

THE CREATIVE MERGE: AT THE INTERSECTION OF CREATIVITY AND CAPITALISM
IN A UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

Lisl Hampton: The Creative Merge: At the Intersection of Creativity and Capitalism in a
UNESCO City of Literature
(Under the direction of Peter Redfield)

The City of Literature program within UNESCO's Creative Cities Network operates within a framework of creativity, capitalism (including tourism), nation, heritage, and power. My task here is to understand how the breadth of the term *creativity* is used and understood across different registers within the program. I examine the history of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and its broader context of creative tourism. My analysis is based in part on an examination of cultural policies, interviews I conducted with people affiliated with Cities of Literature, and an analysis of the language of documentation that has come out of the Creative Cities Network. I also turn to some recent academic work on creative tourism and on cities to situate the Creative Cities Network in a scholarly context. Finally, I discuss the creativity of reading as understood through reception studies and ethnographic studies of readers and reading.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCN	Creative Cities Network
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

In October 2013, a set of large letters was placed in Cracow's central square, spelling out an announcement that the city had been named a UNESCO City of Literature (Miasto LiteratURY). Within hours, Cracovians moving through the square had taken it upon themselves to rearrange the letters and spell out messages of their own (Lloyd-Jones 2013). Inventive moves like this are not new to Cracovians, who have been engaging with Polish literature in their city in the last century in literary cabarets, under Soviet censorship, and today in the annual Miłosz and Conrad book festivals. Literature is based in creativity, most frequently and historically conceived of as solely the creativity of the authors. In this paper, I offer a clear centering of creativity: I see creativity as an integral part of what could be called the cycle of literature, a social, intellectual, political, and (particularly in the UNESCO context explored here) economic process in which the labor and practices of authors, readers, editors, and others contribute to the ongoing production and consumption of literature, in which all actors in the process can be seen as both producers and consumers. Authors and their texts need audiences, and audiences need authors and their texts. The two cannot exist without the other.

The use of literature by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) as part of its Creative Cities Network is an interesting case of creativity, capitalism (including tourism), nation, heritage, and power. These five concepts and forces operate within the Cities of Literature programs in interconnected ways and are evoked and considered by various participants on different registers. My task here is to understand how the breadth of the

term *creativity* is used and understood across different registers, but that cannot be done without taking into consideration the economic forces that have helped to bring about the Creative Cities Network to begin with, nor without the evocation of nation and heritage that is so key to the operation of UNESCO itself as well as to ideas about literature. The thread (or rope) of power runs through these other forces and the discourses swirling around them, from the structures of labor that are employed to build and sustain interest in the Cities of Literature programs to the language politics that operate particularly within those non-English-dominated cities to the basic but not simple criteria that Cities of Literature programs must meet in order to join the network.

Here I explore how the breadth and almost unboundedness of the term *creativity* is used—akin to a boundary object (Star and Griesemer 1989) that is interpreted differently and expressed differently by the array of participants in the cycle of literature. The looseness of the definition of *creativity* creates a Venn diagram in which the term can be used quite differently by participants, depending on their goals and interests. UNESCO and the Cities of Literature programs evoke *creativity* as part of a broader economic movement revolving around “creative cities” as engines of economic development. Cultural policies that in part shape and determine the work done by the City of Literature programs also use such vague terminology in ways that might resonate with or appeal to broader audiences, each of which might understand the term in a different way. The program seeks to foster collaboration on creative work, though this is primarily defined as the collaboration among writers from cities within the network. Finally, readers are also creative, and their participation in the cycle of literature is a key component to that process as not only the “consumption” end of the making of books and texts but as creators of social networks and increasingly as, for example, direct responders to authors online, helping to shape texts.

In this paper, I begin with a discussion of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and its history, and then I examine the broader context of creative tourism within which the network operates. My analysis is based in part on an examination of cultural policies related to UNESCO and the Creative Cities Network, on interviews I conducted with people affiliated with Cities of Literature, and on an analysis of the language of documentation that has come out of the Creative Cities Network. I also turn to some recent academic work on creative tourism and on cities to situate the Creative Cities Network in a scholarly context. Finally, I discuss the creativity of reading as understood through reception studies and ethnographic studies of readers and reading.

2. UNESCO AND THE CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (CCN) began in 2004 as a means of promoting economic growth and development in cities through working with the creative industries and forming a collaborative network.¹ Research done around the time of the program's founding showed that a majority of the world's population would live in cities by 2020 (UNESCO n.d. c).² UNESCO decided that it wanted to develop a project that would better the lives of those living in cities. The CCN's purpose is "to stimulate partnerships between private, public and civil society actors in order to strengthen cultural industries in developing countries and promote the diversity of cultural expressions" (Rosi 2014: 108).

Once a city has been accepted to the CCN, the designation does not need to be renewed, nor does it expire,³ and so the network expects that all members not only are able to maintain and develop their art form at the present time but will be able to continue such activity. Today there are one hundred sixteen members of the CCN, including twenty cities of literature (in order of membership: Edinburgh, Melbourne, Iowa City, Dublin, Reykjavik, Norwich, Cracow, Dunedin,

¹ The creative industries can range from technology-related fields to publishing, architecture, fashion, and so on.

² By 2050, it is estimated that 70 percent of the world population will live in cities (Amin 2013: 203).

³ A city program could potentially be asked to leave the network if it did not keep up its end of the bargain with UNESCO—essentially, continuing to fund the program and maintaining its culturally affiliated programs. If the major institutions and sources of the creative activity were to leave the city suddenly, then perhaps this would also be grounds for being kicked out of the program.

Granada, Heidelberg, Prague, Baghdad, Barcelona, Ljubljana, Lviv, Montevideo, Nottingham, Óbidos, Tartu, and Ulyanovsk; the last nine were accepted in 2015). In the early days of the network, UNESCO worked quietly to nurture the CCN's growth, but in recent years UNESCO has become more involved, placing an emphasis on network diversity and a strong focus on collaboration across the network (interview 12/10/14). Collaborative efforts can be creative and include projects between member cities and visiting artist programs. More broadly, member cities are expected to collaborate with one another on the program level. At annual meetings, CCN program officials are expected to discuss their strategies for bringing tourists to their cities, creating projects and programs in which literature, for example, is explored, and brainstorming ways of finding funding, encouraging involvement in the program, and reaching out to related industries and businesses in the creative area.

2.1. Development of the City of Literature Designation

While UNESCO was cooking up its idea for the CCN, in Edinburgh, four well-established people in the Scottish literary world were discussing ways in which to promote literature in the city, and they decided to take their ideas to UNESCO. UNESCO leaders in the Culture Sector loved the idea of including literature in the developing project of the CCN. At that time, UNESCO had already identified a number of other creative industry sectors, including music, film, media arts, and gastronomy. Just a couple years later, Edinburgh became the first member of the CCN and the first UNESCO City of Literature (Edinburgh City of Literature 2014; interview 12/10/14).

The Creative Cities Network's cultural means of fostering collaboration and economic development intends to take into consideration "private and public sectors, professional

organizations, communities, civil society, and cultural institutions in all regions of the world” (Rosi 2014: 109). The application process for the City of Literature program focuses primarily on the promotion of literature through economic means (the application requires information about funding available for the program and related initiatives), institutions, and large cultural programs such as literary festivals (UNESCO 2013b). The information on the network’s website touts the importance of “socio-culturally diverse communities” and “healthy urban environments” while not shying away from the importance of private-public partnerships and creative tourism (UNESCO n.d. b).

Writers are explicitly and implicitly part of the vision for the City of Literature program. Readers, however, seem to be taken into consideration as a passive part of this process, as the public that will purchase (it is to be hoped) and consume the literature that is produced and distributed through these larger institutional networks. On the website for the network, UNESCO states that cities must include all parts of “the creative industry chain, from the creative act to production and distribution,” in one step excluding the reader and reinforcing the conception of the writer as the source of creativity (UNESCO n.d. a). This understanding of the “creative industry chain” is common among promoters of creative tourism, which I will explore below. However, by stopping at the point of distribution, UNESCO’s broader conception of these creative activities does not take into account the ways in which creative “products” are themselves creatively taken in and used and how these might contribute to city life and social fabric.

As part of the initial motivation for the inclusion of literature within the CCN, these Edinburghians helped devise the criteria for the UNESCO City of Literature designation. These include the need for strong publishing, translation, and collaboration; literary heritage; excellent

educational and library systems; literary events and festivals; and a vibrant literary community of writers and readers (UNESCO n.d. c; interview 12/10/14).⁴ Member cities are also expected to use literature to promote economic development in the city, to help regenerate the city, and to foster creativity within.

As one of the key requirements for City of Literature membership, translation is an interesting one, particularly since many early member cities have large English-speaking populations (Edinburgh, Iowa City, Melbourne, Dunedin, and Norwich). In Cracow, translation is supported by Jagiellonian University, the Polish Book Institute, and several local publishing houses. The Polish Book Institute, which works closely with the City of Literature program, gives a few translation-related awards. Translations are frequently made from Polish into several other languages, and these various institutions and programs work to ensure that Polish literature is translated and circulated outside the country. UNESCO's interest in translation is about developing the network of cities of literature through ensuring that various national literatures are sharable and that there is a sense of exchange and promotion of language diversity.

Translation, however, is not without a politics (see, e.g., Spivak 1993). It is more likely that the political aspects will be engaged more deeply by translators and translation-supporting groups working with the City of Literature programs (even groups such as ICORN, which provides funding and a place for writers who are not free to work in their own countries). The UNESCO designation might enable a broader group of work to be translated, so that the translation-as-cultural-window would be larger and more detailed. Despite the emphasis on

⁴ It is not clear what specifically the educational expectations are for those interested in obtaining this designation, though the program does seek to involve cities in which there is broad and equal access to education. Implicit in the requirements is also an expectation of relatively high literacy rates. Of the top twenty countries ranked by literacy rates, Estonia is the highest-ranked country (at twelfth place; see Central Intelligence Agency 2013) of those involved in the City of Literature program.

translation, though, the translation market will still facilitate or close off many of these possibilities.

The Cities of Literature program has a European bias, and it is not clear whether that is due to the European-focused criteria for membership or to an Enlightenment-inflected understanding of literature or both. As of 2015, finally, the designation has been bestowed on both Baghdad (which has been a contender for several years, as I understand it; personal interview, 7/14) and Montevideo. Otherwise, the cities have been and remain largely in the West, within Europe and the United States, which are the two primary forces behind much of UNESCO's activity since its inception. They constitute the original "First World" ("developed," capitalist, and, here, Enlightened), and there are some tinges of a First World superiority that have influenced the direction thus far of the City of Literature program. In December 2014, I interviewed a program officer with the Edinburgh City of Literature program, who stated: "Despite sustained efforts by Edinburgh and other cities in the network, the Cities of Literature group have been slow to grow in terms of cultural diversity. Freedom of expression and equal access to education are key concepts enshrined at UNESCO and perhaps more than any of the other art forms in the CCN, they come to bear on the City of Literature designation and may have contributed to the slow growth in this area of the network" (interview 12/10/14). Although the critique of a Eurocentric bias must now be tempered with the addition of Baghdad and Montevideo, questions remain about what constitutes literature for UNESCO and how the participant cities see and understand their relation to various ideas of literature.

Despite the efforts of many to involve non-Western cities in the City of Literature program specifically, most program members remain firmly within a Western tradition of literature and supporting infrastructures and institutions. Western elite notions of what counts as

literature are a significant factor, even if not overtly or explicitly stated as such. But if the CCN expects a certain kind of infrastructural and institutional support, as well as political or state-sanctioned freedom of expression and “equality” in education, then surely these filters make it much harder for certain cities to be accepted. On the whole, the CCN is fairly diverse in its membership, with the exception of the literature program (until 2015, at least). Diversity and engagement are a regular topic of discussion in the CCN’s annual meetings, and it has been suggested that the network should make specific calls for applications from cities outside the West in order to draw from a more narrowly defined but much-needed applicant pool (interview 12/10/14).

In fact, the City of Literature program is able to retain this Eurocentricity because literature connects to the knowledge/power nexus in a way that other art forms usually do not. Of the art forms celebrated in the CCN—craft and folk art, design, film, gastronomy, literature, music, and media art—literature has a “high art” heritage that the others do not have. Literature has particular connections to education and industry that also stretch farther into history than, say, film, music, or design. Literature has some tinges of elitism that the other art forms do not, which is intensified, as I will examine below, by the links between language and nation that are often exploited by the state or other entities seeking to strengthen the nation and citizenship through language-related work. This particular constellation of high art, industrial support, and nation building have contributed to the distinct European flavor of the City of Literature category in the CCN.

Today, however, with writing and reading practices changing in response to technological advances—primarily the presence of the Internet but also the rise of electronic books of various forms—older notions about literature, specifically about the roles of writers and

readers, are starting to shift as well and, along with them, ideas about what constitutes the creative work of literature. On some platforms online, for example, writers and readers work in a collaborative process, and with the ever-increasing locations online for commenting, there is much more opportunity for feedback as well as for writing itself.

Literary reading has long been characterized as a creative activity by scholars in reception studies (see, e.g., Culler 1980; Darnton 2006; Duguid 2006; Iser 1980; and Ricoeur 2007). Rather than simply receiving the author's intent through the medium of the text, the reader uses her position, history, and previous interaction with texts (primarily understood as literature) to create her own meaning and understanding of the text. This is a situational, physical, and often affective engagement, and depending on the reader and the text, the reader's interaction with and interpretation of the text can allow her to understand the world in a profoundly new way and to act upon that new knowledge (see, e.g., Barthes 1975; and Ricoeur 2007). Reading also can occur within more social settings, such as reading groups (which I will return to below), in which the group works collaboratively and uses each other's knowledge to create an ideal reading.

With literary and other forms of reading occurring online, the creativity of reading, as through the blurring of traditional roles and increasing collaboration, is becoming more prominent and prevalent. Through interactivity, readers and those who observe reading online (authors and other online participants) can see reading as a creative, constitutive practice that works with writing (see, e.g., Feng 2012; and Fortunati 2014). That said, an understanding of reading as a creative, active process, not one that is grounded in consumption as a passive act, is not widespread. Although reception and audience studies have transformed ideas about the work of audiences in some parts of the academy and although readers themselves may engage with

literature in active processes of self-understanding (see, e.g., Barthes 1975; Ricoeur 2007) and the creation of social networks, among other possibilities, such conceptions are not necessarily entertained by publishers and others, particularly when the economic bottom line is primary.

Concerns swirl around not just these shifting roles but whether the ever-expanding availability of entertainment through technology will usurp the role of literature and literary reading themselves (see, e.g., Birkerts 2010; and Waxler 2014). In a 2004 report, the National Endowment for the Arts revealed the results of a series of surveys it undertook that demonstrated dramatic decreases in the number of literary readers in the United States. The survey also asked respondents about other kinds of practices they undertake, including watching television, participating in sports, and doing charity work. The latter correlates strongly with the number of books people read—the general idea is, the bigger the reader of literature, the bigger her heart—and thus with the decreasing number of readers the NEA feared that the number of “good citizens” would also decrease. Though framed in a different way, other recent works on the loss of literary reading emphasize the importance of literature as a way to develop a sense of self and a set of moral guidelines that are otherwise not culturally supported as they were in the past (see, e.g., Dreyfus and Kelly 2011; and Waxler 2014).

My understanding of reading and readers is based in part on work done by scholars in reception studies and the history of the book as well as ethnographies of readers and reading, in which readers are seen as creative actors involved in a historically situated and socially supported network.

2.2. Cultural Policy

In Europe, the valorization of the creative economy in all its forms, including creative tourism, can be used both as a unifier of “European culture” and as a way for various nations and cities in Europe to distinguish themselves. For policies that play out within the European Union, for example, there is both an idea of European culture and the national culture of member states. As Monika Mokre writes: “The Treaty of Maastricht (Treaty on European Union) stated that the community shall ‘contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the member states, while respecting their national and regional diversity, and, at the same time, bring their common cultural heritage to the fore’ (Article 151, Ex-Article 128)” (Mokre 2007: 33–34). These seemingly incompatible aims play out among the Cities of Literature, which are predominantly in Europe. Member cities are expected to tout their literary heritage and make claims to being unique and therefore important sites for literature, while at the same time they are supposed to collaborate with other cities in the network, sharing ideas for events, activities, and campaigns.

Cultural policies related to literature and language have particular meanings, emphasis, and impact that policies related to visual arts, for example, may not. In this area, in particular, policies resonate with other kinds of government documents (constitutions, federal policies, etc.) since language is a key rallying point for ideas about nation and citizen (see, e.g., Anderson 2006; Miller and Yúdice 2002). As Miller and Yúdice (2002: 8) point out, language is easily used as a tool for hegemony. Further, policies relating to literacy and education are established and implemented as modes of instructing citizens about their roles, morals, and taste. Regarding cultural policy on literature specifically, Miller and Yúdice write: “Literature has been a central strut of public education, as a training in both language and in norms. It embodies the public sphere by offering public discussion of the private life of the *bourgeoisie* (Habermas *Structural*),

serving up exemplary individual lives to be emulated (or abjured) and providing a *mise-en-scène* of the predicaments that face an economic class-in-the-making as it devises forms of ethical legitimacy” (Miller and Yúdice 2002: 8–9).

UNESCO operates under Enlightenment ideas about culture and the kinds of institutions that are able to promote “culture.” Yudhishtir Raj Isar and Miikka Pyykkönen (2015) point to the presence of Enlightenment ideas in UNESCO’s constitution and first statements on culture. In the constitution, for example, one of UNESCO’s missions is “to maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge by assuring the conservation and protection of the world’s inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science” (Isar and Pyykkönen 2015: 15). Perhaps this is less surprising considering the writing of the constitution in 1945, but these ideas continue to shape UNESCO’s policies and programs. Moreover, UNESCO’s mission has been based, in part, on disseminating these European ideas around the world, training the world to be European or at least more like Europe.

Carlota Larrea and Alexis Weedon (2007) point to the European industries surrounding literature and their influence on UNESCO’s more recently established World Book and Copyright Day, specifically a particular configuration of publishers and media conglomerates in Europe. As they understand it, World Book and Copyright Day is designed to promote the consumption of books, particularly as commodities, with an attendant conferral of (good) taste on the reader. Furthermore, new or young readers are introduced to ideas about the protection of copyright. In its establishment of World Book and Copyright Day in 1995, UNESCO declared: “Considering consequently that all moves to promote their [books’] dissemination will serve not only greatly to enlighten all those who have access to them, but also to develop fuller collective awareness of cultural traditions throughout the world and to inspire behaviour based on

understanding, tolerance and dialogue” (Larrea and Weedon 2007: 224–25). The protection of intellectual property rights works only for some artists and writers, however, and intellectual property law broadly speaking curtails creativity by limiting access to knowledge (see, e.g., Adamson 2013: 104–5). Furthermore, with intellectual property laws shifting in response to the amount and kinds of material available online, there is an increased focus on “protecting” materials, knowledges, and practices, and this can have profound effects on creative use for those adhering to such laws, such as publishers.

Regarding the use of terminology in UNESCO documentation, Isar and Pyykkönen note that the terms *culture* and *cultural diversity* are used in order to accommodate as many definitions as possible: “The solution generally adopted by the international organization secretariat officials who actually draft the texts is to take on board as many meanings and interests as is grammatically possible so as to arrive at a sort of international common denominator” (Isar and Pyykkönen 2015: 14). Thus when the terms are used in UNESCO policy and documentation, the audiences who read them are freer to interpret them as they wish. This freedom can be used to include or exclude groups (certain segments of the population, those who don’t speak the “right” language, etc.), interests, organizations, and institutions. Depending on what kind of body or organization is using this UNESCO documentation, because of the terms’ polysemy, adopters can interpret the UNESCO documentation on their own terms and can use the policies in disparate ways, to address (or not) a variety of concerns or projects.

2.3. Members of the Creative Cities Network

Individual members of the CCN—that is, the programs that operate in each creative city—must negotiate between multiple parties: UNESCO, businesses and programs, participating artists, and

the public. For the most part, the documentation provided by individual programs attempts to emphasize the importance of “culture” and “creativity” but never strays too far from economic growth and development. Although this is understandable in the context of UNESCO’s development project, it is unclear to what extent the economic purpose is expressed to the residents of and visitors to the cities within the network. One could argue that that doesn’t matter, but if the programs are being promoted as being open to many or all and as celebrating creativity and the “enlightenment” of participants, then it would do well to situate UNESCO’s use of these terms vis-à-vis how participants on all levels (program officers, citizens, and tourists alike) understand those terms and what all participants hope to achieve by immersing themselves in creative work of one kind or another.

The notes from a 2006 CCN conference shed some light on the middle ground on which individual programs must stand. As discussed in the notes, attendees emphasized that the community must “buy into” a vision of “creative tourism”: “In order for the tourist to feel a part of the city, the community must know and be proud of what they have, and be willing to cultivate local enterprises that share the experience” (Creative Cities Network 2008). Participants went further in this discussion to express the desire for tourists to have “an educational, emotional, social, and participative interaction with the place, its living culture, and the people who live there” (ibid.). Such reliance on emotion and experience specifically tied to tourism links to the use of experience that the CCN programs rely on for the citizen participants. In this discussion by CCN program members, however, the programs are relying on the tourist, who has come to the city to purchase and consume, and, the programs hope, to feel.

The programs do not seek such affective response from the public-private partnerships they also hope to foster. In the language used to discuss those relationships, conference attendees

are much more economically oriented and refer to tax incentives, best practices, and packaging, though they also note that collaboration should be used among network members to result “in innovative local solutions for poverty, environmental sustainability, and other difficult global issues.” The notes end with a breezy call to seek out a sponsor “at a global scale,” such as Sir Richard Branson, the CEO of Virgin Atlantic (Creative Cities Network 2008).

When talking among themselves, then, the network members hit on many of the key terms used by UNESCO: collaboration, creativity, creative tourism, and sustainability. They are also able, as noted, to be frank in their discussion of the fundamental importance of economic development to the network. However, individual programs and those who run them do operate in other registers, including emotional ones, as they care about the cities in which they are based, the artists whose work they are helping to promote and maintain, and city residents and visitors. In its 2009–10 report to UNESCO, the Edinburgh City of Literature program states that its goals are to get more people engaged with literature, promote Scotland’s literary history, and “bring people together to stimulate creativity, share information, provide space and opportunity, and develop a sense of community” (Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature 2010). In fact, the ultimate goal of the program is to spread “enlightenment—an enlightened approach to engaging with literature.”⁵ The more detailed section of the report discusses the program’s financial situation. Understandably, in order to run, the program needs money, and it must fund itself (though it does use a number of volunteers).

Located at the nexus of the UNESCO network, other institutions, private-public

⁵ This nod to the Scottish Enlightenment works both to reinforce the strength and importance of Scottish intellectual achievement and to indicate the possibilities for further enlightenment, Scottish style. It also tacitly assumes that enlightenment is possible through literature but further that enlightenment is a positive goal for all, rather than a European and Scottish view of the world, the individual, and reason.

partnerships, and the people (tourists and residents) of the cities involved, the individual programs must negotiate among all these participants, utilizing language that appeals to all and is also understood by all, and they must operate collaboratively and creatively with a number of different partners. These programs are beholden to UNESCO and to the donors who support them, but they also seek to promote their art and the use of that art form by as many people as possible.

3. THE CREATIVE ECONOMY AND CREATIVE TOURISM

Creative tourism is a relatively recent approach to tourism and is directly linked to the work of the CCN. Cultural tourism, the progenitor of creative tourism (see, e.g., Richards 2011), is a mode of tourism in which visitors observe and engage in the “culture” of the tourist site. While tourists are encouraged to go to museums, eat at culturally appropriate restaurants, and generally observe the people, creative tourism is intended to be more interactive; tourists are encouraged to participate in the culture of the area and to have experiences other than buying souvenirs. Thus, tourist activities are more along the lines of learning to make a local craft, taking a cooking class, or participating in a workshop. The tourist industry and tourists themselves take this to be more authentic and to lead to a deeper understanding of the place being visited. Further, creative tourism is understood also to support and promote creativity among the craftspeople and others who live in the tourist site and are teaching the tourists about their art. As I will explore below, active experience itself is seen as key to creative tourism, as opposed to a generalized passive mode of cultural tourism.

The rise of creative tourism goes hand in hand with the recent interest of economists, public policy makers, city planners, and others in the “creative class.” As outlined by Richard Florida (2002) in *The Rise of the Creative Class*, the creative class, the most valorized part of the knowledge economy, is a growing and increasingly dominant class of workers who use creativity as a fundamental component of their work. Further, Florida argues, members of the creative class are drawn to cities (and only particular cities), where they are able to experience and explore

more than they would otherwise. Employers thus follow the creative people to the cities, and the cities are strengthened economically. Following this logic, the use of creativity as an economic means has increased significantly in the past two decades, starting most notably in the early 1990s with the UK government's creation of the "Cool Britannia" campaign (Richards 2011: 1231). Within the tourist industry, there is increasing focus on creative tourism as opposed to cultural tourism.

For the most part, institutions and organizations that are utilizing the concept of creativity—for example, economists, development professionals, the tourism industry, and institutions such as UNESCO—use it in a more nebulous fashion, which allows the institutions and organizations to appeal to potential tourists, consumers, and workers by evoking the positive aspects and at the same time not addressing the ways in which the type of creativity they are hawking may be curtailed or otherwise tempered.

Within the creative economy, then, there arises a fundamental problem between the need to allow freedom for creativity to flourish while simultaneously limiting creative workers within the organizational or institutional confines and also necessitating the production of creative work in order to uphold the economic bottom line of the organization. This is demonstrated in some of the ways in which UNESCO and others have become involved in the protection of heritage, particularly intangible cultural heritage, through means of copyright and property laws. Lucy Suchman (2011) writes about XEROX's PARC (Palo Alto Research Center Incorporated), which was established with the intent to be a space for design, experimentation, and creativity fostered and supported (economically and otherwise) by the parent company. As Suchman notes, however, there are inherent limitations to promoting creativity of any kind within a business environment, even an open one and one intended to promote creativity, broadly speaking.

Suchman argues that PARC was not designed itself to be open to all kinds of creativity: “PARC is designed in important respects systematically to block innovation, if by the latter we understand a kind of ongoing or unfolding transformation” (Suchman 2011: 13). She links this with the design of other institutions, including schools, that, based on their structure, strongly limit the open-endedness and opportunity to fail that are necessary to creative work (see also Sennett 2008).

A brief case study here might better illustrate some of these tensions. In an industry such as publishing, creativity and creative activities abound. The publisher exists, after all, to find writers, help them develop their talent, and then publish and distribute their work. Creativity is further employed at almost every level of the publishing house, from the editor’s work with the writer to the designer’s work on the layout of the book to the copyeditor’s work with the writer. And yet increasingly over the past twenty to thirty years, much of this work has changed due to increasing economic constraints that tend to increase individuals’ workloads and decrease time spent on any given project. A book designer told me that she and her fellow designers were asked to design more books with increasing limits on materials—but the books still needed to be beautiful (personal communication 3/5/2016). Although some designers are able to work under such conditions, not all can, and what gets lost is the time and work required for the “beautiful” part. In manuscript editing, work formerly done in-house is now done by freelancers, a new model of piecework that is part of an increasing trend toward the precarization of work in many areas (see, e.g., Ross 2003). Also, as they try to produce more, publishers increasingly rely on computer programs to systematize and streamline processes (from title management systems to word-processing systems), which invariably produces more mindless (automated) work and less creative work. And even authors are called on to compile increasingly more complicated sets of

permissions, depending on whether the publishing house in question takes a conservative line on permissions or a more liberal one. In fact, a book designer recently told me that the creative opportunities supposedly provided through digital texts—such as embedding videos or providing interactive capabilities—are often impossible to implement based on the increasingly restrictive and intrusive copyright laws that have proliferated with digital materials and the availability of material made possible by the Internet (personal communication, 3/5/2016). The creative possibilities for author, designer, and reader are all curtailed in what might otherwise be a more dynamic textual moment.

Some research on creative cities and the use of creativity in economic projects revolves around the communities of practice that work together to produce the “creative product” (Ash and Roberts 2008). These communities of practice are largely studied within organizations and institutions that are part of the knowledge industry. In a study of efforts to foster creativity in Montreal, for example, creativity is seen as being part of the work and practice of only some in these creative cities. The people who live there or who visit are still seen by economists, developers, and even some scholars (see, e.g., Cohendet and Simon 2008) as being the end of the line of a chain of creative production, in which they consume the fruits of the city’s newfound or recently developed creativity but do not themselves use these materials to further alter or augment their own social worlds and lives. This resonates with the predominant popular view of readers as passive consumers (despite much scholarly work to the contrary).

In creative tourism, then, tourists and the people and places they visit are expected to interact and to create together. Sites of creative tourism are meant to provide experiences for tourists, who both witness and perform (and then learn from) acts of creativity. Creative tourism is connected to the “experience economy” and “symbolic production” (Richards 2011: 1228),

which are linked to new approaches to consumption (consumers/tourists are seen as wanting experiences rather than items), the increasingly hybrid quality of work and leisure (work time and leisure time are no longer as distinct as they were, as many people are accessible at all times through their phones or computers), and interest in developing identity and a sense of self (Richards 2011: 1229; see also Gregg 2011; and Florida 2002). Rather than a display of the world's finest and most cultured places, absorbed by young upper-class European men on their grand tours, or even the later upper- or middle-class tourist visiting the same capitals of culture with a checklist of sites (or a *Baedeker*), this newest trend in the tourist industry seeks to reconnect tourists (still largely upper and middle class) with places as they are lived, rather than as they are idealized or rarefied.

If the tourist experience historically can be captured through or encapsulated in the memento, what is being produced in the experience-based creative tourism industry? This is too simple a question, however, as tourist experiences have historically involved people's intellects, emotions, bodies, and so on—none of this has changed. But how we understand the body to operate within the space of the tourist experience may shed light on the more recent focus on experience itself, particularly as it relates to creativity, which can involve experimentation, practice, and the body in ways that might not have previously been open to the tourist. As Dylan Trigg writes, "Places can, for instance, become singular in the library of our memories through their very *unfamiliarity*. Indeed, precisely through their strangeness, places become memorable by disturbing patterns of regularity and habit. In doing so, a given narrative is broken while another one begins. Such moments tend to impart significance into our lives, even if that significance is realized only belatedly. To this extent, places become the stage setting for profound events in the life of an individual" (2012: 9). Trigg continues: "The body activates

place. But the same is true in reverse: *Place activates the body*” (ibid.: 11). Programs such as UNESCO’s that are rooted in a single place, a city, may tap into this phenomenologically based understanding of place, but just as our memories and feelings are triggered by smells, sounds, and feelings, we interact with places even if unconsciously, and our bodies record our experiences and can call on them again. Anthropologist Tim Ingold argues that moving through a space and being shown things are key to how we know. Knowledge, then, cannot live in the mind alone but is created through experience. He writes, “Our knowledgeability consists, rather, in the capacity to situate such information, and understand its meaning, within the context of a direct perceptual engagement with our environments” (2011b: 21). This connection to place, particularly to a new place as experienced in tourism, helps us mark significant moments.

Creative tourism is also intended to provide more “authentic” experiences for tourists, ones that they can carry with them back home through the knowledge and skill they have obtained in their participatory creative experience.⁶ Calling on another of the Creative Cities Network’s buzzwords, *collaboration*, the creative tourist experience is sometimes understood to be based in cocreation, in which both tourist and host create together (Jusztin 2012). One positive outcome of this is that there is increased focus on the creative process, which is something, as we have seen, that is often curtailed when creativity is used within a business setting. If tourists are themselves able to learn through this process, through experimentation with materials and so on, then such a tourist experience may well be quite different from more “traditional” ones. The question remains, though, as to who gets to determine what counts as the authentic, creative experiences that are peddled through creative tourist programs. In the City of Literature program, particular institutions, structures, and ideologies that are primarily rooted in

⁶ Though how much skill a person could truly develop in the short time frame of a tourist experience is questionable.

Enlightenment ideas continue to inform what counts as literature and who is licensed to arbitrate such decisions.

As Florida sees it, the creative class is interested in experiences for the same reasons as creative tourists. Creative class members also seek experience because it is a critical factor in the development of class members' own creative faculties. Florida characterizes class members as seeking out being in the middle of a busy streetscape, rather than going to an already orchestrated event and being entertained. As Florida writes, "[T]hey come with a sense that they are entering a cultural community, not just attending an event" (2002: 183). Experience itself is a fundamental part of the creative process, in which the creative person draws on different experiences in order to work through ideas and different ways of thinking about the problem and thus to come to a new solution. Drawing on Florida's understanding of the creative class, this interest in experience is a natural part of the creative class member's accumulation of knowledge, which will be used at work but is drawn from regular life experience.

UNESCO's Creative Cities Network seeks, in part, to utilize this interest in experience and creative tourism to bring people to the member cities. UNESCO describes creative tourism thus: "Creative tourism is travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture" (UNESCO 2006: 3). Tourists and city residents are seen as collaborating and creating together. For the tourist, an experientially based understanding of the city, Cracow, for example, emerges, and residents develop a sense of themselves as part of the city and the nation more broadly through the program's work as well as through interactions they may have with tourists.

This development of national identity works within the City of Literature program,

binding as it does UNESCO's interest in heritage and a national literature. As argued by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities*, capitalist print media can unify a group of otherwise disconnected individuals into a national community. In order to circulate more widely, print media is often reliant on a single dialect or form of a language, which then becomes established as not only the proper form of the language but more important as the *known* form of the language (an in-house *lingua franca* of sorts). Anderson's understanding of these imagined communities also takes into account a sense of history, as developed through the language use in print media, and the implicit understanding or even sense of the broad, horizontal, but unknown community within which some individuals operate. Thus, through print media and mass literacy, Anderson is able to track the development of nationalism through the conjuring of imagined communities. As Anderson sums it up, "These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected to print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community" (2006: 44).

The City of Literature programs will be able to draw on these connections. Today's language communities, however, are able to extend their tentacles all around the world through the Internet, even if the net itself is choked with English-language material. As a seemingly limitless space, there is plenty of room for sites devoted to English literature to cozy up to those that cater to Wisława Szymborska fans or those of Haldor Laxness (Nobel Laureates from Cracow and Reykjavik).

To draw on Anderson's notion of capitalist print media as helping to define and create a nation, though, provides a counterbalance to the more divisive ways in which literature can be defined and utilized, as above. Clearly part of UNESCO's project draws on the idea of the nation and the national language as part of its cultural heritage mission. But within the program, each

city sees its role within the nation in a particular way and as contributing to that nation in a particular way. Participants—citizens, tourists, and others—are also bound together by the language and the national literature. In those City of Literature programs for which English is not the primary language, the language and literature are charged in a different way.

There is a tension here between working the seam of national heritage and gesturing toward a cosmopolitanism that links these cities and will only increase as the network itself increases. This is revealed in the program's emphasis on translation to facilitate the distribution of national literatures. The broader network of world literature gestured toward here, though, is curtailed by the publishers or translation groups making the decisions about which books to translate and into which languages. Such a world literature has borders, ones that are drawn, for the most part, based on economic decisions. English is certainly a primary language for translation, which only strengthens English's political, economic, and social dominance. Although national literary heritage and language are key components of the program, the focus on cities, rather than nations, promotes an idea of cities as crucial sites for the future of literature and creativity more broadly.

3.1. Cities as Sites of Creativity

As mentioned, one of the drivers behind the CCN was the understanding that more and more people would be living in cities in the future, and UNESCO sought to establish a way of using creativity to promote development in cities and to increase the quality of life for urban dwellers. UNESCO also sees cities as key to creative work because many “cultural actors” live in cities, cities are considered “breeding grounds for creative clusters,” and cities are able to operate at

both local (state) and international levels due to their size (UNESCO n.d. c).⁷ From economic and development standpoints such as UNESCO's and Richard Florida's, creative people are drawn to cities as places in which to have the experience-rich lifestyles they seek. As Florida argues, businesses will seek out these creative workers and will thus go to the cities.

The UNESCO network was not the first to form around creativity and cities, but membership in the CCN is the preeminent cultural designation of its kind. Several more local networks exist, including Eurocities, the Creative Cities Network of Canada, and the European Capital of Culture, and some of these predate the CCN. Membership in these smaller networks may help raise the profile of some cities, but there is debate about whether membership confers any positive economic outcome or even whether it increases tourism (see, e.g., Namyślak 2014; and Miller 2009). It is too soon to say whether the UNESCO designation, as a more powerful marker, will have a positive economic impact. Between 2002 and 2004, the group in Scotland who were assisting UNESCO in devising the criteria for the City of Literature designation and who then went on to bid for the designation, carried out an economic impact survey as part of the bid preparation, and it indicated that the designation would strengthen the city and Scotland's economy in specific areas (interview 12/10/14). The CCN is a long-term program, though, and it will depend on many factors to understand the impact that membership will have on cities.

This interest in development in cities is not limited to UNESCO and is linked to globalization and governments, businesses, and institutions that are seeking to capitalize on the shrinking global landscape. The rise of such programs as the CCN fosters both competition between and collaboration among cities. The CCN rhetoric focuses on the sharing of

⁷ Such an attribution of creativity to cities is not new, nor nonsensical, since not only are there large numbers of people in cities but many of the industries that support creative work, particularly in the case of literature with publishers and printers, are based in cities and provide ways to produce and disseminate certain forms of creative work.

understandings, ideas, and resources (not necessarily financial) among cities, but each member city is also set the task of distinguishing itself from the other cities in the network and those outside by promoting its own assets and qualities. In some ways, the CCN is about making futures that are collaborative, creative, urban, and economically viable, and yet this particular program is also rooted in cultural and national heritage. Can a program that works to preserve heritage also be flexible enough to move beyond the business or institutional boundaries that heritage is tied to in order to produce such futures?

Allen Scott (2006) argues that the increased interest in creative cities comes about based on new economic and work-related circumstances: technology, production, labor, and creative clusters. He emphasizes the importance of the laborers who work in the creative industries, particularly the knowledge economy, as both part of the production cycle but also key to the consumption and use of creative products. Within the knowledge economy in particular, workers are often highly skilled and well paid, and their aggregation in cities contributes significantly to the strength of those cities as creative sites but also to gentrification and other similar socioeconomic shifts.

Not only is the contingent quality of much creative work today largely ignored by Florida and others, but the rest of the residents of these creative cities are essentially left out of the equation, though their work—running offices, delivering mail, washing dishes—is fundamental to the work of the genius creative class. As Jamie Peck observes, “The uncreative population, one assumes, should merely look on, and learn” (2005: 746). As Ash Amin contends, much of the research and thought on cities tends to conceptualize cities as conglomerations of forces but of relatively fixed, institutionalized ones. Instead, Amin urges, in order to grapple with how cities are changing and will change, particularly given the rapid population growth projected for

cities, cities cannot be treated monolithically from any given perspective. Dealing with “the city of multiple formations, hidden contests, and partial intelligence” necessitates working “through the plural and the unknown” and tackling “pressing developments without detailed macro- and micro-management” (Amin 2013: 207). Such a messy and partial approach, Amin contends, will not take place under the current structures of geopolitical power.

Along the same lines, Craig Calhoun, Richard Sennett, and Harel Shapira (2013) insist on the need to engage with creativity and cities in new ways. Not only must creativity be seen as something that is not limited to a particular group of people, such as Florida’s creative class, but the city itself must be conceptualized in different ways. “Behind the reified term *city* lies human activity. . . . And perhaps what is most significant in these laboratories of the contemporary world is that they can reveal the process of making in all its nuances” (Calhoun, Sennett, and Shapira 2013: 196). Through rethinking urban infrastructure and recognizing the human creativity of daily practice that repurposes and reshapes such infrastructure, Calhoun, Sennett, and Shapira argue for being purposeful about the uses of urban planning and design to work through ideas about “what kind of society we want to build” (ibid.: 199).

The city itself is a meshwork of human and nonhuman others, messily bounded, historic and future looking, and multiply layered, configured, and living. People who live in a city negotiate with each other and with the landscape in order to navigate their way. In “Does the City Have Speech?” Saskia Sassen argues that the city’s complexity and incompleteness work together to create an environment that fosters making—“making the urban, the political, the civic” (2013: 209). Furthermore, the incompleteness of the city allows for in-between spaces in which freedom and making occur together, and all of the actors in the city, from people (not just the creative class members) to buildings to spaces, together “produce something akin to speech:

resistances, enhanced potentials, in short that the city talks back” (ibid.: 211). This resonates with Michel de Certeau’s understanding of walking through the city as a kind of speech act, in which the walker takes some paths and not others, all within a conversation with the surrounding landscape and the other beings moving through the space (1984: 93–99), as well as with other understandings of the ways in which people move through urban space.⁸

Calhoun, Sennett, and Shapira state: “Our contention is that creative action thrives in contexts that have a combination of regulation and deregulation, that is, contexts that contain rules but whose rules are flexible enough to enable action and not restrict it, indeed, that contain rules aimed at maintaining flexibility. We see this flexibility, this combination of formality and informality, this messiness, as an important part of what defines the city and makes it a creative space” (2013: 197). But within the confines of structured and hierarchized organizations with specific goals, as within the industry of creative tourism, other creative industries, and the CCN, creativity *is* often overly restricted.

3.2. An Anthropology of Creativity

Creativity is seen to be a universal good and, increasingly, as a universal human capacity. As I have shown above, the concept of creativity has been harnessed by governments, policy makers, businesses, and industries to promote economic growth while tapping into the feel-goodness of the idea of creativity. Whether the businesses and others driven by this kind of creativity are able to produce more creative products, to “unleash the creative powers” of their workers, and generally to make the world a better place is yet to be seen.

⁸ For example, the early twentieth-century writing of Walter Benjamin and others, as well as more recent work on the emergence of the modern city at the turn of the century (see Steinberg 2011).

Creativity has also recently appeared more often within anthropological work, some of which continues to try to understand not just how humans are creative but how “creative products” are used, culturally absorbed, and valued. Beyond this, anthropologists such as Tim Ingold are interested in creativity and the creative process as they pertain to design. In some of this work, design is understood to be a dynamic, collaborative, and creative process, all aspects that businesses are tapping into as well (see, e.g., Ingold 2011a, 2011b). Some of this work is geared toward using design in its professional context to create products and systems that are more environmentally conscious and conscientious and that can serve broader and changing publics that are responding to the rapid changes occurring in the world based on climate change (Gunn, Otto, and Smith 2013). Others (Fry 2012, 2015; Gatt and Ingold 2013; Manzini 2015) want to expand the scope of design beyond its professional context and using the designerly and creative capacities of all to create possibilities for living in the world that are, again, more environmentally conscious but moreover less focused on products and more on ways of life, rethinking cities, and working toward new futures (Fry 2012, 2015). Others take explicitly the political aspects of design into consideration, including the ways in which power can be seen as operating through design while simultaneously bringing to the fore the creative possibilities for those who are using the designed “products” (Domínguez Rubio and Fogué 2015).

Eitan Wilf (2014) points to the particular utility of an anthropological study of creativity, because creativity is not the product of some kind of genius but is, rather, highly socialized. There is great variation in how different societies and communities define creativity and creative work, embedded in socialization, education, and systems of value, and what they do with creativity. Anthropological work, by examining the social structures that help to shape creative practice, can work toward a better understanding of how creativity is encouraged, curtailed, and

utilized. Moreover, because creativity is such a broad term, what does it mean for different actors to claim creativity—or not? As Anne Balsamo writes, “Creativity is a cultural construct: what counts as creativity or novelty varies from culture to culture, and in this sense, culture is the generative mainspring of creativity” (2011: 11).

Such an analysis is key to a study of the Cities of Literature program, in which creativity is called upon and operates in various registers. The creativity celebrated in the UNESCO program is for the most part limited to the creativity of the writers, and with a Eurocentric definition of literature, the creativity that is the core of the program is also strongly shaped and defined by the institutions, social structures, and systems of value that operate in Europe. What must be considered, however, are the writers and tourists who are envisioned as participants in this form of creative tourism. Who is being sought out for participation, and who is excluded? If “traditional” sources for literature continue to be the foundation of the program (e.g., publishers and bookstores), then literature—and its audience—will continue to be confined to its existing sphere.

That said, if the programs are able to understand the potential for creative action for others who participate in literature, even starting with the interactivity and potential creativity of these new forms of tourism, then that could open up possibilities for the impact the programs have and for the growth of and investment in literature and creativity more broadly in the cities. Through UNESCO’s emphasis on dialogue between and among cities in the network, the programs have the potential to develop possibilities for literature that may not otherwise have occurred, starting with projects among writers. Writers themselves often understand their readers and audiences with a more nuanced understanding of readers’ creativity, and such understandings have the potential to provide for more dynamic, interactive projects between

writers and readers in the City of Literature program.

3.3. *Cracow, City of Literature*

Wander around Cracow, and you are likely to see people reading. If you are in Planty Park or the Matras Bookstore, you may see a small blue sign designating that this is a Free Reading Zone (Strefa Wolnego Czytania). The City of Literature program organized a list of fifty such zones, with the help and input of Cracovians. The list includes obvious choices such as the Matras but also buses and trams as well as the inventive suggestion of the lake at Nowa Huta. Projects such as these serve as reminders to Cracovians and visitors that they should pick up a book and read, and they also mark visually and spatially the city as a place for and of reading. The City of Literature program has also put together a literary map of the city, which is designed “to incentivize people to embark on their own search” for literature and literary life in Cracow (Krakow 2015).

In Poland, creativity and literature had a particularly interesting relationship during the twentieth century, particularly under Soviet censorship, when writers and others worked to circulate literature and political work (and of course the two are not mutually exclusive) outside of the reach of the censor’s pen, starting in the 1940s. Many Poles also worked to create *drugi obieg* (sometimes translated as “second circulation”), the literature and political writing that was produced within and outside Poland by underground producers and was then circulated, often from person to person, in Poland, thus escaping the strictures of censorship. As Padraic Kenney (2002) notes in *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989*, by the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Poles were known in Central Europe as experts on the production of samizdat, and activists and social movements not only sought guidance and inspiration from the Poles but even

had some of their own samizdat produced in Poland and then smuggled over the border. During the period of unrest in Central and Eastern Europe starting in the late 1960s and fueled by the Solidarity movement and Orange Alternative in Poland, the intensity of such publication increased. The Poles are likely to have recognized their own importance in this broader resistance movement, which could manifest in their relationship to this secretive form of publication, a sense of identity, and a particular connection to the practices and materialities of publishing underground literature. In fact, Kenney notes that even machines for printing were smuggled out of Poland during this period.

In a collection of essays published in the émigré journal *Kultura*, Robert Kostrzewa writes about noticing copies of the journal partially hidden on the shelf at a friend's house: "One read *Kultura*, smuggled into the country by Poles returning from visits to the West, with that kind of intellectual curiosity and mounting excitement which one feels encountering something forbidden and dangerous" (Kostrzewa 1990: x). Readers clearly had particular affective relationships to these texts. Moreover, the necessary social circulation of the texts also carried an affective load, heightened by the political significance of the texts and their circulation and further reinforced in the social communities that formed around them (see Kostrzewa 1990; and Kenney 2002).

Performance of literature is a key component of Cracow's history. Since the turn of the twentieth century up until the 1970s, the city was home to a number of literary cabarets. These were social spaces where writers, artists, and audiences gathered to share work through performance. Many artists and writers used these venues to work through their experiences of the Soviet state, as well as simply experimenting with texts. Individual literary cabarets came and went, but the tradition of sharing these forms of uncensored literature are relevant today in the

city's tourism industry. These cabarets spawned literary movements, such as *Młoda Polska* (Young Poland), in the early twentieth century and were the starting points for the careers of many well-known poets and other artists. Cracovians thus found ways to get around censorship, to critique national politics, and to discuss what being Polish meant (particularly within the context of an area that had been geographically and politically divided and united multiple times within a couple hundred years), all through literature of various forms, and these sensory and embodied experiences have left their mark on the ways in which Cracovians today think about and engage with the literature that now circulates in their city.

As a form of literature/writing that circulates outside the standard publishing institutions, *drugi obieg* has some similarity to the circulation of zines in the United States and elsewhere in the 1990s. As Radway notes (2012), the purpose of zines is not merely to be read but instead is an active and often playful engagement with materials. Moreover, zinesters seek out and create social networks with other zine readers and writers, in order to share ideas and discover new ways of being that break from standard societal roles. The attention to both materials and social relations are hallmarks of both *drugi obieg* and zines, and they are also both less emphasized in mass-produced or institutionally created books and other textual forms, though their points of origin (either out of censorship or seeking alternative markets) differ. In craft practices as well, this attention to materials and social relations both fosters the individual's own knowledge and understanding of self but also teaches the individual to see herself within social networks (and moreover that all individuals in the network are differently skilled and need to work together in order to best use those differently distributed skills) and to connect with the surrounding world, which produces the materials that are explored and used in the craft workshop. The zinester, too, takes images and ideas from elsewhere and reincorporates them into a new assemblage in the

zine, and many producers of samizdat also used the bricolage-type assemblage for creating their material (see, e.g., Schmidt 2013). What is it about such an assemblage itself that might recast the ways in which writers and readers see these materials, and what are the ways in which political-economic situations influence the perceptions of materials as well as their use? How might a reader relate to such creatively constructed texts in a way different than the same textual material that is put into a standard format and is mass produced? One point of connection to this kind of text is an appreciation of human capacity and human creativity.

4. VIEWS OF READERS

In the 1970s and 1980s, reception studies came about as a way in which to recognize and theorize the importance of reading to the study of literature. Rather than understanding texts as delivering a particular meaning, scholars came to appreciate the role of readers as interpreting and understanding literary texts (Culler 1980; Iser 1980). These understandings of the reader and the reader's work, then, see the act of reading as a creative process, one in which meaning is not delivered from the author to the reader directly through the text, but one in which meaning is sussed out, explored, and subsequently used. It is curious that reading continues to be taken as a passive activity in much popular discourse. Despite many common and publically held conceptions of readers as passive, quiet, and cerebral, reading in practice is active, evokes physical responses, and acts strongly on the emotions (Barthes 1975), and it is experienced differently at different times in the reader's life, in different physical places (outside, on the train, in bed), and it evokes different responses and interpretations depending on the reader's relation to the material of the book itself.

Although by adulthood most people read by themselves, there is a considerable social element to reading that is also creative. Studies of reading groups illustrate how group members learn from one another as textual interpreters and explicators, and together produce alternative ideas about the text's meanings and how the author could have presented the material differently, building toward a social creation of the ideal text. Joan Bessman Taylor (2012) argues that within reading groups creativity grows out of the space between the author's and the reader's

expectations. Reading groups work through the gaps in the text, basing their understandings (always multiple) of the text on the specific text but also on their broader understanding of how an author or a genre works. Reading group members thus base their understanding of a text on individual accumulated knowledge and on the shared and creative interpretations of the group.

Book groups are a popular means through which scholars have undertaken studies of readers (see, e.g., Long 2003; Radway 1984 and 1997; and Taylor 2012). They are an understandable target of research, because they often involve “regular” readers (not literary critics or scholars), they are obvious instantiations of the social worlds that reading creates, and they are an easy way to engage with a group of readers, while still hearing from individual readers and their personal experiences. *Reading the Romance* is an early ethnographical study of reading by literary scholar Janice Radway (1984), and it came about as Radway’s sense that in order to understand reading as a practice it was necessary to undertake an ethnographic study that both elicits the readers’ understandings of the books but also places those understandings into a broader social context that the readers may or may not recognize. Radway discovers that these female readers of romance novels use reading as a way to give themselves time and to explore ideas about empowered women and relationships in their otherwise fairly sheltered, Middle American lives.

The City of Literature program in Edinburgh celebrates an annual National Reading Group Day, and several other City of Literature programs note the importance of such groups (and even literature clubs in Heidelberg) to their work. Rather than engaging directly with readers through book groups, the programs tend to work with institutions, libraries, and bookstores, but many of the programs also have projects to incorporate both reading and literature into the everyday lives of people on the street. Readers in Cracow are encouraged to

read when they stumble upon a Free Reading Zone. In both Cracow and Edinburgh, texts are projected onto buildings at night. In Edinburgh, two recent projects, Carry a Poem and Cities Get Lyrical, are aimed at incorporating and highlighting literature in the everyday lives of people. The latter project, which is about song lyrics, is also aimed at making literature seem more friendly and less elitist. Not all of the programs have such initiatives, but in the Cracow program, for example, there are possibilities to emphasize the city's history of and connection to forms such as *drugi obieg*⁹ and the experimentation with texts that took place in the city's literary cabarets.

None of the Cities of Literature have very strong digitally oriented programs to date. This is discordant, since the Internet in particular is a space in which the roles of readers and authors are changing most dramatically, and those shifting roles are likely to change cultural perceptions of readers and authors more generally, in print or online. Creativity also comes to bear in these role changes as well. The City of Literature program is not new enough to explain the dearth of digital projects; rather, the program's focus on books reinforces a certain conception of and form for literature. There have been "experimental" projects, such as Edinburgh's work on lyrics as literature, but the digital arena troubles many Western ideas about literature, how it circulates, how it is accessed and who has access, and fundamentally who creates it. In the next section I discuss the current book landscape, in which print texts and their associated authorial and reader roles cavort next to new and still fluid digital books and their collaborative creators and cocreators.

⁹ This is particularly true since the library at Jagiellonian University has a large collection of *drugi obieg*.

4.1. Both Print and Digital

Whereas historically literary scholars understand books to act upon readers in the same way, historians of the book have long understood books and readers within broader social contexts, all of which actively transform each other (see, e.g., Darnton 2006; and Price 2006). Further, the history of the book takes into account the significance of books as objects and as materials and the ways in which the use and circulation of books carries social and political messages outside the text of the book itself. Indeed, for the everyday reader, the book in hand carries a particular social message, even a political one.

At this moment, online literary spaces are reshaping and remapping literary worlds. The collaborative efforts already undertaken within the City of Literature program are thus far mainly physical in form (programs for visiting writers and the like), but certainly the online space seems an important stage for future collaboration, particularly since readers and writers are already finding each other online.¹⁰ The shifts occurring today regarding print and digital books are not merely about changes in book form, availability, and accessibility but are about the changing roles of the author and reader, among other participants in the production and circulation of texts. These shifts can be seen in the ways in which digital texts can be manipulated and altered by authors and readers, and such interactivity also underscores one part of the cycle of literature, in which the reader's comments can more directly address the author, who can then take them into consideration and alter the text or write again with those comments in mind. The accessibility of digital texts and spaces for comment may also empower readers to write their own works. Such

¹⁰ Although English is decidedly the world language at this point in time, it seems likely that the availability of work in other languages—in this case, Polish—online will itself instigate collaboration among different and new communities of readers and writers, both within Cracow, for example, but readily accessed and thus extended to Polish communities outside the city and country.

activity can bypass the standard publication process but in so doing has sparked much discussion about the generally perceived and/or discussed tensions between information wanting to be free (see, e.g., Duguid 2006) and the hierarchical, privileged structures of publishing and knowledge production more broadly (including academia).

The rise of print and affiliated authorial roles came about due to a particular configuration of technology, changes in legal practice (regarding copyright), means of production, and shifting perceptions of authorship (Poster 2006: 487–88). Such a constellation can also be seen today, in which technology, copyright, production, and authorship are all again in flux. Changing ideas about authorship relating to digital practices could alter the way literature is commonly conceived and may eventually impact the way that UNESCO understands literature within its Creative Cities Network. Currently, the Cities of Literature programs for the most part utilize literature as operating within historically based spheres, including the linear production-consumption of books as noted, traditional roles of authors and readers, and deep ties to the history of literature in the member cities. The digital component of the Cities of Literature programs is not very robust at the moment and tends to focus on projects such as making sure readers have access to texts on electronic readers.¹¹

As Foucault (1998) understands the author function to be based in discourse, genre, and changing notions of property, so too might we expect the author function to be undergoing another shift now. Mark Poster finds in Foucault's idea of the author function and the postauthor utopia some parallels to the ways in which authorship is changing relating to digital texts. Poster

¹¹ Ideas of heritage and history are clearly at play here, in that the City of Literature programs call on writers and literature that are already very well established (Szymborska and Miłosz in Cracow and Robert Louis Stevenson in Edinburgh, for example). With its pedigree, such literature can evoke feelings and ideas around nation and identity that newer literature in print and online has not yet had the opportunity to develop fully.

here connects the less rigid structure of digital texts and their inherent fluidity (whether that fluidity is used by author or reader is dependent on many factors) with a more loosely defined figure of the author. As Kathleen Fitzpatrick (2014) contends, reading and writing online are different, and people who read online are increasingly doing more writing online (and offline) as well. Since readers are writing more, the more crisply delineated roles and functions of author and reader are blurring, not that they were ever utterly delineated in practice (writers being readers themselves, of course), though certainly they have been in discourse. Leopoldina Fortunati (2014) argues as well for the transformative potential of the Internet to reading and literary studies more broadly. Rather than restricting authorship and interpretation to narrowly proscribed groups with particular educational pedigrees, the freedom to read, comment, and write online offers the potential for new understandings of literature, which may be unsettling to those who would prefer to keep literature within a smaller sphere.

Such a blurring is brought out in Jin Feng's (2012) study of authors and readers engaged in digital textual production in an online literary space, Jinjiang, in China. Jinjiang is a platform for romance writing, in which authors post texts and readers access the texts to read but also to provide comments. Authors will, in fact, address readers' comments and make adjustments to their text as they deem appropriate. Feng describes this interactivity as a "'reader-oriented' form of writing," one in which "author and reader have turned into fluid and mutually constitutive categories" (2012: 49). Feng notes that in addition to authors and readers, the designers of the Jinjiang platform are themselves key actors. Not only is the site designed to promote discussion and interactivity, but the webmasters "emphasize the quality of readers' comments and especially encourage textual remarks that are produced by the commentators themselves" (*ibid.*: 59). Readers can comment on texts as well as rank them, and the participation of authors,

readers, and webmasters all work to create a community in which not only are traditional roles blurred but traditional forms of literature are reworked, all within a creative and collaborative space.

It is not just the scholarly community that is concerned about who is reading and how, of course. In 2004, the National Endowment for the Arts released a report, “Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America,” based on surveys showing the decreasing numbers of people reading literature in the United States over a ten-year period. The NEA draws a connection between reading and good citizenship. As the report states, readers are more likely to do charity work. Similarly, Hubert Dreyfus and Sean Dorrance Kelly (2011) make a case for literature as a moral compass. Proponents of deep reading and literary reading argue for the importance of reading as supporting such moralistic and identity-related development but also as a counter to the growing concerns about the ways in which technology breeds distraction (see, e.g., Waxler 2014).

Some of these concerns, Fitzpatrick claims, are linked to the reification of the book form as the vehicle for literature and knowledge and to broader concerns about “cultural decline” and the diminishment of what it means to be human (2014: 167). Instead, Fitzpatrick writes, “While the relationship to the book as an object is certainly changing in the West, those changes may indicate a more thorough imbrication of books and reading with popular culture, rather than their marginalization” (ibid.: 166). Fitzpatrick argues that although there are differences in the way texts are read online versus in print (depending on the kind of digital text that is read), reading digital texts, though it may not always have the linearity or temporality of reading a hard-copy book, is nevertheless a creative act and one that furthermore “reflects readerly *production* as

much as *consumption*” (ibid.: 170). This of course meshes with Feng’s observations of the Jinjiang community.

Books exist because of the social, intellectual, cultural, technological, and political situations that brought them into being and continued to mold their use, and the information presented in books is too part of this constellation of factors, which are above all social. Duguid writes: “Publication is then very much a process of producing a public artifact and inserting it in a particular social circuit. Indeed, what general intelligibility manuscripts have is due not to the autonomy of information, but to a reader’s understanding of the broader literary system” (2006: 502). Even with publication, though, things are changing today, and with options such as self-publishing and writing for a blog or even a more formal online forum, both the intelligibility of the texts and the social circuits Duguid refers to will morph. Some parts of the academic community are wringing their hands about the fate of peer review with new models of publication available particularly in scientific scholarly journals. Literature is validated through a different set of processes, though one that nevertheless often relies on the expertise and knowledge of a few. Readers of literature also frequently rely on accumulated knowledge through education and their own reading practices or on recommendations from trusted sources. At its most basic, too, literature cannot exist without literacy, which then produces the authors and readers who remain at the heart of literature.

With a better understanding of what books actually are and how their texts operate with all people who come into contact with them, we can look anew at what this moment of change in books actually signifies.

5. CONCLUSION

As I discuss in this paper, UNESCO's Creative Cities Network and in particular the City of Literature program are part of a broader movement to use human creativity to strengthen cities economically. With roots in creative tourism, the City of Literature program is naturally bound up in multiple other forms and modes of creativity and the creative actors of many kinds who are themselves part of the cycle of literature. These creative actors and the various forms of creativity operate at multiple levels in the program, from UNESCO's broad interest in creativity as a driver of economic growth to the programs that seek to coordinate the interests of different parties to the writers, editors, and readers, among others, who are involved in literature at the most granular level.

Only a decade old, the City of Literature program is also positioned at a key historical juncture in the production and consumption of literature, since electronic books, online platforms for literature, and other literary and book-related websites have now become firmly established and crucial to the circulation of books themselves but also to ideas and discourse around the past, present, and future of literature. In some cases, literature-related sites online function simply as places for readers and others to go and comment on texts. This kind of information has economic value for booksellers and others, and is also a source of public discussion and commentary. Depending on the prominence of the text being discussed, such commentary can fuel broader public talk about a literary work or can simply be lost amidst the dense cloud of "Likes" and starred reviews that proliferate online.

Elsewhere online, however, literary websites serve as places for writers and readers to interact and even to collaborate on texts. Perhaps because of the relatively anonymous-making properties of the Internet (excluding the language in which one reads and writes), such interactive work has on some sites changed the roles of authors and readers, shifting the productively oriented capacity of the author and the consumption work of the reader to a kind of work that at times casts the author as reader and allots the reader with productive, writerly work. Since the death of the book form itself has been and continues to be debated, whether the blending and blurring of practices online will have an effect on the work of authors and readers in more traditional print media is yet to be seen. However, just as the idea of the book still informs the ways we read online and what we expect of moving through a text, it seems unlikely that the pervasiveness of the Internet and the increasing numbers of literary places online that allow for such collaboration and creative reworking of roles will *not* have an impact on the kinds of work expected of authors and readers in print.

Within the cities themselves, multiple forces and interests intersect and sometimes merely collide. UNESCO's mission of cultural heritage and preservation clings to these cities' pasts as "cultural capitals" and to efforts to preserve (and sanctify) national languages and even ideas about national literature that are still bound up in and otherwise connected to the print form, the rise of mass literacy and spread of print media, and related ideas about national identity that are interconnected with the above. However, such backward-glancing images and ideas clash with the need of the programs to provide a digital face for participants. As stated, we do not yet know how ideas about books, authors, and readers will change as experimentation online in particular continues and as various forces continue to have an effect on the existing print publishing

industry—as well as on creative tourism and UNESCO’s economic development project more broadly.

Taking reading to be a creative act and a means for readers to move toward greater self-understanding, I close with a dream of how the Cracow City of Literature program and the people moving through the city might intersect and interact. What does it mean to be reminded to read in a city park, to read lines of poetry as they are projected on the side of a building, or to take a literary walk through a city? Do these activities differ from seeing a set of letters in a city square and rearranging them? These all serve as reminders to residents and others moving through the city: they remind people about Cracow’s history as a place of books, the Polish language, the ability of words to stop you in your tracks. Depending on who encounters these reminders, a person may be reminded of being Polish or of simply being in Poland. This is some of the work of the City of Literature program.

But what about those who are being reminded of all these things? Do they simply absorb this information and move on? It seems unlikely. A passer-by who reads a few lines of Michał Zabłocki’s poetry might read it aloud to the person she’s with or she might go home and look up the poem. She might also write a poem about the experience of reading poetry on the side of a building. There is this sense of anticipation captured in “Widok Krakowa,” a video commissioned as part of Cracow’s City of Literature bid (Krakowskie Biuro Festiwalowe 2013). Though much of the video is devoted to a romantic vision of the city’s literary history, Adam Zagiewski muses at the beginning that the city has yet to have a great novel written about it: “There are cities like Dublin that have their own *Ulysses*, which is an exquisite declaration of love and hate for Dublin. There are cities that have their own book, one single book, that contains the summary of the city’s experience. Cracow doesn’t have one. Maybe it’s still to be

written.” Perhaps it will be written collaboratively online. There are numerous experiences, decisions, questions, and ideas that these projects might inspire. How the reading public and tourists use these is up to them, but based on the creativity of Cracovians in the past, performing literature or circulating it as *drugi obieg*, and considering the ways in which online literary forums are producing new authorial and reader roles and inspiring people to write, read, and share, it seems that there are many possibilities for people to work creatively with texts within this City of Literature.

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