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Urban Development and Cultural Policy "White Elephants": Barcelona and Valencia

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ABSTRACT *The importance of culture in defining new models of local development has been increasingly emphasized. However, less attention has been paid to the influence of local development models on local cultural policy. This article will focus on analysing two cities that have used culture as a central element in their economic and urban development. In both cases, they have followed different strategies but the two have finally finished generating two "white elephants": the Universal Forum of Cultures in the case of Barcelona and the City of Arts and Sciences in the case of Valencia. From a comparison of the two cases, the paper analyses the causes of this urban phenomenon, which combines cultural legitimation, wasteful investments, financial and social unsustainability and, last but not least, corruption. These four characteristics of cultural white elephants express the depletion of a neoliberal city model based on real estate speculation and tourism, which de facto relegates culture – in spite of discourses about social cohesion and sustainability – as an instrument of urban branding and elite socio-economic domination.*

Introduction

The role that culture has developed has been the subject of increasing debate since the 1980s, especially in the context of cities, which have converted culture into a central element of their development model, for example, in Glasgow (García, 2004b), Liverpool (Connolly, 2013), Bilbao (González, 2011) and Barcelona (Muntaner, 2007). These cases have been considered a model for other cities wishing to project themselves as either a global city (Sassen, 1991) or a creative city (Landry & Bianchini, 1995). As part of

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these analyses, the growing importance of orientations of instrumentalization towards culture has been emphasized (Belfiore, 2002; Gray, 2007) in defining local cultural policies, which have gained new prominence (Connolly, 2011).

Over the last decade, there has been a considerable amount of critical literature on the so-called "Barcelona Model" (Balibrea, 2001; Blanco, 2009b; Degen & García, 2012; Delgado, 2007). Some authors even discuss the coherence of the model (Blanco, 2009a) or the existence of several Barcelona models (Neuman, 2011). Moreover, these visions have focussed on the tensions and negative virtues of the process of urban regeneration as a branding strategy and the role played by local stakeholders in this process in terms of participation (Barber & Pareja Eastaway, 2010; Morris Hargreaves Mcintyre, 2009). The case of Valencia has received less attention, despite the fact that since the 1990s, it has provided a clear example of the scope—and undesired consequences—of a development strategy for a neoliberal city (Cucó i Giner, 2013), in which the label of a creative city was used in depth to restructure central neighbourhoods and to create globalized spaces (Hernàndez & Torres Pérez, 2013). Some spaces, despite embodying the urban-renewal brand, have had little impact on cultural sectors and actual citizenship practices (Hernàndez i Martí *et al.*, 2014).

Thirty years after the commencement of Spain's configuration process for local cultural policy within the framework of democratic city councils (Bouzada, 2007), it is time to take stock of the consequences of these processes in two cities that partially differ in their local development strategies—especially in their origins—but share some of the underlying trends of the instrumentalization of culture. Moreover, it is time to ask why, in cases such as those of Barcelona and Valencia, these policies have generated what we call "white elephants" (see endnote 1), meaning infrastructure or major events that require large investments or maintenance costs but do not provide public value (Moore, 1995). The article attempts to answer the following question: why, in cities such as twenty-first century Barcelona and Valencia, have these types of white elephants been developed and what are the roots of this phenomenon?

Accordingly, our article begins with the following hypotheses. First, the creation of white elephants correlates with the appearance of a cultural policy model oriented towards cultural instrumentalization and urban branding. Second, and moreover, the model of cultural policy is conditioned by so-called local development and many of its features and contradictions are explained by the relationship referenced above. To the extent that a local development model is oriented towards the model of the creative city—that is, external local promotion (tourism and branding)—the model of its cultural policy will be more disjointed and disconnected from its cultural base (Sánchez *et al.*, 2013).

To test the hypotheses set forth above, we first propose developing an analysis of the debate between local development and cultural policy by examining the characteristics of the local development model and establishing a chronology of the various stages of cultural policy. Second, we will analyse a typical case of the two cities' cultural policies to test the extent to which they comply with the proposed hypotheses. First, we will analyse the Barcelona Model of local development and its effects on the definition of cultural policy. Below, we will provide an example of the model as applied to a large event, Barcelona's 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures, which involved a large mobilization of resources and a heated controversy about both its objectives and its cultural and urban effects. Next, we will analyse the case of the city of Valencia. In this city the project of creating a "Mediterranean" regional capital was abandoned in the mid-1990s to launch

a series of very ambitious projects in projecting the city. These projects had problematic medium- and long-term effects on both the model of the city and the culture promoted by those projects. Valencia represents a "cosmopolitan" model exemplified by the case of the City of Arts and Sciences and the Marina, which were the subjects of concentrated investment efforts in culture during the 2000s.[1]

Cultural Policy as a Vector of Local Development

The evolution of post-industrial society has led to a new symbiotic relationship between economy and culture: culture is gaining centrality in the economic development of Western societies (Scott, 2007). This process, which has involved the decreased centrality of the Fordist system of industrial organization and the decline of the Keynesian welfare state and its mode of regulation, has led to a profound reorganization of political and production systems. In the context of these transformations, which give renewed prominence to the local context, local governments have both changed and gained importance. Thus, they have gone from being passive implementers of state public-service policies to being active promoters of local development (Blanco, 2009a).

The so-called entrepreneurial turn (Harvey, 1989) of local policies, which focus on urban revitalization through large architectural projects, spectacular events and the development of services and new industries, has an eminent cultural character that often materializes in the creation of artistic neighbourhoods or clusters of cultural industries (Scott, 2000; Scott, 2010). Thus, it is claimed that cultural strategies have become key to cities' survival (Zukin, 1995, p. 271). One mechanism for extending the use of major events as catalysts of urban development has involved the construction of flagship museums (Bianchini, 1993b) and the generation of large events (García, 2004a). From these activities, a new cultural policy has been conceived, which, as in the cases of Liverpool and Barcelona, represents the will to unite urban change, economic development and social transformation (Connolly, 2011). Simultaneously, this model is inscribed within another, more profound change in cultural policy, one of the epicentres of which is Great Britain. In this way, since the 1980s, cultural policy has been perceived as a driving force of cities' economies and a lever to regenerate urban centres (Landry & Bianchini, 1995). This new approach appoints local governments as the leaders of cultural policies, above state cultural policies, which were traditionally redistributive (Menger, 2010).

The theory of the creative city, which has become commonplace in the academic literature and urban development plans, establishes that it is important to attract the "creative class" to create a brand of creative city (cf. Florida, 2002). In turn, the theory is conceived as a process of creating infrastructure to facilitate residential installation and professional development, thereby establishing frameworks for social interaction—called buzz by Storper and Venables (2004)—and abundant, varied cultural and leisure offerings. This element is a generally important aspect for economic actors and has emerged as a key factor for urban planners.

This local, entrepreneurial turn in cultural policy (Menger, 2010) has used major cultural facilities as one of its main instruments due to their ability to promote urban regeneration processes (Moomas, 2004; Whitt, 1987) and promote a city's image (González, 2011; Plaza, 1999). However, such facilities have generated a tendency to standardize a cultural policy that accommodates global architectural guidelines and aesthetics (Evans, 2003) and a tendency to create both glocal areas and banal spaces (Hernàndez i

Martí, 2013; Muñoz, 2010). Accordingly, the dilemmas of the cultural policy (Bianchini, 1993a) identified 20 years ago remain in effect: final effect *versus* cultural value, large events *versus* small actions, and international projection *versus* local development.

The models of "entrepreneurial urbanism" (Harvey, 1989) and "creative city", two sides of the same coin, take different forms in different cities. To explain the heterogeneity of these situations, we believe that both the concept of "actually existing neoliberalism" (Brenner & Theodore, 2003) and its emphasis on the "contextual integration of liberal restructuring projects and path dependence" (Theodore *et al.*, 2009) are particularly useful.

Programs for large projects, global events and cultural policies as economic vectors are inserted into a local context, a city, a specific socio-urban area comprising socio-economic and urban characteristics, the history and traditions that make it unique, the power relationships among different social groups and the policies implemented by public managers. Thus, the distinct local contexts of Barcelona and Valencia establish differences in the application of a model for a global, entrepreneurial and creative city, and the different expressions of the neoliberalism in these two cities. A comparison between the two cities shows not only common trends in their management but also differences, which in some respects are very important. However, despite these differences, "white elephants" emerge in both Barcelona and Valencia, thus indicating that we are discussing a common trend.

The Barcelona Model and Cultural Policy

Barcelona is known for having developed a model of a city led by its local government, with the objective of transforming the city economically, socially and culturally (Blanco, 2009b). Furthermore, Barcelona has been analysed as embodying a modernizing impulse for the city under successive social democratic governments, which were initially characterized by the implementation of a socially inclusive and culturally advanced urbanism (Marshall, 2000). Among the elements typically attributed to the Barcelona Model it is common to emphasize (a) the use of large events and culture as symbolic-material strategies to transform the city (Subirós, 1998), (b) the introduction of the logic of strategic planning, (c) governance and co-operation among different levels of government and public–private partnerships in generating urban projects of public interest, (d) the leading role of technicians (architects, planners, cultural managers) in the development of the urban project (Muntaner, 2007) and (e) the development of mechanisms for citizen participation and the broad public consensus elicited by the model (Blanco, 2009a). Consequently, one can speak of the Barcelona Model of urban renewal as a model of municipal leadership and social democratic inspiration in opposition to the spectacular and privatised urbanism of North America (Hall, 2002; Zukin, 1995).

Thus, Barcelona's cultural strategy is rooted in a long history that began during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the creation of large cultural institutions and major events such as the Universal Exhibitions of 1888 and 1929. The entrepreneurial orientation of the elites and local power re-emerged in the 1980s, when Barcelona developed one of the most advanced models of an entrepreneurial city (Marshall, 1996). Thus, there is some consensus that Barcelona represents a successful model that wisely combined urban renewal, cultural planning (Subirós, 1999), regeneration of the urban centre and promotion of peripheral neighbourhoods (Blanco, 2009b). Since Barcelona's formulation as a model, several authors have developed critiques of it. Some of those authors have highlighted

Barcelona's inconsistencies as a model of a city (Blanco, 2009b), that is, its passage from a model to the brand of a commercialized city (Balibrea, 2001; Borja, 2010), and they have argued that urban transformation has favoured the interests of the new middle classes at the expense of the masses (Julier, 1996). Additionally, some authors have noted contradictions between the development strategy for creative industries advanced through the formation of artists' neighbourhoods and local participation, taking as an example the development of the 22@ creative district. In this case, the emergence of the cluster of media and technologic enterprises does not help the emergence of the artistic studios cluster. On the contrary, it has created a socio-politic antagonism between the two dynamics, the top-down planning of the local government of the 22@ and the emergence of the artistic movement from the bottom-up, as we can see in the *Open Studios of Poblenou* developed since 2006 (Martí-Costa & Pradel i Miquel, 2012; Zarlenga *et al.*, 2013). Finally, it has also been noted that an increasing deviation has gradually been created, particularly since the 1990s, between integrative discourse and the scope of social participation in practice within the context of the model's mercantilist and authoritarian turns (Degen & García, 2012). However, few have studied how the Barcelona Model has conditioned the formulation of cultural policy and how its priorities have been reoriented around large events and cultural infrastructure.

The Barcelona Model of Cultural Policy: The Case of the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures

The 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures initiative emerged from the desire to imitate the experience of the Barcelona Olympic Games in both the dimension of urban development and the city's cultural dynamics (Subirós, 1998). However, in this case, the balance may not be as positive because the internal contradictions in what we can define as the Barcelona model of cultural policy were more clearly projected.

The Forum was an example of excellence in its development as a redevelopment project for a degrading area (the mouth of the Besos River) and as a renovation process for sustainable infrastructure. This included the building of an efficient water treatment plant and installation of photovoltaic solar panels that reduce the air and noise pollution produced by the former electric plant near the Forum site and the creation of a park in the waterfront (Majoor, 2011). However, its evaluation is much less positive if we focus on its effect either as a general plan for urban regeneration or as a cultural event aimed at promoting sustainability, cultural participation and peace. Moreover, its classification as a "white elephant" is clear in light of its cost: from 1999 to 2004, the Forum cost the government 220.8 million euros , approximately the amount of the regional government's annual spending on culture (Rius Ulldemolins *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, public attendance was much less than expected: although 5 million visitors were expected, the final official figure was 3.3 million. Worse, the Public Audit Office of Catalonia (*Sindicatura de Comptes de Catalunya*) estimated that this figure is inflated and that there were actually 1.6 million visitors, with a public cost per visitor of 136.9 Euros (SCC, 2014).

The idea of a new, large event related to culture and sustainability resulted in the 1997 presentation of the project to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, an organization that formally expressed its support for the initiative notwithstanding its then-indefinite character. Subsequently, the Municipal Action Plan of 2000 from the Barcelona City Council defined the Forum as

a global, innovative event in format and content, with the desire to be the first edition of a new type of regular global event and an emphasis on cultures and people, pursuing the mobilisation of broad sectors of civil society with the goal of constructing new social relations in the world of globalisation. (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2000)

To this end, a consortium that combined the government and a parallel anonymous corporation was created, which gave the project considerable organizational complexity and opacity. The event implemented the immodest goal of "moving the world", wanting to emulate the enthusiasm generated by the 1992 Olympic Games at the national level and thereby to extend Barcelona's urban and cultural model (Mascarell, 2005).

Next, the project was implemented as a singular and mixed model of arts festival and a thematic conference and a forum for social movements, combining performing arts, expositions, conferences and debates. With respect to the latter, the Forum was inspired by the Social Forum in Porto Alegre, a biannual meeting of the anti-globalization movement. However, some social movements of the city, including the important Federation of Neighbourhood Associations, affirmed that the Forum's participatory claims were purely rhetorical (Espai en Blanc, 2004). Additionally, they denounced that the entrepreneurial scheme was favoured by the City Council whereby the Forum sought financing by large companies, some of which were accused of environmentally negative practices (Endesa)[2] or to develop ways of sponsoring highly oriented to pure advertising (Toyota).[3]

This confrontation between the organizers of the forum and the social movements and the most critical sectors of the creative community, along with the participation of governments in favour of the Iraq War (in which Spain participated) and multinational companies criticized for favouring practices opposed to the official discourse of the Forum, caused the Forum to be seen by the intellectual and creative sectors as an exercise in instrumentalization and hypocrisy by its sponsor, the City of Barcelona (Delgado, 2007). This perception ended with a campaign to boycott the Forum, and the Assembly of resistance to the Forum had significant media and social impact (Espai en Blanc, 2004). In this context, some of those responsible for the cultural policy who had begun the project resigned from its leadership and publicly distanced themselves,

In terms of Barcelona's cultural infrastructure, the legacy the Forum left behind consists of an oversized convention building of 120,000 m^2 and an auditorium, which in 2011 was converted into the Blue Museum of Natural Sciences. To achieve that transformation, it was necessary to readjust the space for museum use, for which it was not designed, which required an additional investment of 13 million euros (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2011). Significantly, one of the uses with the greatest economic and cultural success has been the unintended use of the Forum Park, one of the largest plazas in Europe, which has enabled various festivals, such as Primavera Sound, to develop their activities with remarkable success. However, some of the Forum's areas have remained incomplete due to a lack of resources, such as the marine platform, a 20-acre space by the sea that was to have housed a new Barcelona Zoo and Aquarium. Currently, there are several projects to promote amusement parks (parks with waves or wind tunnels), thus increasing the area's specialization as a commercial leisure area.

Finally, with respect to the Forum's posterity as an event, other editions have taken place with uneven success in Monterrey, Mexico (2007), Valparaiso, Chile (2010), and Naples, Italy (2013). The 2016 Forum was supposed to take place in two cities, Quebec, Canada and Amman, Jordan. However, Quebec decided not to organize it in

2016 due to its high cost and local people's lack of enthusiasm, thus compromising the project's continuity. Further, some authors have even highlighted its positive effects on city infrastructures (Majoor, 2011); the Forum project is one that is seen as a "white elephant" to be buried and forgotten by most of Barcelona's elite and citizens.[4] However, in light of the multiple indications of irregularities and corrupt practices found (cf. SCC, 2014), many voices demand that a citizen audit be conducted to enable cultural policy as a form of urban development to break from the Barcelona model of cultural policy, a variant of the paradigm of the creative city that is now exhausted and increasingly revealing its dysfunctions (Sánchez *et al.*, 2013).

Urban Transformation and Cultural Policy in Valencia

In the 1980s, as in other Spanish cities, the City of Valencia's urban policies focussed on the extension of facilities and basic services to poor, working-class neighbourhoods and the initiation and development of facilities and infrastructure that are now central to the life of the city, such the Garden of Turia and the tram. Additionally, some "typical big-city" cultural facilities were constructed, as the arts centre of Valencia (*Institut Valencià de les Arts*) or the opera auditorium (*Palau de les Arts*), which, beyond Valencia's metropolitan area, aimed to make the city a cultural landmark of the Mediterranean.

In the late 1980s, the policy transformed from a few proposals for contained growth, covering both the deficits left by the Franco regime and improved quality of life, to increasingly prioritizing economic growth, urban space as a commodity and regulatory adaptation to a favourable climate for business. With certain nuances, this transformation resulted in the basic agreement between the Popular Party (PP) and the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) (Alcalá-Santaella, Díaz, Ginés, & Lourés 2011; Gaja, 2002), a strategy that has been analysed as an entrepreneurial regionalist planning in the context of European economic and political integration (Prytherch & Huntoon, 2005), with a political agenda and legitimizing discourse that combined local sustainable regeneration and the ability to develop large projects and events worldwide (Sacco *et al.*, 2013). The General Plan of 1988 established a strategy of urban expansion towards the sea, with the Turia Gardens as one of its axes. In 1991, the socialist council approved the construction of a City of Science and Technology that, with much remodelling, would become the City of Arts and Sciences (CAC) 10 years later.

Valencia's business-urbanism orientation was secured by the first conservative council, in 1991 and was exacerbated after 1995 with conservative hegemony in the government. In 1998, the ~~Foster~~ Palace of Congresses designed by Norman Foster was inaugurated, the first of successive buildings by leading architects. Also that year, the government and city council gave new impetus to the CAC project, which became the flagship of the new Valencia. After that date, we can speak of a Valencian model of neoliberal urban development, which compared to Barcelona (or the first stages of cultural policy of the Catalan city) was more openly aimed at instrumentalization of culture to promote urban development and the urban brand and less responsive to citizen participation or cultural sectors. In Valencia, this urban development has focussed on major projects and events, urban marketing, new and affluent neighbourhoods and new road infrastructure interconnecting those spaces (Alcalá-Santaella *et al.*, 2011; Gaja, 2013). Large projects and facilities have played a central role in city management, both at the socio-urban level and in cultural policy. With respect to Valencia's urban development, the highlight of this

period is the emergence of new neighbourhoods directed towards middle- and high-income sectors and in many cases condominium towers for sociability closed to the outside, thus imitating a pattern of urbanization of US origin that is increasingly common in Spain (Bellet, 2007; Díaz Orueta, 2013). The case of Valencia stands out because these are the only neighbourhoods constructed in the last 20 years and because they are linked to major projects that, like these projects, were conducted based on an "a la carte urbanism" (Gaja, 2006). This includes the neighbourhoods Penya-roja and CAC, located on the left and right of the CAC, and "Nuevo Benicalap", at the intersection of Corts Valencianes avenue and the Foster Palace of Congresses, the Campanar Nou neighbourhood and the new Mestalla. In other cases, these neighbourhoods have arisen without ties to large events, such as Sociopolis and Avenida Alfahuir [Alfahuir Avenue], but still form part of their "narrative": embracing and leveraging businesses that were intended to generate an affluent, cosmopolitan and interconnected neighbourhood attracted to global Valencia (Cucó i Giner, 2013). Further, the infrastructure, new avenues, north ring and extension of the metro and tram network have largely served the new business areas of the city (Torres & García, 2014).

This urban development and the cultural policy that accompanied it enjoyed broad, widespread popular consensus based on the hegemony of the PP, the media impact of major events, the alleged benefits generated and the long cycle of economic growth. However, unlike Barcelona, since its inception the Valencia model attracted criticism from many urban planners, architects and cultural managers, in many cases leading to open clashes with the city council (as in the case of the project to extend Avenida Blasco Ibañez to the sea, destroying part of the neighbourhood of El Cabanyal). Criticism has focussed on the social and economic sustainability of the city model; on the priority given to large projects, global events and affluent neighbourhoods over the needs of lower class neighbourhoods; and the massive transfer of public funds to private capital in both projects and events, thus establishing conditions to ensure that these projects and the promotions of gentrified neighbourhoods were a good deal for the construction industry lobby (Boira Marques, 2012; Cucó i Giner, 2013; Gaja, 2002). With the economic crisis, the failure of this city model is evidenced by the paralysis of the major urban reform projects (such as the reform of the district of Cabanyal or the undergrounding of the railroad tracks), a municipality with a huge debt (1.046 billion euros in September 2012), the crisis of the great cultural and leisure projects (cf. Castillo, 2013; Miralles, 2014; Tudela 2014) and a city with closed neighbourhood facilities due to a lack of funds for maintenance and with more expensive municipal services, which reduce effective services (Torres & García, 2014).

Valencia's Model of Cultural Policy: The Case of the City of Arts and Sciences-Marina

After the second half of the 1990s, Valencia's PP government launched a redefinition of Valencia's urban, cultural and tourist profiles. The area formed by the CAC and the Marina (Puerto Deportivo—PD) has played a central role in this project. After the PP's 1995 victory, the initial project was reformulated with its current orientation. Constructed between 1993 and 2008 in the Park of Turia, it occupies a surface that covers 35 hectares, 1800 m in length, and it contains the following elements: *L'Hemisfèric*, where IMAX movies are shown; *Laserium*; the *Museu de les Ciencies Príncep Felipe* (inaugurated in

2000); the L'Umbracle, which houses a huge parking lot and wooded garden; *L'Oceanogràfic*, an aquarium of more than 110,000 m^2 that houses representatives of the planet's major marine ecosystems; and the *Palau de les Arts Reina Sofía* (inaugurated in 2006), a four-room auditorium for opera, dance and theatre. Subsequently, the *Àgora* building opened in 2012, albeit unfinished and without a concrete use; the *Assud d'Or* bridge was also added. All of these buildings were designed by Santiago Calatrava, with the exception of *L'Oceanogràfic*, which was the work of Félix Candela. A 387-metre high television tower was designed by Calatrava but then discarded. In this futuristic complex, large global, media-focused events have been developed, including music festivals such as Music Television Winters, sporting events such as the Association of Tennis Professionals Tennis Masters and the Global Champions Tour for Equestrians (2009), computer events such as the Campus Party, the 2006 World Meeting of Families presided over by Pope Benedict XVI, and movie shoots.

Since its opening, the CAC has dominated the city's image and has played a central role in city management at both the socio-urban and cultural policy levels. We have already referred to the former; it is also important to stress that the CAC has generated a new centrality not only of the iconic, cultural and touristic but also of services and shopping centres (Santamarina & Moncusi, 2013a). With respect to cultural policy, the hegemony of both the CAC (considered the "crown jewel" of Valencian cultural policy) and its underlying logic led to its expansion as the model was consolidated. With the concession of the celebration of America's Cup to Valencia, with the first edition held in 2007, the city's port was remodelled into an ultramodern marina (i.e. the PD) with the construction of the Royal Juan Carlos I Marina and avant-garde buildings such as *Veles e vents*, a port for high-level regattas, specialized facilities for racing and a nightlife area. The space was relatively close to the CAC and its relevance increased further when the Formula 1 street circuit was installed, with the first race held in 2008. The port project was also intended to transform the port into a berth for luxury cruises, and thus the city attempted to attract a select clientele of tourists, professionals and senior executives to major events. At any rate, the city has achieved a complete transformation of its northern waterfront, as part of a strategy of urban branding oriented towards the external promotion of the city (Benlloch, 2009).

This hegemony of the CAC-PD has been both socio-urban and cultural, with inter-relationships and characteristics between the two dimensions. The cultural policy of both the Valencian region and the city of Valencia has pivoted around the CAC-PD and large events, both by creating these types of acts and manifestations and through agenda priorities that establish the amount of public funds that they consume. With respect to content, the glamorous, the vanguard and the cosmopolitan are the rising values that are demanded for the new "cultural entrepreneurs". These values are imposed in the face of the local and the popular, represented by the expressions of popular culture in the Valencian language or even the Fallas, the most important cultural manifestation of Valencia's own local culture, but that nevertheless is systematically ignored by the municipal government's cultural policy.[5] In this sense, the CAC-PD area has been erected as Valencia's brand of excellence, representing the institutional success of the firm, convincing support by city marketing (Santamarina & Moncusi, 2013b).

It should be stressed that the deployment of the official cultural policy articulated by major projects and events presents two versions that attempt to please different audiences. First, there is "programming" oriented for consumption by a massive, popular and global

audience and in this sense, pop-rock concerts, computer and technological events, sporting events, and various shows are held, in addition to religious events such as the large Mass for the Pope's visit. Second, however, actions are also implemented that target a select, highly cultured, and distinguished audience, which is also global or cosmopolitan, as in the case of operas, equestrian competitions, tennis championships or social parties, with the goal that certain events generate an environment of "glamour" around illustrious or aristocratic visitors (Hernàndez & Torres, 2013).

Finally, the economic analysis of the projects encompassed in the CAC-PD reveals its centrality to the strategy of promoting the city and subordinating the cultural policy to this objective: the CAC's initial budget (308 million euros) increased, based on work changes, to 1300 million in 2012. The rising cost of maintenance should be added to this initial investment because of the continual drop in income for the emblematic areas of the CAC, which otherwise are chaotically managed (Tudela, 2014). In sum, large events, primarily concentrated in the CAC-PD area, have contributed to an enormous public debt (29.643 million euros, or 29.8% of Valencia's gross domestic product), closely tied to the proliferation of clientele networks (Hernàndez i Martí & Albert Rodrigo, 2012) and numerous cases of corruption, in which several Valencian government agents are implicated.[6] According to a recent estimate, these cases of corruption involved 12,500 million euros of public money (Castillo, 2013). Finally, it is important to note the rapid collapse of almost all of the area's cultural and sports projects: the decline began in the ingrained, inflexible area that was almost dismantled by the marina, which has lacked either events or luxury mega-yachts for the past 4 years. The infrastructure for the Formula 1 street circuit languishes and the race has deteriorated. In addition, some of the CAC's most stunning buildings either suffer from structural architectural deficiencies (Prince Phillip Museum of Sciences, *Palau de les Arts*), are unfinished (Ágora) or have lost the continued, dramatic purpose for which they were intended (Palace of the Opera, *Veles e Vents*).

Conclusions

From the analysis of the model of the city and cultural policy, we can conclude that the creation of "white elephants", or the generation of cultural and leisure facilities, cannot only be considered a product of poor management, a failed project or the product of a growth cycle, although these factors are present. Instead, we have analysed how the creation of white elephants is also correlated with the appearance of a model of cultural policy, the so-called "creative city", aimed at cultural instrumentalization and urban branding.

Additionally, from our analysis, we conclude that cultural "white elephants" are a feature of the model adopted by these cities. First, "white elephants" are buildings and places that quickly lose the utility for which they were built (either because the major event for which they were designed ends or because the actual uses are different than the intended uses), creating what Augé (2003) terms as modern, underused ruins in the process of degradation. Second, "white elephants" are the product of a strategy that aims to attract the public (in this case, local and global citizens), generating a euphoria that distracts from the process of urban transformation that accompanies it and sometimes it could be used to justify its negative effects on the most excluded sectors (segregation and gentrification) in a discourse that combines the legitimacy of culture and the supposed

future benefits of these actions. In this type of action, the notion of cost compared to social uses is abandoned based on supposed indirect impacts and an intangible benefit for the city's brand. However, it soon becomes clear that these infrastructures usually are over planned budget as other megaprojects (Flyvbjerg et al., 2003), are expensive to manage, difficult to make profitable, and difficult to maintain, and they can generate an image of waste and decay in the medium- to long-term. Finally, white elephants create a significant problem related to sustainability and amortization because they extract present and future resources from the local cultural system and often present some difficulties to repurpose for uses other than those for which they were conceived.

Barcelona's 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures and Valencia's CAC-Marina share these features of "white elephants". However, the weight and impact of each "elephant" on the city have been very different, at both the socio-urban and the cultural policy levels. From the perspective of urban development, although the facet of the regeneration of a degraded area is positive, the assessment of the 2004 Forum as a failure was almost unanimous and no political party or social or cultural agent openly made a positive assessment. The Forum represents the decline of a stage of the Barcelona model, even though the model has resulted in other, more successful accomplishments (such as the 1992 Olympics). For Valencia, the CAC-Marina is not an element but instead the model of the city. The CAC and the Marina comprise the model. They constitute the core around which much of Valencia's redevelopment, its marketing strategy and its cultural policy have pivoted. If we examine the latter, differences are also evident. The failure of the 2004 Forum as a cultural event was undeniable and for 2 or 3 years, the Forum established a key element—but not the only element—of the city council's cultural policy. Barcelona offered and still offers other large facilities, an intense cultural life and a trajectory as a creative city. The Forum's failure did not tarnish the city's image. In contrast, the CAC-Marina and the events that it has hosted have consumed Valencia's energy, public funds and cultural policy promotion. Its fall, if only because of the weight of its debt, has caused the disappearance of almost all of its cultural and sports projects and the degradation of global Valencia's marketing, which uses the CAC-Marina as its iconic image. When the Valencian cosmopolitan bubble burst, it became clear that the "white elephant" was too large.

Therefore, this model of cultural policy could initially have had some virtue in generating additional resources for a sector, culture, which previously held a secondary position on the public agenda, or it could have been conceived as a way to develop an integrative and inclusive public policy (at least it was partly justified in this way). Instead, the model has emerged as an instrument that is increasingly oriented towards external local promotion and less addressed to promote the cultural practices of the local population (Sánchez *et al.*, 2013). In short, in both cases, which at one point might have seemed "a good idea", the generation of cultural spaces for discussion about a culture of peace and sustainability (in Barcelona) or the promotion of scientific and technical culture (in Valencia) has been perverted in their implementation, generating a stampede of "white elephants" that have left behind a cultural and civic wasteland.

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Notes

1. The article is based on the results of two research projects. In the case of Barcelona, 24 semi-directed interviews were carried out in the framework of the research project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Competitiveness (Project "System of cultural policy in Spain", Ref. CSO2008-05910/ SOCI) (anonymous reference) developed between 2012 and 2014. For this research, urban and cultural policy-makers (of the government and opposition) and senior members of the government, its agencies of the different public administrations involved in cultural management and specifically of the organization of Barcelona *Forum de les Cultures* 2014 (Government of Catalonia, Barcelona City Council and Central Government) were interviewed. In the case of Valencia, the article is based on the results of a comparative research on cultural policies in the regional governments of Spain funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Competitiveness (Project neighborhoods, Museums and art: public art, artists, institutions – HAR2012-38899-C02-01) developed between 2008 and 2011. The project included 42 semi-directed interviews with policy-makers and cultural managers of the Government of Valencian Country, Valencia City Council and managers of the cultural local sector. The interviews were conducted, transcribed and analysed and incorporated into the analysis exposed in this paper.
2. While the electric corporation Endesa funded with 15.1 million euros the Forum of Culture that should promote a culture of sustainability, its subsidiary corporation in Chile promoted the construction of five hydroelectric plants in the Chilean Patagonia, which has alleged the flooding of vast areas of outstanding natural beauty and the displacement of entire villages of the Mapuche people, the indigenous population of Chile (E. González, 2006).
3. Some of the sponsoring companies received economic compensations: Endesa, the electric corporation, received the concession to operate the combined cycle plant built under the project of the Forum and Telefonica, the communications corporation, received the consideration of the main supplier of the Forum. Finally, another major sponsor, Toyota, received in exchange for their contribution, a commitment of the City Council to organize a promotional event related to the Toyota F1 team in Barcelona. Therefore, as the Catalan Audit Office criticizes, these sponsoring practices with economic compensations, although they may be legal are close to misappropriation of public funds and corruption (SCC, 2014).
4. On the 10 anniversary of the opening ceremony, the Spanish press was unanimous in emphasizing a negative balance of the event and the willingness of local government to "hide" the event without making a critical review of the failure, its causes and lessons on the city model and cultural policy. See for example: ABC (2014), "Barcelona hides the tenth anniversary of the Forum", 22 April 2014 or La Vanguardia (2014), "The Forum ten years later", 5 April 2014. Only, the *Sindicatura de Comptes* (Public Audit Office for Catalonia) at the request of the Parliament of Catalonia has made an effort to critically review their financial management aspects of the event (SCC, 2014).
5. The Fallas is a popular festival, which dates back to the eighteenth century, which is organized from wide associative network composed of 382 entities. Over 100,000 people are directly involved in organizing the festival, which consists of the erection of nearly 800 artistic and sculptural installations in the streets and squares of the city. To this we must add hundreds of parades with music bands, fireworks and various events that attract nearly two million tourists to Valencia (Hernández i Martí, 1996). Also, Fallas are currently waiting to be declared Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.
6. Furthermore, mismanagement, waste of public money and corruption have also characterized one of the flagship projects of the City of Arts and Sciences: the *Palau de les Arts*, Valencia's opera. Opened in 2006

with an investment cost of 32 million euros, the spectacular building designed by Santiago Calatrava has become impossible to maintain and manage by the Valencian Government revealing itself as an authentic white elephant: in 2014, as an effect of financial cuts to the *Palau de les Arts* the famous director of the orchestra Zubin Mehta resigned and publicly criticized the situation of cultural institution as a collapse (Verdú, 2015). Finally, in the beginning of 2015, its CEO Helga Schmidt wasarrested and prosecuted for mismanagement and irregular appropriation of commissions in fundraising, which has come to completely sink the image of *Palau de les Arts* as a prestigious cultural institution at local and international levels (Nieto, 2015).

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Urban Development and Cultural Policy "White Elephants": Barcelona and Valencia

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