based on multidisciplinarity.

Thus, Tüzin Baycan identifies ‘top FAQs’ as a starting point for investigating the general characteristics of creative cities and the corresponding strategies and challenges.
In the next chapter **Luigi Fusco Girard** reveals the complex content of economic competition, ecological/climate stability, social cohesion, self-governance in relation to the principles and approaches which nurture city resilience, addressed from economic, social, environmental and cultural perspective.

Further on, **Waldemar Ratajczak** presents the components of the XXQ concept, demonstrating the following logical relationship: "If the resilience of a city greatly exceeds its vulnerability, it develops as a sustainable city; as such, it displays a high level of liveability and thus may be considered a city which fulfils extra high-quality conditions” (p. 99).

**Part II**, focused on the entrepreneurial and creative urban economy, discusses the role of creative and knowledge-based industries in urban, regional and global economy.

The chapter written by **T.R Lakshamanan and Lata Chatterjee** captures the contributions of entrepreneurial creative clusters to the development of the so-called entrepreneurial cities, which “both direct and adapt to structural change” (p.120).

In the next chapter **Peter Daniel** concentrates on the role of business and professional services to sustaining the creative city, pointing out the challenges for less advanced cities: skills shortages, use of staff training, etc.

The chapter authored by **Haifeng Qian and Roger Stough** proposes a case study in China, highlighting the “geography of talent” (p.163) in this country: creativity is linked to megacities and regions so as to provide a clear view on the factors associated with talent attraction. The unit of analysis is the provincial-level region, including four municipalities (megacities) under the central government (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Chongqing).

**Part III** addresses the urban cultural landscape and creative milieu, emphasizing the role of cultural heritage in urban development, culture-led regeneration and local development.

This part is opened by **Roberto Camagni**, who discusses the relationship between creativity, culture and urban milieu and presents the alternative strategies for relaunching cities’ development by strengthening the preconditions for innovation and creativity. The accent is put on the reorientation of
“traditional ‘vocations’ and competencies of the local context towards new and modern activities through the provision of interaction opportunities and places” (p.183).

In the next chapter Xavier Greffe addresses creativity from the cultural landscape perspective, considered to have a strategic role in increasing urban attractiveness and competitiveness. Even if landscape is usually related to the natural scenery, the author argues that there are a lot of elements linking the man to nature (ecological movement, cultural tourism, cultural atmosphere, etc.) that favour creativity via new activities, jobs and revenues. The criteria that can be employed in order to assess the quality of urban cultural landscape, the instruments for protecting it, the solutions for making cultural landscape more proactive, for implementing creative cities are particularly pointed out.

Further on, Faroek Lazrak, Peter Nijkamp, Peter Rietveld and Jan Rouwendal propose an economic evaluation perspective on the cultural heritage and creative cities. A wide range of methods for economic assessment of urban cultural heritage is discussed, from physical compensation to project evaluation methods, state preference methods and revealed preference (travel and cost method, hedonic price). They can serve as useful tools for underlying a “creative urban policy”, able “to translate creative and cultural assets and expressions into commercial values (value added, employment, visitors, etc.)” (p.239).

In the chapter written by Guido Ferilli, Pier Luigi Sacco and Giorgio Tavano Blessi cities are approached as creative hubs, bringing into discussion the ways in which culture may have a relevant impact on local economy. In this context cultural and creative industries have a central place in culture-led development models and processes.

Next, Aliye Ahu Akgün, Tüzin Baycan and Peter Nijkamp direct reader’s attention to rural areas as creative milieus, based on evidence from Europe. They point out the factors which stimulate the advance of rural areas using an index for identifying the socio-economic progress of the investigated villages and suggest subsequent research for developing strategies able to integrate the rural areas and the urban surrounding in creative milieus.

Part IV is devoted to methodological approaches and planning instruments, combining theory and practice, design and visualization techniques.
In the first chapter of this part Francesco Forte explains how the geopolitical atmosphere can form a stimulus for creative places. The stages of development and associated theories are interpreted from design choices viewpoint and a series of current threats are identified. As a response, the role of urban planning within public policy is examined.

The next chapter, by Mario Giampietro, Gonzalo Gamboa and Augustin Lobo, presents an approach which situates the energy metabolism of the modern city in relation to the metabolic patterns expressed by the household types existing in the city. It makes it possible to study the mechanisms and consequences of changes at various hierarchical levels highlighting increasing share of human activity allocated to adaptability.

In the chapter authored by Joe Ravetz the city system is approached in relation to sustainability and creativity in physical terms, ‘relational thinking’ and ‘relational visualisation’ being proposed as methods and techniques suited for this kind of investigation.

The following chapter, by Eduardo Diaz, Henk J. Scholten, Arda Riedijk and Rob van de Velde, explores the innovative geospatial visualization techniques as parts of institutional arrangements which integrate them into spatial planning processes enabling sustainable city and creativity.

A special chapter, belonging to Robert U. Ayres, deals with creative urban transport, focusing on the people-mover problem. It suggests the ideal solution – people to live where they work and the necessary changes that should be performed in the derived policies.

Finally, Emiko Kakiuchi presents best practices for promoting creative urban initiatives in Japan. The tacit knowledge and culture shared by community members is seen as an infrastructure for creativity and innovation, able to integrate citizens’ efforts in the attempts to attain a balance between economic development and quality of life.

The diversity of cases and experiences shared by the contributors to this volume makes it an original, timely source of knowledge about the fascinating field of research represented by sustainable and creative cities. It is highly recommended not only to academics and researchers, but also to students and policy-makers, all of them finding valuable ideas and inspiration for their own inquiry into this field.