

Astrid Huopalainen
School of Business and
Economics
Åbo Akademi University
ahuopala@abo.fi

Jutta Tailas
School of Business and
Economics
Åbo Akademi University
jtailas@abo.fi

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Abstract

This paper explores the complexity of meanings of the ‘creative city’ through multiple understandings of space. We explore how meanings attached to a novel, material space called Logomo, established in the city of Turku in Finland, European Capital of Culture in 2011, play out in the construction and performing of the city as ‘creative’. We understand space as socially, materially and imaginarily constructed and here, connect the notion of space to the dominantly deterministic and problematic creative city debate. More specifically, we examine those multiple ways in which meanings of a ‘creative city’ in transition are socially constructed through different *representations* of space. In addition, we show space in the making: how meanings of Logomo are constructed through those representations, thus creating certain *ideas* of space Logomo. By questioning ideas central to the normative creative city debate, our study shows how space matters in the ongoing making of a ‘creative city’. As such, this study attempts to contribute to the critically oriented research on spatiality in organization. We show, however, how representations of space ironically seem to reconstruct mainstream notions of a ‘creative city’.

Introduction

Creativity, a concept widely celebrated, praised and embraced, has become today’s buzzword to such an extent that it appears sufficient to state that the concept has lost its force and critical meaning (e.g., Chatterton, 2000; Rehn, 2009, 2011; Vanolo, 2012). Despite the difficulties of conceptualizing creativity (what is creativity and how do we in fact distinguish a creative person, place, product or process from what is considered a ‘non-creative’ one?), it appears that creativity, whatever it means in a specific context, needs to be encouraged, fostered and *promoted* everywhere. It has, furthermore, been claimed that the boost of creativity magically enhances the economy, replaces ‘traditional’ industries and creates new jobs and various opportunities, in what to us appears a slightly uncritical, positivistic and instrumental manner. Consequently, and certainly due to the controversial and political hustle and buzz, countries, regions and cities have not been slow to aggressively implement strategies and policies as well as establish projects in order to increase, foster and boost creativity in every possible way to ensure competitive advantage (e.g., Florida, 2002, 2005; Landry, 2000, 2006a; Andersson, Andersson & Mellander, 2011) in today’s fierce global competition.

* **Astrid Huopalainen**, PhD researcher in Organization and Management at the School of Business and Economics, Åbo Akademi University. Her research is situated at the interface between organization studies and fashion studies and addresses questions related to organizational bricolage, creative work, critical organizational aesthetics, embodied labor and affective capitalism.

Jutta Tailas, PhD researcher in Organization and Management at the School of Business and Economics, Åbo Akademi University. Her research focuses on questions related to the organizing of creative spaces.

In line with the ever-growing interdisciplinary interest towards various dimensions of creativity in urban studies (e.g., Cunningham, 2004; Scott 2006, 2008; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009; Hutter, 2012), creativity has also been pronounced at the heart of economic geography, planning, urban development and change. Not so surprisingly then, contemporary urban city planners are eager to promote their cities as boosting, “eventful cities” (Richards & Palmer, 2010), desperate to do almost anything to smarten up facades and make the cities look more attractive and outstanding in the context of a knowledge-based, dazzling, grandiose New Economy. Whereas creativity has shifted from a marginal interest to becoming the key driving force of city politics (e.g., Myerscough, 1988; Landry & Bianchini, 1995; Allen, 1999) the notion of the creative city has equally become a buzzword. It seems likely that we have Florida (2002, 2005, 2008), Landry (2000, 2006) and Howkins (2001) to thank for promoting a dominantly normative and controversial, rather than a “standardized vision of creativity and the creative city” (Vanolo, 2012, 1) that builds upon universal, causal explanations, a resource view of creativity (Rehn, 2009), and which further promotes certain understandings of creativity and the creative class, while excluding others.

Creative cities, if approached normatively, evidently perform ‘better’ than others. To us, such an approach appears an inadequate and quite problematic starting point. Despite the critical scholarly voices raised in the debate (e.g., Chatterton, 2000; Peck, 2005; Markusen, 2006; Scott, 2006; Wilson & Keil, 2008; Atkinson & Easthope, 2009; Luckman, Gibson & Tess, 2009; Vanolo, 2012), the dominant creative city debate has not taken into consideration what Vanolo (2012, 4) critically points out: “there is nothing ontologically creative in geographical terms”. How are we, to begin with, able to address and decide what makes certain geographical locations, regions, cities, spaces or places ‘creative’? Who is to decide what creativity encompasses, or which city counts as creative and which does not? And how do we take those changes in the specifics of the local, socio-historical contexts into consideration, as well as those processual, complex networks of differing meanings, affects, embodied and material practices attached to spaces and places, continuously changing, shaping and performing them over time?

Despite the ever-growing scholarly interest paid to creative cities, it seems fair to state that considerably little *critical* scholarly interest has been devoted to the exploration of space and spatiality in connection to the creative city debate. We argue that the dominant creative city debate does not understand the complexity of open-ended, abstract and multiple space, but instead, tends to oversimplify space as fairly universal passive ‘box’ of “economic externalities” (Vanolo, 2012, 3) and by so doing, neglects for instance the many ephemeral dimensions and understandings of space in connection to power, materiality, sensations and experiences. In developing this discussion, the problems of the mainstream creative city debate in relation to spaciality forms a central preoccupation of this paper, into which we attempt to provide insights.

We analyze the complexity of meanings attached and attributed to a novel material space called Logomo, a giant creative epicentre to-be, a huge invest-

ment alone, established in the city of Turku in Finland to serve ‘creative’ needs during and after 2011, when the city had the honour to be European Capital of Culture. More specifically, this paper examines those multiple ways in which meanings of a ‘creative city’ are constructed through different *representations* of space, and how multiple meanings of space Logomo are, with this in mind, constructed and performed. What Logomo ‘is’, we believe, is a matter of constant becoming.

Our aim is to take space seriously in approaching the ‘creative city’, which we understand as a notion socially constructed and in constant flux. The biggest investment alone for the European Capital of Culture Turku 2011 was the construction of Logomo, a novel, material and ‘creative space’, providing facilities for the year. Being the main event arena for numerous and different ECC Turku2011 events, this multiple space, other than merely physical, we argue, plays an important role in the continuous *construction* and transformation of the city into a ‘hip and cool’ creative epicentre that promotes culture, creates new images, rebrands and repositions itself during 2011, and for the future. More specifically, this paper explores how space, understood as material, socially constructed and imagined, is continuously shaping the ‘creative city’ establishment, where different meanings or understandings of space Logomo render visible different understandings of the city as ‘creative’. This paper shows how meanings of space are wrapped up with (normative) ideas of beneficial transformations of a city in flux, addressing particularly boosterism and growth-led logics towards becoming a ‘creative city’.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, we introduce the theoretical framework of our study and discuss different understandings of organizational space. Here, we position ourselves within the existing literature in order to then relate our understanding of space to the creative city debate. Following this, we introduce and describe the specific empirical context of our study, ‘case’ Logomo in the city of Turku, European Capital of Culture (ECC) in 2011. In the section that follows, we analyze different representations of space Logomo and show how these different understandings of space also construct the notion of the ‘creative city’ Turku. The final section provides a summary of the findings presented and conclusions. Our study indicates that spatiality is an important matter that deserves to be taken seriously in the creative city debate, especially from a more critical, inclusive and diverse point of view.

On space and the creative city debate

Space matters and recognizing space is important because space influences, enables and constrains organized actions, and by so doing, *constructs* our worlds. The subject matters of space and place, well established as research areas in social sciences and in the context of human geography and the writings of Massey, Soja, Lefebvre, Ingold and Harvey in particular, are also enjoying an ever-growing interest in the discipline of organization studies (e.g., Guillén, 1997; Czarniawska & Solli, 2001; Hernes, 2004; Kornberger & Clegg, 2004;

Dale, 2005; Halford, 2005; Clegg & Kornberger 2006; Spicer, 2006; Taylor & Spicer, 2007; Dale & Burrell 2008; Tyler & Cohen, 2010; Beyes & Michels, 2011). It was not until quite recently, however, that the relevance of space, for long the taken-for-granted “unrecognized aspect” (Spicer, 2009, 65) of organizational life, was discovered to a greater extent within organization studies.

Traditionally, space has been treated as a neutral, objective, stable and fixed category. From such a naturalistic point of view, space is understood as given, a priori, or as a box “within which the subject acts” (Kivinen, 2006, 28). It appears as if the mainstream creative city debate solely builds upon this particularly objective, and thus simplifying, understanding of space. Within organization studies, this traditional approach to studying space mainly as a material and physical entity from an architectural and a managerial perspective (e.g., Elsbach & Pratt, 2007) is evidently present too.

Space has been viewed also as socially produced, in line with the subjectively oriented research on social space. Sociological and anthropological perspectives have hugely influenced this approach towards space, with Lefebvre (1991) being particularly foundational in work on organizational space. Distinguishing space between objectively defined spatial practices and subjectively defined representations of space, however, emphasizing the interactions between these two as ‘space of representations’, Lefebvre’s (1991) dialectical view of space as an active force has within organization studies, at least according to Beyes & Steyart (2011, 3), often been read in a somewhat static and essentialist manner emphasizing “the representations of the beings of organizational spaces”, thus ignoring embodied, generative “everyday spatial becoming” or the ongoing performing of space.

Third, we identify a hugely interesting, critical, non-representational approach towards space, regarding space as “an excessive composition of multiple forces” (Beyes & Steyart, 2011, 4). This processual and performative approach to spacing considers complex dimensions and multiple forces of material, affective, embodied apprehensions when it comes to how space is continuously performed (e.g., Cadman, 2009; Thrift, 2007; Anderson & Harrison, 2010; Beyes & Steyart, 2011). We acknowledge the potential of this aesthetically, affectively and bodily sensitive approach also in terms of writing space as generative ‘spacing’, thus moving away from the static understanding of space towards mobile understandings embracing multiple dimensions intertwined, ambiguity and flux.

Influenced by the non-representational, open-ended and performative approach taking embodied, material and affective spacings seriously, we approach organizational space as mutually planned, practised and imagined. In line with Clegg & Kornberger (2006), we view dimensions to space as ‘mutually constitutive’, and by doing so, we work from the assumption that different dimensions of space continuously construct and are constructed by each other. Taylor & Spicer (2007) define space as the categories of distance, power and experience, in which they include objective physical place, the post-structuralist interest in space, and finally, the subjectively imagined and felt space. Although we identi-

fy and acknowledge these aspects of space, we will not, however, meditate further on their interrelationships in the scope of this paper.

Instead, the focus of our paper lies on the meanings attributed to a creative city through subjective *representations* of space, and consequently, we intend to discuss those different meanings or subjectively defined spaces towards presenting and rebranding a city as particularly ‘novel’ and ‘creative’ through space. Despite recent developments in organization studies towards an explicitly non-representational, performative theory of space (e.g., Beyes & Steyaert, 2011), we here use the notion of representation knowingly. Hence, we acknowledge the limitations of representations of space in the possible static interpretations of them, not addressing everyday ‘spacing’ as more-than-representational (Beyes & Steyaert, 2011). Space appears relatively under-examined and overlooked in the context of the ‘creative city’ debate to begin with, but we find it, however, foundational and it is perhaps ‘safer’ to introduce space from a ‘representations of space’ approach in order to initially open up and exemplify how space can be constructed within such a context. Having positioned our study within the existing literature of space within organization studies, we can now shift our focus towards the creative city debate.

The creative city debate – realistic dreams and promises or just shallow hype?

The notion of the ‘creative city’ is not a new phenomenon. As previously touched upon, many researchers have discussed the concept of a creative city, mainly from a ‘sensationalist’ point of view (e.g., Lynch 1960; Allen 1999; Howkins 2001; Landry 2000, 2006b, 2008; Florida 2002, 2008) focusing on the self-recognition, glitz and glitter, but saying rather little about “the hard edge of a capitalist, racist, patriarchal landscape” (LeGates & Stout, 2007, 167) of cities. Some researchers (e.g. Andersson, 1985; Mulgan & Worpole, 1986) have since the 1980s and during the 1990s developed the mainstream concept of the creative city further by enhancing the importance of culture, cultural resources at different levels, diversity, networking, openmindedness and the like, in order to create new ways of approaching the age of the ‘new economy’ (Landry 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Andersson et al., 2011; Karlsson, 2011).

For a creative city, it appears vital to attract the ‘right’ people, to encourage creative clusters, to provide places and spaces for people to meet, interact and incubate learning, as well as to maximize networks for people to ‘be creative’ (e.g., Gibson & Kong, 2005). In other words, places and spaces are said to be of utmost importance for creative cities without, however, critically reflecting on the matter further. The ‘creative city’ debate is coloured by normative and neo-liberalistic views (e.g., Vanolo, 2012), where the pressure of becoming creative is so prominent, that policymakers, with the sole goal of improving images of cities or regions, are apparently ready to do anything to make their city ‘creative’. There is, however, always another side to the coin: what is out of sight, what tends to be forgotten, overlooked or silenced.

Chatterton (2000) points out that a city should not only focus on the buzz, the window-dressing and the glamour but also on the hum; the everyday and ordinary, the drabness, the mundane things that make up life for urban dwellers. Advocating a more inclusive notion of the creative city, Chatterton (2000), like Vanolo (2012), critically embraces more than just some of its parts. Chatterton asks whether all cities can be creative, if it is a self-fulfilling prophecy, or something a city in fact cannot survive without striving to become. Allen (2006), on the other hand, pinpoints the utopian vision of embedding a whole city in the positive experience of the development. He argues that there will always be the ugly, the poor and the overlooked parts that are exiled from the hub or buzz. Chatterton's (2000) comment about the creative city only as a comfortable, self-defining 'feel good' concept dominantly used by consultants, policy makers and politicians, is worth taking into further critical consideration.

Following Vanolo (2012), we work from the assumption that a 'creative city' is a social construction based on a popular, situated *idea* of creativity. In other words, what is understood as a 'creative city' depends on who recognizes it as 'creative', and these ideas are usually shifting, contradictory, selective, partial and also, subject to power relations: "a city or an urban quarter is creative when recognized as such by external actors — public policies, investors, visitors, scholars — or when the inhabitants and users self-define the place as creative" (Vanolo, 2012, 4).

We view the creative city not as a static notion, but as what has become a dazzling self-fulfilling project for any contemporary city. We recognize the hype around the concept and the mainstream creative city debate as problematic, welfare-orientated yet underpinned by uncritical promises of fulfilling beautiful dreams of an ivory tower, if only a city strives to be 'creative' as everyone else does. Ironically, if we approach creativity from such a perspective, the notion itself appears rather exclusive and does not even consider the importance of and the variety of "place-specific social institutions" (Vanolo, 2012, 12) that certainly also foster innovation. Consequently, we consider the mainstream assumption not only difficult to take seriously and grasp as such, but also as limited and problematic to put into practice in a complex 'reality' better addressed as 'variability': complicated, fluid and diverse.

Studying Logomo

In this paper, we are explicitly interested in 'space in the making' within the creative city framework, or in other words, the dynamics of the ongoing processes of constructing a creative city through space. We explore different understandings of space through different *representations* of space. The empirical material of this paper derives from an on-going ethnographically oriented study of the construction and establishment of Logomo, a particular creative epicentre in the city of Turku. The research methods used throughout this study are qualitative, based on empirical material that on the one hand is gathered by us, but on the other is also *constructed* by us.

Researching space is not a particularly easy and straightforward matter. To begin with, we are aware of the methodological challenges of going deeper into the topic of space, and particularly acknowledge the difficulty of making observations about space, or being able to study spaces in a constant flux, or spaces as they are being performed. By methodologically including a set of different kinds of empirical materials in our study, we strive to ‘do justice’ to the complexity of space, and methodologically build upon our understanding of space as neither non-linear nor neat and easy to ‘box’ in.

We conducted participatory observations on Logomo, before and during ECC Turku2011, particularly during 2011 when Logomo was open to the public from January to December. We paid Logomo our first visit on a rainy day in October 2010, when we had a private tour within the half-finished building under the guidance of representatives from the construction company Hartela Ltd. At that time, Logomo was a messy, loud, wide-ranging construction site. The following time visit we paid Logomo was on January 15th 2011, the night of the evening gala of the grand opening of ECC Turku2011. This was when Logomo was introduced to the public for the very first time, and when the capacity of the building was tested. From that day on, we have paid Logomo and its exhibitions and halls, meeting facilities and café numerous visits. We have taken field notes based on our experiences of Logomo at different phases and during different events performed (under the construction phase, on the opening-night, during concerts, exhibitions and so on).

On the one hand, we focus on our subjective understandings of space, having collected empirical material based on our observations. Over approximately three years in total, from autumn 2009 to spring 2013, we conducted participatory observations in an ‘ethnographic sense’, following Logomo being constructed, developed and transformed from a former railway engineering workshop to the main venue of the year Turku was Capital of Culture. In addition, we conducted formal interviews and were involved in numerous informal discussions with organizers of the ECC year, the representatives of company Hartela Ltd, constructors of Logomo, as well as representatives of the city of Turku.

On the other hand, this paper includes existing secondary empirical material, representations of space in written media, such as media output, brochures and on-going discussions in local media. More specifically, we analyze representations of space, reflecting on matters of space as vital in transforming a city to ‘fit’ the creative city discourse. By particularly analyzing the ongoing local written media debate, we intend to discuss different meanings attached to Logomo from such a media point of view. We identify dominantly hopeful and positive views on spacing, which further renders visible the rather uncritical, promotional tone of the writings, and as such, illustrate the hustle and buzz of taking part in the ‘self-defining’ of the city of Turku as ‘creative’ in attempting to reposition and transform the city.

Here, it is worth pointing out that we are aware of the interrelation between space and time, and although we do not examine this interrelationship further, we acknowledge the difficulties of separating these two categories. We have

followed the preparations, the ECC year and some of the aftermath in a chronological order. Hence, in this paper we draw upon insights from our empirical material, exploring space Logomo before, during and after 2011 when the city of Turku held the title of a European Capital of Culture (ECC), providing citizens and visitors with memorable experiences throughout the year.

Introducing the Context: The City of Turku – European Capital of Culture 2011

Historically, the city of Turku, founded in late 13th century, could be seen as the cultural cradle of Finland. With the first national university, the first cathedral, a lively market square and former Hansa connections, the city has been an important economic, cultural and industrial site for centuries. It is fair to say, however, that the city of Turku has in recent decades suffered from the image of a rather sloppy and sleepy industrial town, and as such, was not perceived as a particularly innovative and advanced creative epicentre. Perhaps in an attempt to do something to correct the situation, the city administration of Turku expressed its desire to become a European Capital of Culture in 2005 and initiated applications for the title.

The city of Turku in Finland was indeed successful in its application and chosen as one of the European Capitals of Culture (ECC) for 2011, together with the city of Tallinn in Estonia. Palmer (2004) and Cantell (1999) suggest that Culture Capital-titles have contributed to numerous positive changes in the cities hosting the event, including for instance the boosting of local culture, the creation of new spaces for cultural use, an increase in tourism, business relocations as well as media publicity. An ECC title usually aims for long-term impacts on the cultural development of cities and their environs, as well as involving the participation of the inhabitants living there to a significant extent .

In line with the goals as presented by Palmer (2004), sustainability, creative economy, wellbeing and new ways of using culture were stated as main goals also for ECC Turku2011 and the future of the city. “Turku 2011 is more than one year. It is a process through which Turku emerges as a pioneer and a creative centre of the Baltic Sea region cooperation, a city that produces and mediates arts and science”, the official vision stated (Helander et al. 2006, 8). All ECC activities aimed to achieve long-term advantages and impact. The ECC Turku2011 also aimed to promote international networking and visibility with local, national and foreign contributors involved in creating the big event.

Interestingly, and perhaps in line with ever-growing shifts towards stimulating the market economy by creating memorable experiences, several cafés and restaurants have ‘popped up’ along one bank of the river Aura in the city of Turku in a couple of years. Additionally, an old market place has been restored, as the main public library. This, we believe, is one way of celebrating and developing creative milieus, the cityscape and nurturing the need for third spaces. Simultaneously, there is a general lack of spaces for cultural production in the city - a shortage of workspaces for artists but also a lack of spaces suitable for

concerts and bigger events. The shortage of spaces for creative workers is one of the reasons why Logomo apparently was, and still is, a popular and warmly welcomed space in the city for cultural consumption.

Logomo - at the Heart of Culture?

LOGOMO is a new cultural and event centre and venue in Turku, and it opened as the main arena for ECC Turku2011. This is a great starting point for Logomo — straight at the top! The 24,000 square meter building, transformed from an old railway-engineering workshop into Logomo, has created an amazing contrast between a historical industrial milieu and a modern, spacious interior. Logomo delivers more than meets the eye¹. (<http://www.logomo.fi/esite>, accessed 15.12.2011)

As the quotation above illustrates, the introduction of a physically rather robust and rough industrial warehouse, transformed into a multi-purpose ‘creative space’ responding to “the creation and consumption of cultural meanings” (Vanolo, 2012, 8) in the city of Turku, is portrayed as a matter with great potential, underpinned by a fair amount of boosterism. This establishment of a creative space or a cultural centre for a multi-purpose use within a spacious physical building significant and interesting both culturally and historically in itself, can be described as a phase of transformations taking place before, during and after the European Capital of Culture year in 2011. Originally constructed for industrial use, engineering activities took place within the walls of the site in question from 1876 to 2002. Logomo was for the ECC Turku 2011 introduced as a completely novel cultural space in the city of Turku, and as such, portrayed as a ‘new’ beginning for both the more than a hundred-year-old history of the major railway building, as well as something very special for the creative economy of Turku.

Long before ECC Turku 2011 and Logomo were known about at all, the city of Turku was considering and ‘mapping’ available physical spaces for cultural premises in the city. According to city representatives, the city lacked workspaces for artists and had only a few existing spaces suitable for bigger events. Only a few well-used spaces existed, and none of them suitable for ‘all’ the various and ever growing creative needs of the city. In June 2009, the Finnish construction company Hartela Ltd ‘happened to’ acquire an old industrial building from the company TKU Palmberg Oy, “*because the building provides a framework for the construction of various creative needs of companies*” (TS 25.11.2011). The involvement of private property in the establishment of Logomo was evident from the beginning. The plan was to develop Logomo into a cluster of creativity, a successful creative ‘hub’ with great economic potential. As CEO Heikki Hartela, Hartela Ltd said “*the creative economy is already one of the most significant clusters of Turku, and it also indirectly affects the competitiveness of other sectors*” (TS 25.11.2011). The essential idea of establishing Logomo appears to

follow the mainstream creative city prophecy, emphasizing the bringing together of the creative class, the vital players of the creative economy together in a close community or cluster, in an attempt to further position the city as a knowledge-intense, post-industrial, creative economy. Nurturing creativity is, in other words, done through establishing an infrastructure allowing for those 'creatives' to meet and interact, in a way that *self-defines* the *place* as a creative hub both to the inhabitants of the city as well as the outside world.

At the moment of purchase in 2009, the spatial needs of the ECC Turku 2011 were, according to Hartela Ltd, not yet known. However, in February 2010, Hartela Ltd agreed with the Turku 2011 Foundation on a partial lease of Logomo as the main venue for the Cultural Capital in 2011. Yet, the content of the agreement between the two parts was kept secret. Simultaneously, Hartela Ltd initiated a huge renovation of the building and construction of novel spaces within it, designed to suit the needs for the upcoming Cultural Capital year. At approximately the same time, however, as a separate issue, Hartela Ltd and the city of Turku started negotiating on the use of Logomo as a diverse creative centre after 2011. Both parts unanimously highlighted the importance of strengthening and widening the creative economy cluster in the city of Turku, to which Logomo was presented as the perfect solution.

By the time of purchase in 2009, the idea of a creative epicentre was, however, still a vague dream. In an article headed "*Logomo is born in great haste*" published in TS (30.12.2010) and rendering visible representations of a hastened project characterized by confusion, it was, according to CEO, Heikki Hartela, a "strategic" decision to implement temporary solutions for the ECC year, during which the main event site was to be completed. In the case of Logomo, completely novel spaces were designed and constructed within the old brick walls of the building. Merely to meet governmental requirements and exercise formal control over the space for mass events, did huge monetary investments have to be made. "*Hartela has repeatedly stated that a new construction would have been a lot cheaper. However, its character would not have become Logomo*" (TS, 25.11.2011). Evidently, the huge investments created pressure for successful commodification and consumption, a topic however not actively discussed or debated.

We paid Logomo our first visit in October 2010, when it was still heavily under construction. At the time, we were somewhat puzzled by the grandiose size of the building, but also by the tight timetable set for the project completion, which sounded rather optimistic. Considering what it looked and felt like at that time, only months before opening, Logomo required considerable improvisation to complete:

The place looked really, not even half-way there, which made it really difficult to imagine that this place, would, in only a few months, be serving as the base for a diverse set of activities. One part of the house was under bare sky. At other places water was pouring through. [...] The spokesman claimed that they were working long

hours to get it finished on time, which in her opinion, was fully achievable. I really doubt it. (Jutta’s field notes from 20.10.2010)

Logomo, a multiple space under constant ‘becoming’, was ironically never really completed during 2011. The timetable for the huge construction and renovation project was always extremely tight, and not all of its sections were finalized in time for the grand opening of ECC in January 2011. In September 2010 it was already clear that the project was behind schedule and Logomo would not be entirely completed before 2014. Whose spatial needs did Logomo then meet, and how was Logomo initially introduced and used? During 2011, the capacities and functions of the spaces were tested and developed in practice straight away from January, as Logomo served as the main venue for ECC Turku 2011 events, exhibitions and concerts, with cultural consumption taking place throughout the year. In general, the facilities were portrayed as apparently anticipated and warmly welcomed by the organizers and spectators alike:

Both the organizers as well as the audience have for decades hoped for a space in Turku, a space suitable for world-class artists attracting an audience of 2,000-3,000. Now that venue exists. Starting from today, the responsibility is on the organizers and the audience. (TS 15.1.2011)

As the quotation above highlights, Logomo was portrayed as something longed for, a space urgently needed. Until now, large events and concerts for instance, had not always taken place in the city of Turku, partly due to lack of spaces. Therefore, evidently hopes were high from the beginning that Logomo, serve the diverse spatial needs of the experience economy.

According to constructor Hartela Ltd, the strengths of Logomo were particularly in the diverse functions of the physical space and the major multi-purpose spaces in it, described as remarkable even in terms of international standards. In addition, the meeting rooms of Logomo were designed suitable for large congresses. The major Logomo scene and its technical features enabled a diversity of concert activities, including new forms of operas, musicals and theatre productions. “*There is nothing like this in the whole world*” the local press reported of the main hall (ÅU 17.9.2011). Furthermore, “*the acoustics of the room are said to be able to manage anything music-related*” (ÅU 17.9 2011), “*Logomo invites you to its splendour*” (TS 15.1.2011) and “*...Logomo might in the future become the heart of culture in Turku*” (TS 15.1.2011). Quite excited and hopeful comments were made by representatives of the local media praising Logomo and its potential, very different from the many critical voices evidently raised during the preparations in 2010 when questions such as “What will it become?”, “Who is it actually meant to be for?” and “Who is going to pay for it in the end?” had been murmured.

What roles did Logomo play and what meanings attached to Logomo in constructing and transforming the city of Turku into a European Capital of Culture, and thus, a creative city? Logomo had been highlighted as one of the most

important and vital physical *places* of culture in the city already before the ECC year began: “*In Turku, the central place is Logomo, which functions as the scene both for long-term exhibitions and major performances*” newspaper TS wrote in June 2010 (TS 10.6.2010). “*Logomo is the heart of the Cultural Capital year*” was the headline of ÅU right before the ECC year kick-started (29.12.2010). Spatiality was certainly constructed as the central factor. During the entire cultural capital year, the local print media definitely celebrated and portrayed Logomo as *the* attractive and interesting place for cultural production and consumption. Logomo garnered much media publicity and attention, and was in intensive use throughout the year. Moreover, a main goal articulated for Logomo and the entire ECC Turku2011 year was to develop Logomo into a space for future cultural and creative activities, ensuring continuous economic growth, and by doing so, attracting greater investments:

The office spaces at Logomo are ideally suited for workers and businesses in the creative sector. Our aim is to create a community of professionals to complement and support each other. Photographers, travel agencies, illustrators and translators will all have collaborators close at hand. The studio spaces are designed for professional artists and range from small rooms of a few square meters in size to larger spaces suitable for collaborative working.

(<http://www.logomo.fi/esite>, accessed 15.12.2011)

As the above quotation shows, the future spaces of Logomo were during ECC Turku2011 planned to include offices and co-working spaces for “a community of professionals” and to occupy some 200-300 workers within the creative sector, such as advertising agencies, industrial design firms, publishing and entertainment companies as well as large networks of freelancers, photographers, designers or artists operating around these creative agents. Here, it is reasonable to state that those professionals expected to join the community appear to represent a somewhat exclusive group of high-profile workers, made up of those “people in design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology and/or creative content” (Florida, 2002, 8), more or less an *exact* notion of Florida’s notion of the creative class.

According to an interview with an employee from Turku Region Development Centre in TS (25.11.2011), the objective was to create a brand out of Logomo, something, that cannot be found elsewhere in Finland. Ironically, it also appears fair to state that this very ‘original’ idea of creating a unique brand out of a creative hub, again, recalls a great deal of conventional wisdom of the normative approach to the creative city, a concept fairly imitated and replicated in city policies worldwide. However, this initial plan of ‘branding’ Logomo was met with certain criticism and suspicion, and for good reason: “*The general concern is that constructing a completely new Logomo inside the old walls will create expensive luxury space, that only a handful can afford*” (TS 25.11.2011).

Indeed, the concern as expressed in TS appears justified, and further reflection on the matter of inclusion and exclusion is interesting. It was apparently crucial as early as 2011 to ‘brand’ Logomo by embracing the ‘right’ kind of diversity, the ‘hip and cool’ crowd that fit into the dominant notion and idea of a creative city and a creative class.

The surroundings and the environment were also an important concern in the ongoing discussion of Logomo, both before and after 2011. According to both Hartela Ltd and the City of Turku, there are urban development policies and formal plans for the further modification and development of the neighbourhood surrounding Logomo, such as developing the infrastructure to better connect to the city centre. Again, these statements and plans appear to confirm the dominant creative city and economic development thinking of the wish to develop sophisticated infrastructures to organize and foster creative environments (e.g., Florida, 2002, 2008). However, constructing grand buildings in local environments in order to ‘be creative’ is, evidently, not enough. As articulated by Richards & Palmers (2010) below, creating the more intangible feeling, or attempting to attach the right ‘atmosphere’ to a certain place, is also of importance:

Cultural events have become central to processes of urban development and revitalization, as cultural production becomes a major element of the urban economy, and cultural consumption can dominate both the image of places and urban life in general.[...] Claiming distinction is no longer a question of hiring signature architects and constructing grand museums; it also involves the creation of a lively atmosphere and a sense of place. Events are making cities fashionable and ‘cool’ places to be. (Richards & Palmer 2010, 3-4)

It would be useful here to elaborate on the physical and ‘mental’ location of Logomo in the city of Turku. When Logomo was introduced, it was portrayed as ideally located close to the train and bus stations and only some 700 meters from the Market Square and all central services of the city: “*The central location near the Central Railway Station is a great advantage, and when we add the rugged beauty of the architecture and top-notch functionality to the mix, it is clear that Logomo rises above most event arenas in Finland*” (<http://www.logomo.fi/esite>, accessed 15.12.2011). However, according to our understanding, when Logomo was initially introduced to the wider public it was perceived as far away, and situated on the ‘wrong’ side of the outskirts of the city. We learned that even local taxi drivers could not find their way to Logomo at the beginning of the ECC 2011, which was the case also for the ‘Cable Factory’ in Helsinki, a similar multi-purpose space introduced when the city of Helsinki acted as ECC in 2000 (e.g., Lehtovuori 2001). The somewhat problematic location of Logomo was also picked up in local newspapers from the beginning of ECC Turku2011:

Logomo has been seen as a place difficult to reach. Architect Pekka Vapaavuori has certainly already planned a bridge, so that the walk

from the market square will be as short as possible. Logomo is not far from the city centre. (TS, 23.4.2010)

The cultural centre Logomo is a beautiful place to be proud of, but it is too difficult to reach. That is why some politicians made an effort to develop the passageway over the railway lines. Without a new arrangement, Logomo will not be used to its best potential. (ÅU, 24.1.2011)

The media debate concerning Logomo merits further discussion. We would describe the media climate in general as heavily coloured by ‘self-defined’ creativity boosterism, and the on-going articulation of great expectations and brilliance consequently rather uncritical. While working on our empirical material, we made a similar observation: quite a few critical public discussions concerning Logomo existed during and before 2011. Logomo was not, quite unsurprisingly it turns out, merely portrayed as a dream and a promise of something genuinely positive and exciting for the city of Turku. Again, this was made clear, especially in the City Mayor’s quotation below, when he was participating in the boosting and the celebrating of the creative potential of Logomo:

The year is thus liberal and tolerant, but there is also some “hush-hush” in the background. For example, one is not allowed to say anything critical about the VR railway-engineering workshop. This expensive project with long-term side effects raises questions, however. (TS 30.5.2011)

And Logomo is nice, but it is also polished. It is a space for the consumption of culture, but something that we never have the money to rent for ourselves. (ÅU 27.1.2011)

One of the central success stories during the year has been the launching and introduction of Logomo. Logomo is also physical evidence of the long-lasting effects of the year. Logomo has justified its place as the main arena and as an enduring site of interest. Its mission is to develop and expand the experiences and new ways learned during the festival-year, and turn all of this into permanent action, says the Mayor of the city of Turku. (TS 16.12.2011)

The real black swan is Logomo. It should be developed into a place of cultural production and experience with boutiques and handicraft workshops. Simultaneously it should be made into a centre where citizens can take part in culture. A city-plan concerning the area around Logomo should be made, turning the area into a cultural suburb that

would attract artists, tourists and citizens in a completely new way.
(TS 25.11.2011)

Discussion

Before and during the ECC year, Logomo was dominantly portrayed as the potential ‘heart of culture’ of the city, as a possible success story–to-be, and as an outstanding multi-purpose arena that surpasses most event arenas in Finland. In general, the representations attached to Logomo examined in this paper appear to be underpinned by strong self-defined boosterism, and the performing of a ‘creative city’ through promoting a deliberate, common desire to turn Logomo into a local, regional and national success story before it was even introduced in ‘reality’. It appears that the images constructed and expectations flourishing around Logomo were generally so overwhelmingly positive, that they silenced the existing critical voices and forgave a great deal. They forgave, for instance, the fact that Logomo was merely an improvised, half-finished and expensive building behind schedule when it was introduced in January 2011. Rather uncritically, Logomo was accepted and embraced as beneficial for the transformation of the city of Turku, and representatives of the ECC Turku2011 foundation, city officials, politicians, citizens and others involved, all participated in the on-going constructing of a ‘creative city’ through Logomo.

This paper shows how multiple meanings attached to space seem to reconstruct strong mainstream notions of a ‘typical’ creative city. Addressing the importance of (physical) space with the further fixation of nurturing creativity, attracting the ‘creatives’ into a hub and attempting to change the climate of the city into being more ‘open’, Logomo illustrates what we would describe as a rather ‘typical’ example of popular notions of a creative city in the making.

Second, and relating to our first conclusion, this paper shows that the dominant creative city debate has strongly influenced meanings attached to Logomo, and thus the making and transformation of Turku into a ‘creative city’. This, we argue, is typical for the widely celebrated creative city discourse. Defined by numerous self-defining prophecies and the major mainstream notions for a creative city, the case of Logomo strongly circulates around mainstream notions of what appears desirable and strategically important in the making of a creative city. Here, we have explicitly made visible how the mainstream creative city hype and boosterism reproduced and represented in media has meanwhile contributed to construct the hype around Logomo, thus also ‘creating’ space Logomo.

Third, we have made an attempt to move away from the traditional understanding of space as solely physical towards more complex ‘space in the making’. With an evidently strong emphasis on the importance of *physical* spaces to present ‘culture’ and ‘experiences’ to wider audiences, to boost cultural production and consumption, as well as to foster images of an experience economy, it appears justified to state that understandings of space within the creative city debate are quite easily denigrated to merely concern physical ‘place’. Such an

approach, primarily focusing on what material buildings do for creative cities, is rather simplistic, shallow and uncritical to begin with. However, as our paper also shows, it appears difficult to move away from physical space within the creative city debate, in which what is needed in the making of a city as 'creative' is apparently an actual, material building with walls, rising in a designated creative environment. For the further development of the creative city debate, however, it is crucial to move away from and beyond these assumptions towards non-representational and multiple understandings of space.

Finally, the importance of a physical, multipurpose space in a creative city is not to be ignored. The city of Turku has, particularly because of the ECC-title and an entire year of cultural extravaganza, attempted to revitalize its 'old' image and transform itself into something new and interesting. ECC Turku2011 appeared to provide the right moment to construct something like Logomo, and Logomo has, indeed, contributed to shape various, different and multiple images of the city of Turku constantly in flux, embedded in its local, socio-historical context. What our study illustrates is the ongoing performing of ideas of a creative city wrapped up with conventional wisdoms of what a creative city 'is'. The strong influences of the normatively-oriented approaches in the creative city debate need to be considered. In order to develop the scholarly discussion further, however, it is important to keep exploring those 'alternative' approaches to understanding creative cities. Spatiality is important and deserves to be taken seriously in the creative city debate. Consequently, we advocate a complicated, broad, diverse and inclusive approach towards creative cities embracing variability from various, critical and diverse angles.

Afterword

Logomo attracted 248,000 visitors in total during the ECC 2011², which is considered a successful number in terms of Finnish cultural consumption. With bookings apparently already made until year 2016, Logomo was also 'needed' and its multiple facilities have been frequently booked ever since. Currently, Logomo provides spaces for events, business, interaction and synergies of multiple kinds. During spring 2013, the first 'creatives' moved into their working spaces. The ways in which these working spaces were promoted is interesting, and again, reinforce certain ideas about creativity and what Logomo should "become" over time: "We don't want a hippie park, but neither a business centre" it was said back then, somewhat betraying the idea of not eagerly embracing everyone, certainly not those creative workers in the city that are too 'odd', too poor, artsy or too alternative. To conclude, we consider that the further study of Logomo in use will handsomely repay the effort.

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Notes

¹ All quotations are translated by the authors.

² According to ECC Turku2011 website http://www.turku2011.fi/en/news/fire-fire-and-only-game-exhibitions-will-continue-logomo_en, read 9.1.2012