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## Cultural and creative clusters – a systematic literature review and a renewed research agenda.

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**Article title: Cultural and creative clusters – A systematic literature review and a renewed research agenda**

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**Abstract :**

“Cultural/Creative Quarters/Clusters/Districts” (CCC) have become very popular local development strategies across the World in the last 30 years. This popularity has been reflected within the academic literature in Urban Planning, Geography, Economics and Cultural Studies. However, each discipline and/or authors define these concepts in their own way or borrow from one another without necessarily clearly delimiting or explaining their approaches. As such, the CCC academic field of research is quite fuzzy. In order to address this issue, this paper presents a systematic literature review (SLR) of the peer-reviewed academic literature included in the Scopus database using the concepts of creative or cultural clusters, districts or quarters (the most popular combination of terms found in the literature). In doing so, the paper analyses the ways these concepts have evolved, who has been writing about these, what have been the themes and dimensions associated with these concepts, how they have been studied and researched (methodologies), and what issues and research gaps are still present within this literature today.

**Keywords :** systematic literature review, cultural quarter, cultural district, cultural cluster, creative quarter, creative district, creative cluster, creative cities, urban regeneration, gentrification, local and economic development, value chain, policies, flagship, branding and governance.

## 1. Introduction

~~The aim of this article is to fill a gap in the literature by presenting a systematic literature review (SLR) of the evolution of the terminology and research associated with what can be called today ‘cultural and/or creative clusters’ (CCC). Such systematic overview is sorely lacking at the moment despite an increasing policy focus on this concept. Indeed, w~~With the rise in popularity of the creative industries discourse across the World in the last 20 years and their use to support economic development at the local and regional levels (ECIA, 2013; 2014; UN, 2010; 2013), the notions of cultural and/or creative cluster, district and quarter have gained in popularity. More specifically, these concepts have been used since the 1990’s in Western Europe (Wynne, 1992; Teo and Huang, 1995) with a growing number of publications both within Western and Central and Eastern European contexts in the last 10 years (see for example, Mommas, 2004, 2009; Cooke and Lazaretti, 2008; Chapain et al., 2010; Kharnaukhova, 2012; Namyslak, 2012). These terms have also been increasingly adopted in North American (Coe, 2001; Vang and Chaminade, 2007; Chapple, Shannon and Martin, 2010; Zukin and Braslow, 2011) and Asian contexts (Keane, 2009; Kong, 2012; O’Connor and Gu, 2014; Zheng and Chan, 2014); and, some literature is emerging on CCC in Latin America (Bleyer and Moja, 2010) and in the Middle East (Ponzini, 2011; Thompson, 2013).

Some useful bespoke academic contributions offering some form of classification and/or typologies based on empirical evidence or academic literature from Western countries have been published in the last 15 years (~~Santagata, 2002~~, Mommas, 2004; ~~Santagata, 2002~~; Cinti, 2008; ~~Evans, 2009a~~, Legner and Ponzini, 2009). While helpful these efforts do not necessarily complement each other and tend to be based on a handful of case studies at one point in time. As such, mirroring the lack of a clear definition (Martin and Sunley, 2003) and unified theoretical approaches on geographic ‘cluster’ (Malmberg and Maskell, 2002; Vorley, 2008), there is a lack of consensus on the definitions, approaches and typologies of CCC (Evans, 2009; Chesnel et al., 2013). This is partly due to the fact that the CCC literature spans various academic disciplines (economic geography, planning...) and that the original confusion about the ‘cluster’ terminology and the diversity of theoretical approaches developed in economic geography to study this phenomenon seems to have transferred to the CCC notion. However, this is also explained by the diversity of the creative clustering phenomena at play, some with little public sector involvement (bottom-up) and others initiated by policymakers with the aims of fostering both economic and non-economic policy objectives (top down) (Mommas, 2009; Evans, 2009). The latter objectives are particular to CCC and originate from the cultural, social and environmental impacts that cultural and creative activities can generate beyond their economic impacts (Matarosso, 1997; Cebr, 2013; Ambrosino, Sagot-Duvaouroux, 2018). However, the prevalence of some objectives over others in cluster initiatives can change over time and across countries depending on the understanding and dominant paradigms (economic, cultural...) associated with the cultural and creative activities and their contributions to society (Andres and Chapain, 2013; UN, 2013). With the increasing transfer/use of the concepts of both cultural and creative industries and cluster from Western countries to other parts of the World, there is a need to better understand how CCC have been defined and studied over time and in different national contexts and to offer a more in-depth overview of the field and identify areas for future research and development.

The aim of this article is to fill a gap in the literature by presenting a systematic literature review (SLR) of the evolution of the terminology and research associated with what can be called today ‘cultural and/or creative clusters’ (CCC). By analysing this literature, we would

like to answer the following questions: What are cultural/creative district, cluster and quarter? When did these concepts appear? Are these concepts overlapping? Who has been writing about these? In which disciplines and in which countries? What has been the evolution in terms of conceptual understanding? What are the themes and dimensions associated with these concepts? How have they been studied and researched (methodologies)? What issues and research gap are present within this literature? –Such systematic overview is sorely lacking at the moment despite an increasing policy focus on this concept. Another objective of this research is to discuss some aspects of the issues of interdisciplinarity researches in Social and Human Sciences. Indeed, the understanding of CCC needs to cross several disciplines (urban planning, economics, management, sociology...). How scholars appropriate the question of interdisciplinarity in their works?

This paper addresses these issues by undertaking a SLR combining a meta-analysis and an in-depth analysis of the most cited papers in the academic literature using the concepts of creative or cultural clusters, districts or quarters (the most popular combination of terms found in the literature). ~~) to answer the following questions: What are cultural/creative district, cluster and quarter? When did these concepts appear? Are these concepts overlapping? Who has been writing about these? In which disciplines and in which countries? What has been the evolution in terms of conceptual understanding? What are the themes and dimensions associated with these concepts? How have they been studied and researched (methodologies)? What issues and research gap are present within this literature?~~Based on our findings, we then present recommendations and guidelines to develop a clearer research approach to study CCC and a renewed research agenda. The next section ~~discusses-describes~~ our methodology while the third ~~one section~~ presents the results from the statistical analysis conducted with our main database. Section four ~~discusses-underlines~~ the thematic analysis undertaken with the most cited papers of our database. ~~The and the~~ last section discusses our key findings and presents our renewed research framework for the field.

## 2. Methodology

Our methodology builds on bibliometric studies and meta-analysis in the economic geography fields such as the ones from Lazerretti et al. (2014), Lazerretti et al. (2015) and Chulanmbaatar et al. (2013) which provide bibliographic overviews on related concepts such as “cluster” or “creative economy” or “cultural and creative industries”. However, we add to these works and methodologies by offering a two steps enquiry and a more in-depth systematic literature review including a thematic analysis. The paper thus presents a more in-depth examination of the specific field of CCC, how it has been studied and identifies areas for further research and development. Creative cluster is only one subset of the work of Lazerretti et al. (2015) and as such their paper does not offer a detailed comprehension of this sub-field in particular. In addition, their work only presents a broad meta-analysis of the evolution of the literature over time in terms of disciplines, authors, etc. Our objectives are to delve deeper and to test the coherence of the field in terms of concepts and definitions, to examine the analytical themes covered and the methodologies used and to suggest some avenues for future research. Indeed, the purpose of systematic reviews is to critically examine and integrate a large body of research in a systematic fashion to identify the state of the knowledge in one area and where gaps exist and to offer either a new theorisation of the field or new avenues for research (Pettigrew and Robert, 2006). For example, the work undertaken by Wilson et al. (2017) on festival research is an interesting point of departure in terms of methodology and approach.

In order to construct our bibliographic database, we use the Scopus database, which is a bibliographic European database with more than 60 million references (including from 21,500 peer-reviewed journals); 24% of them from social sciences disciplines (the focus of this paper). We preferred it to Web of Science as Scopus is more representative of the European and Asian literature in addition to the North American one. Taking into account the various concepts used in the literature, we scanned the social sciences references for any combination of words related to cultural industries and/or creative industries with cluster, district or quarter included in their abstract, title and/or the full body of their text. Table 1 describes the various combinations of terms we opted for; these terms were chosen as they reflect the ones used within the few comprehensive overview and typologies developed in the field (Mommas, 2004; Santagata, 2002, Cinti, 2008; Evans, 2009a; Legner and Ponzini, 2009). The references obtained were then screened to remove any Marketing papers within which similar concepts are adopted in the sense developed by Geert Hofstede's<sup>1</sup> research on cultural cluster understood as cultural groupings as well as any paper for which these terms could refer to cluster statistical analyses, and thus bearing no relation with our topic. This gave us a final number of 226 documents published or included in the Scopus database up to April 2015: 78% being articles, 15% book or book chapters and 6% book reviews; the remaining 1% being editorial or undefined.

Table 1: Combination of terms used to construct the database

	Cluster(s)	District(s)	Quarter(s)
Cultural or cultural industr*	X	X	X
Creative or creative industr*	X	X	X

It is important to recognise the limitations of this approach. First, even though the Scopus database does include papers written in other languages than English, most of our publications are in English, which means that it under-represents papers by non-anglophone authors. Nevertheless, it does include documents and ideas in the field which have a greater likelihood of circulating at the international level and which have been influencing the understanding and academic debate on CCC. Second, we decided to omit on purpose terms which would refer to particular industry such as “film cluster” and “media cluster” etc. as our objective is to comprehend and test the unity of the CCC field as a whole overall and not of cluster of particular creative sector. As such if these papers do not include one of the combinations of terms described in Table 1, they are omitted from our database.

In order to offer a comprehensive analysis of the understanding of CCC and the various dimensions associated with the academic research around this concept, the paper presents two types of analysis: one offering a meta-analysis of the debate and one focusing on a more in-depth thematic and critical analysis of what has been said.

First, we conducted an overall descriptive analysis of our entire database of 226 references: It allowed us to identify when and where the different concepts associated with the CCC notion appeared, how they have been used, by which authors, in which disciplines and which journals, tracing their dissemination over time including potential complementarities and overlaps.

<sup>1</sup> See for example, Hofstede, Geert (December 1983). "Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values". *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Johnson Graduate School of Management, Cornell University. **28** (4): 625–629.

Second, we undertook a more in-depth statistical and thematic analysis of the 48 most cited papers among our 226 references i.e. cited 10 times or more. This consisted in looking in details at the conceptual definitions of our key concepts offered within these papers and in undertaking a systematic classification of the themes and methodologies used as well as the types of case studies examined. The in-depth thematic analysis was undertaken by the two authors of this paper independently who reviewed the 48 papers and coded them accordingly to specific dimensions and themes: names of the authors, year of publication, journal of publication, disciplines of the authors, terminologies of the concepts used, existence or not of definition of these concepts within the paper, types of activities and geographic scales associated with the cluster, methodologies adopted and themes touched upon in the analysis i.e. economic, cultural, social, urban, policy, etc. The themes identified emerged using both a deductive and inductive approaches. First, we looked at the dimensions that authors who have offered typologies of cultural and creative clusters have associated with these concepts, for example, Evans (2009a). Second, we merged these with the main analytical dimensions reflected in the keywords that the authors of our 48 most-cited papers chose to describe their papers. This led to the emergence of 20 main themes – see Appendix. Each paper was then analysed and coded to decide if it discussed each of these individual themes or not and, more importantly, if these were actually analysed within the paper, not just mentioned in passing. Differences in coding were discussed until a consensus was achieved to ensure inter rater reliability. Our in-depth analysis consists in a descriptive statistical overview and a critical analysis of these key variables and themes.

### **3. Trends in the literature: Meta-analysis of the entire database (226 references)**

#### 3.1 The use of concepts over time

While the first document with the concept of ‘cultural district’ appeared in 1986 in a German document looking at tourism and cultural district (Grahn, 1986), only five papers using this concept were published in the 1990s. The amount of literature on creative clusters has only grown significantly after the mid-2000’s, with 85% of the publications having been published since 2007; and 60% since 2010. The first article including the concept of ‘creative’ cluster, district or quarter did not appear before 2003 whereas the concept of cultural or creative “cluster” was introduced in 2002 (see Figures 1a and 1b). Nevertheless, since then, these two concepts – cultural cluster and creative cluster - have grown in popularity and are present in 53% of all the references in the database.

A detailed analysis of the distribution of the six key concepts (Table 2) highlights that while the word “cultural” has been applied relatively evenly to quarter, district or cluster, the word “creative” tend to be associated with cluster mostly – this may be linked to the popularity of both terms and their emergence at the same time i.e. at the beginning of the 2000s. It may also be explained by the types of activities and analysis considered. The term cluster being associated with more value chain oriented analysis, which ties in with the increased economic focus that the shift from cultural to creative tended to indicate (Flew and Cunningham, 2010).

**“Insert Figure 1a: Cultural/creative district, cluster or quarter within the 226 academic references – 1986 to 2014.”**

**“Insert Figure 1b: Cultural versus creative district, cluster or quarter within the 226 academic references – 1986 to 2014”**

#### 3.2 An apparent overlap in terminology

Forty-eight percent of these references tend to include more than one term when refereeing to the CCC concept suggesting some confusion and/or overlap in understanding between cultural and or creative industries and/or cluster, district and or quarter. This overlap has increased over time with references using on average 2.5 of our 6 key concepts since 2011 (with some displaying all six key concepts) compared to an average of 1.5 until 2010.

Examining this terminology association in more details (Table 2), we notice that the terms ‘cultural cluster’, ‘cultural quarter’, ‘creative district’ and to a lesser extent ‘creative cluster’ have a high degree of association with other terms. In more than half of the references, the term ‘cultural quarter’, ‘creative district’ or ‘creative cluster’ are associated with the term ‘cultural cluster’ whereas two fifth of the time the term ‘cultural district’ and ‘creative quarter’ are associated with the term ‘cultural cluster’. These strong associations raise questions as to whether these terms are used interchangeably or designate different phenomena.

**Table 2: Association and overlap of our key terms within the 226 references**

	cultural district	cultural cluster	cultural quarter	creative district	creative cluster	creative quarter	Total
cultural district	0%	36%	29%	18%	18%	14%	23%
cultural cluster	43%	NA	55%	55%	59%	43%	27%
cultural quarter	25%	39%	NA	36%	32%	29%	20%
creative district	2%	6%	5%	NA	3%	0%	3%
creative cluster	20%	55%	42%	27%	NA	14%	25%
creative quarter	1%	3%	3%	0%	1%	NA	2%
<i>Total of associations</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	
<i>Ratio of overlap</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>138%</i>	<i>132%</i>	<i>136%</i>	<i>113%</i>	<i>100%</i>	

Note: the ratio of overlap is calculated by dividing the number of associations with any of the other 5 concepts by the number of documents with the concept in question.

### 3.3 Diversity of usage across geographical areas

The majority of publications on the topic come from Europe (62%), then North America (14%), Asia (12%), Australia (8%), Latin America (2%) and the Middle East (2%). Figure 2 showed that the most prolific countries are the UK and Italy, and then the USA, Australia, the Netherlands, Canada, Spain, China, Germany and Hong Kong; these countries account for more than two-third of all publications.

Some concepts seem to be geographically linked – see Table 3. For example, “cultural district” is much more associated with publications from Italy and North America, “cultural cluster” with publications from Australia, “cultural quarter” with UK and Ireland, “creative district” with North America, Asia and the rest of Western Europe, “creative cluster” with Australia and Asia and “creative quarter” with UK, Ireland and the rest of Western Europe (except Italy) as well as Asia.

First, these associations can be explained by the origin and the more prevalent usage of the term creative industries in Australia and the UK and then its later spread across Europe and



Asia (Flew and Cunningham, 2010; Chapain and Stryjiakiewicz, 2017). However, the European discourse had retained the terms cultural industries or cultural and creative industries to insist on the cultural elements inherent to these industries over the more economic and market driven approaches promoted in the UK and Australia (Hartley, 2005; Andres and Chapain, 2013; Chapain and Stryjiakiewicz, 2017).

Second, the apparent preference for the terms quarter, district or cluster across different countries seem to be either associated with 1) the usage of distinctive terminology to name a geographical/administrative section of an urban settlement (quarter/district) and/or 2) the influence of different discourses to explain and characterise the agglomeration of economic activities in space and which term is usually adopted to explain this agglomeration (Ortega-Colomer et al., 2016). For example, Italy has had a long standing tradition of studying the concept of industrial district within the economic geography literature to designate the agglomeration of firms within a particular geographical area (ibid.) whereas the concept of quarter has been predominant within the urban planning literature in the UK, resulting in the prevalent usage of cultural district in Italy or creative quarter in the UK (Pyke et al., 1990).

As such, our findings allude to a mix of overlaps and transfers between the terms “cultural industries” versus “creative industries” and between “quarter”, “district” and “cluster” and their association to designate the clustering phenomenon studied either explained by the usual denomination of particular geographical/administrative areas or in relation to the disciplinary understanding of this agglomeration phenomena depending on countries. The question is nevertheless whether authors use and study these concepts interchangeably or define them in different ways to discuss different realities. We discuss this in the section on definitions later on.

**“Insert Figure 2: Publications by country of origin of the main author – 226 references”**

**Table 3: Usage of the key concepts by geographical areas.**

	cultural district	cultural cluster	cultural quarter	creative district	creative cluster	creative quarter	<b>Total</b>
Europe	57%	66%	75%	45%	57%	71%	<b>62%</b>
<i>UK and Ireland</i>	9%	17%	43%	9%	12%	29%	<b>20%</b>
<i>Italy</i>	30%	19%	13%	0%	16%	0%	<b>15%</b>
<i>Rest of Western Europe</i>	13%	23%	13%	36%	23%	43%	<b>21%</b>
<i>Central and Eastern Europe</i>	4%	7%	6%	0%	6%	0%	<b>5%</b>
North America	26%	6%	6%	27%	5%	14%	<b>14%</b>
North Africa and Middle East	4%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	<b>2%</b>
Australia	0%	11%	8%	0%	17%	14%	<b>8%</b>
Latin America	1%	2%	0%	9%	3%	0%	<b>2%</b>
Asia	11%	14%	9%	18%	17%	0%	<b>12%</b>
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	<b>4%</b>

3.4 A multidisciplinary field: trends in terms of journals and disciplines

The 226 references found spread across 131 publications, including books. The journal articles, editorials and book reviews on cultural and creative cluster, district and quarter span more than 120 journals indicating that this is a popular topic. 31 journals include more than

one reference and account for more than half of the references (Figure 3). Six journals, *City Culture and Society*, *European Planning Studies*, *Urban Studies*, *Journal of Urban Design*, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* and *Planning Research and Practice* have published 23% of all the references highlighting an apparent concentration around this topic. The academic foci of these journals suggest the multidisciplinary nature of the concept of “cultural and creative cluster” as they cover disciplines such as planning, geography, urban and regional studies, architecture, cultural studies and policy (see Figure 4). While 35% of the publications are associated with geography, 23% with urban and regional studies and 21% with planning, more than 10% of publications are published in journals associated with policy, cultural studies and economics and more than 5% with business, sociology and architecture. Other disciplines include information science, tourism, environmental science, education, engineering... These findings show how CCC as objects of study cross various theoretical underpinnings. This multi-disciplinarity could explain in part the conceptual overlaps and transfers discussed in the previous section.

**“Insert Figure 3: Journal with more than one publication on CCC – 226 references.”**

**“Insert Figure 4: Disciplines of the publications – 226 references.”**

#### **4. In-depth analysis: the 48 most cited papers (>10)**

The statistical overview offered in the previous section raise interesting findings and questions that we explored in more depth by looking at the 48 most cited papers within our database.

##### **4.1 Year of publication, geography and disciplines of the papers**

Among our database, 48 journal articles had been cited more than 10 times up to April 2015. The distribution of the paper across time follows the distribution of the main database with more than 60% of the papers having been published since 2007. The earliest papers published in the 1980s and 1990s, despite their longevity, record between 20 and 80 citation whereas the most recent papers published after 2011 record between 10 and 50 citations; the latter can be explained partly due to the more limited time lag. The two most cited papers, however, date from the early 2000s: a paper by Graeme Evans in the UK published in 2003 (cited 232 times) and another one by Hans Mommas in the Netherlands published in 2004 (cited 196 times). Eight out of the 12 papers with more than 50 citations originate from the UK – highlighting the British influence within the CCC debate. This geographical dominance echoes the overall database but seems to be more marked within the most cited papers. 80% of these papers originate from Europe; half from the UK or Ireland and 17% from Italy. The rest comes from either North America and Australia (14%) and then Asia (6%). This highlights the origin and predominance of this concept in the Western World and principally Europe with Asia catching up and a marked absence of other countries and continents yet in terms of the circulation and spread of ideas (as measured in terms of citation).

While the multi-disciplinary aspect of the debate is still present within these papers, we observe more consistency in terms of disciplines with 42% of them having been written by planners, 19% by geographers and 26% by economists or business academics.

##### **4.2 Methodologies**

These papers display various methodologies and research approaches even though many are not always very explicit about their methods. Nineteen percent of the papers primarily consist in a review of the literature. The remaining papers are based on a wide array of research epistemologies: 35% use an inductive approach, 25% a deductive one and 21% use mixed methods; nevertheless, qualitative research design tend to prevail (50%) with only 31% of papers adopting a quantitative approach. In addition, the great majority of papers offer either a case study analysis (56%) or a comparative case study analysis (27%). Most (90%) analyse secondary data with only 40% offering some primary data gathering. Interestingly, these papers tend to study creative clustering through a longitudinal perspective (73%); this is consistent with a case study analysis approach but also with the focus of many papers on policy analysis. However, heuristically, a minority of papers offer a clear analytical and theoretical framework to examine the CCC concept (42%) with only 63% making the effort to provide a clear definition of the concept they study. This lack of clear theoretical underpinning may be due to the high level of multi-disciplinarity displayed by the majority of authors. This suggests a difficulty in comprehending CCC as an object of study in using only one disciplinary perspective but may render more difficult the assemblage of theories from distinctive fields. Indeed, only one quarter of the papers present some new theoretical development with regards to the concept offering either new definitions (25%) and/or a form of cluster typology (13%). Multi-disciplinarity is often a challenging exercise to practice. However, we may deplore that many papers simply offer a recount of the development of one cluster within a particular city with a focus on regeneration and policy process, not always testing any hypothesis or offering any theorisation afterwards. As a consequence we tend to be in the presence of a collection of very disparate stories which does not help in dressing a clear theoretical overview of the phenomenon in question.

#### 4.3 Scale and geographical location of the CCC studied

A look at the scale associated with the CCC studied show that 65% of the 48 most cited papers tend to consider only one geographical scale with regards to their object of study; the rest associating more than one scale. Among these, the most common ones are either the neighbourhood scale (42%) or the city scale (30%); other scales include more micro levels such as building (3%) and street (7%) or more macro levels such as sub-regional (13%) or regional (5%) scales. This demonstrates that, in general, cultural and creative clusters are understood as mostly happening within a restricted scale but that they seem to cover very diverse geographical dynamics as well, with predominance for neighbourhood and cities.

An examination of the creative cluster case studies examined within these papers also indicates an over-dominance of Western examples, and thus some questions arise with regards to the applicability of these papers' findings across other geographical contexts. Indeed, the great majority of creative clusters mentioned or examined in the 48 most cited papers are either from the UK (46%) or the rest of Europe (44%). Nevertheless, 19% of the examples are from the Canada or the USA, 13% from Asia and there are some examples from Australia (2%) and the Middle East (2%). These are overall located within an urban area or constitute a city as a whole; the most frequent examples (at least present twice) being in London, Manchester, Sheffield, Glasgow, Birmingham, Belfast, Dublin, Dundee, Berlin, Barcelona, New York, Toronto, Singapore and Beijing. This suggests an over-dominance of medium or large metropolitan areas.

#### 4.4 Concepts and definitions

The usage of our key concepts across the 48 most cited papers confirm the predominance of the terms cultural quarter, cultural district and cultural and/or creative cluster. However, the majority of these papers (58%) tend to only use ~~only using~~ one term to designate CCC, suggesting again more consistency in terms of terminology. In addition, we note a higher dominance of the term cultural quarter (33% versus 20%) and a lesser presence of creative cluster (16% versus 25%) compared to the main database. Part of these differences could be explained by the fact that it is less likely that the most cited papers would be the most recent papers – as such, the recent popularity of “creative industries” and “cluster” identified in the overall database could be downplayed here. In addition, this may reflect the more importance dominance of planning and geographic disciplinary perspectives within these most cited papers versus economic or business compared to the overall database.

Only 60% of these most cited works make the effort to provide a definition of the CCC concepts they use. Amongst these papers, only 40% offer new definitions, so only a quarter of all these papers. This confirms the lack of theorisation within this literature mentioned above, when looking at the preponderance of narrative description of particular case studies in terms of methodology. Nevertheless, a detailed analysis of the papers that include some definitional effort about their object of study reveals some interesting trends and insights on the understanding of CCC and its various conceptual declinations.

Overall, this analysis shows that out of the 3 concepts there seems to be a greater consensus around the term of cultural/creative district. Ten out of the 20 papers which mention cultural/creative districts offer a definition of their concepts. Most of these works seem to derive from a transposition of the model of the 1970’s Italian industrial district describing the industrial production system developed by small firms from similar or related industry in specific places and their relationship with the local cultural and knowledge. Within these publications, the work of Santagata (2002:11) has been quite seminal in defining the notion of cultural district i.e. *“Cultural districts are defined by the production of idiosyncratic goods based on creativity and intellectual property. The movie industry, the audio-visual sector, the extensive domain of industrial design and the production of arts and crafts, museum services and the eno-gastronomic complex all draw their inspiration from some cultural link with their original community.”* Similar understanding can be found in the definitions offered by Lazerretti (2003), Mizzau and Montanari (2008), Ponzini (2009), Bader and Sharenberg (2010), Arnaboldi and Spiller (2010) and Markusen and Gadwa (2010) with some indicating the work of Santagata as a starting point. A couple of works (Currier, 2008; Zukin and Braslow, 2011) break apart from this relative homogenous understanding of the notion of cultural district and characterise them as places where artists live or where they can meet their audience or place where they can express their differences offering a less economic and more cultural and social underpinning to their development. Finally, cultural/creative districts can be either planned or organic initiatives.

The term of cultural quarter seems to also benefit from some relative coherent understanding ~~with a number of works providing some overlapping conceptual characterisation (Brown et al. 2000; Newman and Smith, 2000; Wansborough and Magean, 2000; Montgomery, 2004; McCarthy, 2005, 2006a, 2006b; Ponzini, 2009; O’Connor and Gu, 2010).~~ ~~and be linked to the idea of the physical concentration of cultural activities with the aim to foster cultural production and/or consumption through the advantages of economies of urbanisation (i.e. diversity and mixed usage); the concept is nevertheless also used with a wider remit in terms of branding and tourism.~~ The term quarter in itself denotes ~~the~~ ~~is~~ importance ~~of at focus of the concept on the~~ geographical location of ~~cultural~~ ~~these~~ activities within an easily delimited

territory or administrative unit. ~~O'Connor and Gu (2010: 126) summarise these debate by specifying that the notion of cultural quarters emerged within the regeneration agenda of the 1980s and that it may encompass various models but that "They stressed the benefits of colocation for both production and consumption; the mix of public and private actors; diverse leisure, retail, and entertainment offers; and a wider concern with their contribution to, and benefit from, the image of the city within which they were located."~~ Initial popular definitions produced in the 2000s by urban planners and designers such as Wansborough and Magean (2000) define these as geographical concentrations of cultural activities with a number of key characteristics i.e. a central and inner-city location, a mix of cultural facilities providing both cultural production and consumption activities with ideally linkages between them, mixed usage in terms of economic diversity of businesses, and the presence of public arts. O'Connor and Gu (2010: 126) specify that the notion of cultural quarters emerged within the regeneration agenda of the 1980s and that it may encompass various models but that "They stressed the benefits of colocation for both production and consumption; the mix of public and private actors; diverse leisure, retail, and entertainment offers; and a wider concern with their contribution to, and benefit from, the image of the city within which they were located." Mc Carthy (2005a, 2005b and 2006), a prolific researcher in this area, adds that these cultural quarters are expected to lead to long term economic synergies. Montgomery (2004) insists on the role of educational institutions whereas Ponzini (2009) focuses on the preservation of cultural heritage. Finally, Newman and Smith (2000) emphasises that this local cultural production sits within global production networks. In doing so, they situate cultural quarters within a more global dynamic of attraction, branding and city positioning.

In contrast, the cultural/creative cluster notion seems to display a much wider array of definitions and understanding. Within the nine papers which offer some definition of cultural/creative cluster, many tend to associate this concept with the Porterian rhetoric of economic cluster linked to the notion of economies of agglomeration and value chain (Bayliss, 2007; Evans, 2009; Ponzini, 2009; O'Connor and Gu, 2010). As such, these papers focus more on the cultural/creative production side. However, Evans (2009) highlights some confusion in this understanding between the spatial clustering of cultural activities and the existence of actual economic relationships between them whereas Zheng (2010) and Zhao (2010) suggest some issue in the transfer of this concept in China with some potential overlap with the notion of "*cultural quarters*" referred to by Montgomery (2003, 2004) or the '*cultural clusters*' of Mommaas (2004) found in Western countries" (Zhao, 2010: 76-77, 84). The paper from Stern and Seifert (2010) also depart from the Porterian notion to something resembling more the notion of cultural quarter i.e. favouring both cultural production and consumption and a wider remit encompassing economic, cultural and social dynamics. In contrast, Gospodini (2006) use the term creative cluster, more in a geographical and urban planning sense, to characterise the emergence of redevelopment projects in the urban landscape either in the centre, inner city or peripheries and including various economic activities including cultural ones. Finally, while Mommas (2004) does not necessarily offer a definition of cultural cluster per se, he constructs a detailed typology of what he calls cultural clusters; his work has been quite influential in the field. Nevertheless, his typology is based on specific types of cultural clusters i.e. local strategies of development or redevelopment around cultural activities led by public and/or private actors. In this sense, the concept of cultural clusters proposed by Mommas has more affinity with the notion of cultural quarters mentioned previously.

Across the three concepts, while there is an acknowledgment that some of the clustering phenomena studied are organic, many relate to public and top-down initiatives. In addition, while there seems to be a degree of coherence amongst some key authors in terms of their understanding, others use these concepts in completely different ways, sometimes, without necessarily explaining or justifying their choice of terminology, thus generating confusion and overlap. At times, this can be explained by their different disciplinary approaches (geography, urban planning or economics) or geographical origins and thus the locational contexts within which they study these clusters/quarters/districts. However, this contributes to the confusion surrounding CCC. Addressing this contextual issue in a more systematic way would be an interesting avenue for further research.

#### 4.5 Main themes within these most cited papers

An analysis of the themes mentioned and analysed within these papers demonstrates that they touch upon a number of dimensions from 1) conceptual and development/typology; 2) economic value chain and the influence of the territory, milieu of innovation and networks; 3) global positioning, city attractiveness, tourism 4) urban regeneration, policy analysis, governance and policy evaluation and transfer 4) urban regeneration, place making, branding and or governance and cluster policies, 2) cultural and social dynamics of clusters and how clusters fit into global creative city dynamics, 3) economic value chain and 4) developing CCC typologies or making a theoretical contribution to the understanding and definition of the phenomenon/concept — see the previous section. These dimensions are not mutually exclusive and confirm that the CCC concept is at the cross-over/crossover of various avenues of enquiry and analytical dimensions.

More specifically, an overwhelming majority of papers (83%) tend to present a form of policy analysis of cluster initiative and/or consider the production side of the cluster i.e. how the cluster is the location of cultural and creative production in a wider sense including heritage and museum activities. The rhetoric of creative clustering within these papers seems to be strongly related to urbanisation effects (71% of the papers) and cultural idiosyncracies (69%) and on how public and private actors are organised in terms of governance (69%). Other themes touch upon issues around urban development i.e. how clusters are fostering local attractivity for residents, create gentrification, or are part of large development or flagship projects or tourism. Around two-third of papers consider a more economical approach studying issues of value chain, attractivity and social networking. Interestingly, more than half of the papers focus their analysis on process of regeneration, usually associated with a cluster policy analysis or examine to what extent clustering is linked to cultural consumption and branding. Only 46% of the papers include a global dimension in their analysis with as little as 23% looking at global networking. This suggests that the local dynamic is quite crucial when looking at creative clustering, confirming our findings on the scales associated with CCC.

Overall, despite a number of overlaps, two broad themes seem to emerge which we discuss in the next two sections.

##### 4.5.1 Economic dynamics of clusters, globalization and urban Echange

The question of the economic foundations and the dynamics of cultural clusters is discussed in 17 of the 48 papers but it is rarely the central objective of the article. With few exceptions, these articles make little reference to the economic theory of industrial clusters. This is probably due to the fact that our database did not take into account the articles including in

their title, summary or keywords expressions like "media clusters", "music clusters", etc. These works may have a greater tendency to use analysis inspired by business economics (see Karlson and Picard (2011) for an example about media clusters); if they were included, this could change our results slightly. However, this denotes that CCC as a field of study may need a more multidisciplinary approach to reflect the variety of cultural and creative sectors involved and their distinctive relationship with the territory as demonstrated in in-depth analysis of their geographical concentrations (see Chapain et al. 2010, for example). As such, many papers, while examining these economic dynamics, also study associated cultural and social dynamics.

Most of these articles are based on case studies, using existing documents and/or qualitative interviews. Some mobilise quantitative data to measure cluster dynamics and evaluate their performance but they are few in number. For example, in a Krugmanian perspective (ref:1991), Lazeretti et al. (2008) analyse the concentration of cultural and creative industries in Spain and Italy and demonstrate the strong attractiveness of large cities for these activities. Alternatively, studying the case of Philadelphia, Stern and Seifert (2010) distinguish neighbourhoods in terms of their high concentration of cultural activities and test the relationship between these concentrations and neighbourhoods' economic performance across the city. In a more targeted way, Hellmanzik (2010), using art prize auction databases, shows that artists who have worked in large art scenes tend to benefit from an earlier career than more isolated artists.

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The papers using qualitative or mixed methods approaches can be split in three categories. A first series of articles analyses the conditions of appearance and development of CCC. They mainly adopt a Porterian perspective, by analysing the production and value chain of these CCC in a context of globalisation. They highlight the territorial factors that encourage an agglomeration process (history, social structure, shared values ...) (Van Heur, 2008; Bader and Scharenberg, 2010). The development of such clusters in metropolitan areas of various sizes are the subject of numerous papers either looking at one industry for an entire city such as Basset et al. (2002) on Bristol or particular neighbourhoods within a city such as Vang and Chaminade 2007) on Liberty Village in Toronto. A few authors focus more particularly on rural areas such as Mizzau and Montanari (2008) on the Piedmont district in Italy.

Beyond strictly economic dynamics, several articles adopt a systemic approach to analyse the relations between the agglomeration of creative enterprises and the overall dynamics of a territory (Crewe and Beaverstock, 1998; Brown et al. 2000; Lazeretti, 2003; Chapain and Comunian, 2010). "*Rather than only considering the importance of the clustering dimension of creative firms, it seems more important to focus on the wider system that enables and supports the development of creative individuals and their activities in a specific urban and regional context*" (Chapain et Comunian, 2010: 721). Studying the case of the Lace Market Quartier in Nottingham, Crewe and Beaverstock (1998) examine the links between cultural production and consumption and lifestyle in such creative neighbourhoods while Brown et al. (2000) point out, using the examples of Manchester (Northern Quarter) and Sheffield (Cultural Industries Quarter), how networks and third places - where innovation may be tested - play an important role in the economic development of these neighbourhoods, more than public policies and facilities: "*It is these 'scenes', 'milieus', 'happening places' which are the real context for a local music industry rather than 'facilities'. The exchange of knowledge and information is accompanied by a validation, a testing of product*". (ibid.: p446).

A second group of qualitative or mixed methods contributions insist on the transformation of artistic districts into places of attractiveness for the "creative class" or tourists. They highlight the transformation of organic cultural clusters dominated by logics of production in "cultural quarter" marked by logics of consumption. Zukin, and Braslow (2011) in describing the life cycle of creative neighbourhoods in New York, reveal a dynamic that sees artistic production gradually replaced by creative consumption services such as luxury shops, art galleries, trendy cafes ...) in some gentrification process. Pratt (2009) finds the same evolution in the Hoxton district in London whereas a similar dynamic is observed in some Asian cities such as Beijing (Currier, 2008) but with some distinctive features linked to the Chinese context. The potential conflicts between locals and tourists that these processes may generate are pointed out by Teo and Huang (1995: 611) early on who studied the development of the Civic and Cultural District in Singapore: "*The museumization of places may cater to tourist taste and preferences, but Singaporeans feel alienated from erstwhile vernacular places*". From this point of view, the article appears as a forerunner of works that compare development strategies based on the attractiveness of tourists or new residents and those more biased towards the needs of residents.

A third group of qualitative and mixed methods contribution has as main objective a reflection on the contemporary city as a "milieu" of innovation and creativity in the new knowledge economy and study the place of artistic activities in these cities and economies. They partially overlap the papers that propose a systematic approach of CCC. These works are mainly theoretical and often take the form of a critical survey of the literature (Richard, 2011; Stock, 2012; Pilaty and Tremblay, 2007). They present the genealogy of city theories, define and compare different concepts mobilised to describe the contemporary city or the transformations of contemporary economies and tend to deepen one in particular within their papers: Advanced Cultural District (Pilaty and Tremblay, 2007), City of Arts (Lazzeretti, 2003), Informational City (Stock, 2011), value chain (Pratt, 2008), creative tourism (Richard, 2011), etc. These papers mobilise three theoretical corpuses: the information city inspired by Manuel Castells (1989, 2010), the creative cities in line with the works of Jane Jacobs (1961) and Richard Florida (2002) or the creative clusters in reference to Michael Porter (1998).

#### 4.5.2 Urban regeneration policies, place making, branding, governance and gentrification.

More than half of the papers focus on issues linked to urban regeneration, place making and branding policies as well as their governance implications. Amongst these, the great majority focus on this topic only. The remaining papers also discuss some of the other economic and/or cultural and social dimensions mentioned in the previous section. While some of these CCC emerged organically and are then supported by some policies, many have been implemented and developed through public initiative as a main tool for the regeneration or redevelopment of some former industrial or derelict areas.

Some papers (Montgomery, 1995, 2003, 2004; Evans, 2009b; Markusen and Gadwa, 2010) offer more systematic overview of CCC policies or their use in fostering cultural, economic and urban planning development with some effort at classification and theorisation, emphasising some specific issues. Other authors either describe or examine particular initiatives by looking at single case studies (Newman and Smith, 2000; De Franz, 2005; Mc Carthy, 2005; Bayliss, 2007; Porter and Barber, 2007; Cartier, 2008; Mizzau and Montanari, 2008; Sabate and Toroni, 2008; Catungal et al., 2009; Gwee, 2009; Ponzini, 2009, 2011; O'Connor and Gu, 2010; Wansborough et al., 2010; Zheng, 2010; and Zhao, 2010) or



comparative case studies (Montgomery, 2004; Hemphil et al., 2004; Mc Carthy, 2005 and 2006a) with various degrees of theorisation.

CCC initiatives have been used as a tool within many local cultural industries policies across the World (Evans, 2009b). Evans (2009b: 1013) notes that these policies, however, tend to focus on “emergent and still dependent on public expenditures” clusters and to be part of urban regeneration, conservation/heritage or cultural tourism strategies. However, some authors distinguish between “building-centred approaches” where cultural quarters are mostly associated with developing infrastructure and flagship projects versus “people-centred approaches” which reconcile cultural production and consumption around some key activities (Newman and Smith, 2000). Both approaches can also be combined.

Many contributions come from an urban planning perspective and examine how CCC contribute to urban regeneration mechanisms. In a series of seminal papers, Montgomery (1995, 2003 and 2004) examines what makes cultural quarter’s strategies successful and develops an analytical framework to characterise their necessary conditions and success factors with regards to 1) their constituting activities, 2) their built form and 3) the meaning attached to them. How to design the built environment (urban design, public art...) to support cultural regeneration and the development of cultural quarters is also the focus of Wansborough and Magean (2000), Mc Carthy (2005, 2006a), Sabate and Tironi (2008)... Some argue, however, that the cultural image promoted through these interventions may not always correspond to the local identity of the area in question if it does not take into account its heritage and history (Mc Carthy 2005, 2006a). Within this literature, the development of CCC around major flagship projects is also debated both in terms of the reconciliation of the newly local image promoted with the area original characteristics but also in terms of the potential conflicts between this local image and global city positioning ~~positioning~~ (De Frantz, 2006; Sabate and Tironi, 2008; Ponzini, 2011).

Many papers clearly illustrate the issues and conflicts that such projects can generate and analyse the policy processes and the mechanisms put in place to support the convergence of the interests of the actors involved in their development. This is why Ponzini (2009) points towards the need to recognise the role of existing cultural policy networks within the implementation of these projects and why a majority of contributions examine the related governance arrangements put in place i.e. Newman et al. (2000), Catungal et al. (2009), etc. Some like Porter and Barber (2007) discuss the types of strategies that the public sector can adopt in this process i.e. “hands-off” or “hands-on” and what these could look like in practice in terms of planning governance. They recommend an inclusive governance, i.e. the involvement of a wide spectrum of creative and local actors, within “people-centred approaches”. O’Connor and Gu (2010) suggest the creation of specific intermediary agencies to mediate between creative people and policy makers within these processes. Finally, Mc Carthy (2006b) recommends, like other authors, 1) some flexibility in the forms that cultural quarters’ strategies are implemented to better accommodate local needs and circumstances and 2) an acknowledgment that both formal and informal/organic forms can work.

Nevertheless, while many contributions describe and analyse CCC policies, some authors point towards the need for more evaluation of these policies from the start. Markusen and Gadwa (2010), for example, argue that more research should be carried out to estimate the costs, risks and impacts of these policies before they are implemented and suggest that their outcomes should be monitored more closely with regards to their implicit and explicit original intents to better inform policy makers. In this vein, some papers take a more evaluative stance and either develop evaluative framework (Hemphil et al., 2004) or examine

in details the failure of specific policy induced cluster (Bayliss, 2007). Findings from these contributions suggest that such policy initiatives need to better build on the creative capacity on the ground, be realistic in terms of their objectives and recognise the complexity required in fostering such creative milieu while also acknowledging the role of luck in the success of such projects.

Finally, a number of papers study the development of cultural/creative quarter, district and cluster in Beijing (Currier 2008; Zhao, 2010) and Shanghai (Zheng, 2010) in China, and in Singapore (Gwee, 2009). Interestingly, these papers demonstrate some similarities in the way some of these organic initiatives emerged and are then supported by policy makers but may lead to some distinctive redevelopment processes, notably in terms of gentrification as discussed above (Currier, 2008). Finally, CCC initiatives implemented by local governments in China tend to be marked by a more “entrepreneurial” approach of the state where these public initiatives are designed to generate revenue, leading the local government to play the role of a market player (Zheng, 2010; Zhao, 2010). In addition, some of these policies are conceived with a wider economic remit i.e. to support creativity and innovation with some amalgamation with the development of knowledge-based clusters, like in Singapore (Gwee, 2009). These papers suggest a need for further research on the transfer of these concepts and policies within the Asian context but also in the emerging literature from Latin America and the Middle East.

##### **5. Discussion and conclusion: developing a clearer analytical framework and approach to study CCC and towards a renewed research agenda on CCC**

This systematic review and analysis of the literature on the CCC phenomenon offers a thorough understanding and critical overview of the Anglophone (mostly) literature published on this topic since the mid 80's. This SLR reveals some interesting and crucial insights on the lack of coherence in terms of the various concepts used to study this phenomenon, the main understanding, themes and dimensions associated with CCC and on some of the weaknesses and gaps in terms of its theorisation that are worth discussing. Our findings indicate how the various concepts used to describe the CCC have varied over time in terms of their popularity. In addition, they tend to have some unequal distribution across countries. These two trends may be explained by the popularity of either the cultural industries versus creative industries' terminology within the country considered and/or the dominance of economic or planning approaches to apprehend the clustering of cultural and creative activities and as such the terminology used in terms of “quarter”, “district” or “cluster”; the latter often linked to this clustering is mostly understood within these countries. In addition, over time, we notice a shift from cultural to creative and from quarter to cluster in the terminology to designate CCC. This reflects the rise of both the creative industries and the cluster discourses across the World and the increasing popularity of development strategies based on a more economic understanding of the role of culture within society.

Our discussion is organized around 4 points: we ask ourselves first of all about the meaning of the semantic shift leading to favor today the concept of creative cluster. This reflection leads us to discuss the issues of interdisciplinarity in the analysis of territorial strategies. Third, This section concludes with suggestions for the CCC research agenda

1- From the cultural district to the creative cluster: Disciplinary expansion at the cost of a methodological and conceptual blur

Our findings indicate how the various concepts used to describe the CCC have varied over time in terms of their popularity. In addition, they tend to have some unequal distribution across countries. These two trends may be explained by the popularity of either the cultural industries versus creative industries' terminology within the country considered and/or the dominance of economic or planning approaches to apprehend the clustering of cultural and creative activities and as such the terminology used in terms of "quarter", "district" or "cluster"; the latter often linked to this clustering is mostly understood within these countries. In addition, over time, we notice a shift from cultural to creative and from quarter to cluster in the terminology to designate CCC. This reflects the rise of both the creative industries and the cluster discourses across the World and the increasing popularity of development strategies based on a more economic understanding of the role of culture within society.

Historically, two schools/regions have primarily studied CCCs. In the United Kingdom, the industrial decline provoked, earlier than elsewhere, the appearance of wastelands on the outskirts of city centers quickly invested by artists. Urban planners have studied the dynamics driven by the top-down or bottom-up development programs of these neighbourhoods, which are qualified as cultural. And economists have begun to measure the economic weight of cultural industries to support these development strategies. London, Manchester, Liverpool, have been the subject of numerous studies highlighting both the effects of attractiveness and economic renewal of this artistic specialization but also the gentrification associated with it. These analyzes echoed earlier and pioneer works (Zukin, Jacob) on the effects of urbanization.

At the same time, in Italy, the initial question was to analyze the specific economic dynamics created by the embedding of organizational networks and individuals within variable-scale economic spaces called districts, with reference to Marshall's founding works. This has resulted in a very economical approach to CCCs as cultural districts.

In the 2000s, through the mediatization of Porter's works, the term cluster has gradually replaced in the international literature to those of neighborhood and district as shown in our study. As an economic concept characterizing territorial strategies for organizations aiming innovation and pooling, the term cluster was then mobilized by other disciplines to more generally characterize territorial development strategies through culture. The economic dynamics of clusters have been drowned in multidisciplinary approaches that often confuse neighborhoods, quarters and clusters.

At the same time, many works have focused on the creativity of cities or certain types of workers (creative class), placing "creative" actors at the center of the transformations of capitalism and the renewal of cities. The term creative, more encompassing but also more vague has replaced that of cultural.

The survey of the literature that we have carried out thus reveals a gradual shift in notions of cultural districts (initially borne by urban planners and developers) or of cultural districts initiated by economists, to that of a creative cluster, carried by everyone, but considerably more blurred. Many articles consulted thus do not give definition of concepts and use them as synonyms.

This evolution is probably not neutral. It reflects an instrumentalisation, conscious or not, of urban planning policies based on cultural industries for economic purposes (Mortreau, 2016). The gentrification phenomena engendered by these policies are very quickly highlighted in

the studies consulted, but most often to denounce the economic logic of urban strategies as if this were their only objective, resulting in neglecting other forms of territorial integration of culture in territories (identities, cohesion,...).

This is particularly true of papers that come from Asian researchers (à préciser

## 2 : Interdisciplinarity issues

While this evolution reflects the very multidisciplinary dimension of the literature on CCC, it also sometimes reflects the superficiality of these multidisciplinary approaches which are limited to the borrowing of terms whose initial theoretical foundations are forgotten or little depth. It seems necessary at this stage of thinking about CCCs that researchers agree on clear definitions and terms used and on the literature associated with them.

While it would be tempting to reduce these differences in terminology to disciplinary approaches and distinctive paradigms, our findings clearly demonstrate a high degree of overlap and confusion in the terms used across papers and the definitions provided which render this assumption too simplistic. Indeed, our in-depth thematic analysis indicates that CCC as an object of study covers a numbers of cultural, economic, social and political dimensions which require the mobilisation of various disciplinary understanding to comprehend its manifestations. As such, the CCC field is highly multidisciplinary. However, this seems to create some barriers in the development of a unified and coherent field of study as concepts used in one discipline are then employed within another one without a clear explanation or justification. For example, the terms of cluster or district have been used in a purely geographical dimension without reference to their original economic understanding, leading to confusion. Indeed, our SLR has highlighted the lack of definitional rigour displayed by many papers as well as a dominance of descriptive case study analysis with little effort at theoretical development. In addition, the transfer of some concepts to non-Western contexts appears to create some additional definitional and understanding issues as illustrated by recent works on CCC in Asia. These findings suggest that future research and contributions on this topic needs to be more rigorous in highlighting within which disciplinary perspectives they position themselves while analysing CCC in addition to explains and justify more clearly the usage of specific terminologies.

First, our findings indicate how the various concepts used to describe the CCC have varied over time in terms of their popularity. In addition, they tend to have some unequal distribution across countries. These two trends may be explained by the popularity of either the cultural industries versus creative industries' terminology within the country considered and/or the dominance of economic or planning approaches to apprehend the clustering of cultural and creative activities and as such the terminology used in terms of "quarter", "district" or "cluster"; the latter often linked to this clustering is mostly understood within these countries. In addition, over time, we notice a shift from cultural to creative and from quarter to cluster in the terminology to designate CCC. This reflects the rise of both the creative industries and the cluster discourses across the World and the increasing popularity of development strategies based on a more economic understanding of the role of culture within society.

### 3 : The dynamic perspective

Many of the most cited papers mention the economic dynamic of CCC but only a few examine in depth this dynamic using a purely economic perspective. Indeed, a great majority tend to discuss the various policy initiatives associated with CCC, denoting in doing so their popularity. They demonstrate how CCC policy initiatives have been used to regenerate deprived and derelict areas or promote urban development within what Scott (2008) calls the new cognitive cultural economy. Urban planners have very early on shown an interest in CCC whereas economic geographers, economics and business researchers have been late in studying these spatial manifestations of cultural activities. As such, the planning terminology of quarter has initially spread more easily to designate CCC with district and cluster coming later. This has been reinforced by the preponderance of research published within the UK initially where this term is quite popular, then complemented by district when researchers from Italy have started analysis CCC from the point of view of the industrial district paradigm, popular in their country. The emergent CCC literature in Central and Eastern Europe and Asia is however more influenced by the creative industries and cluster discourses. This is confirmed when analysing in detail some of the differences in the definitions offered of cultural/creative quarter, cultural/creative district and cultural/creative cluster within the most cited papers. Our analysis tends to suggest an association between cultural/creative quarter and planning initiatives and issues whereas cultural/creative district and cluster tend to be associated with economic agglomeration dynamics.

While it would be tempting to reduce these differences in terminology to disciplinary approaches and distinctive paradigms, our findings clearly demonstrate a high degree of overlap and confusion in the terms used across papers and the definitions provided which render this assumption too simplistic. Indeed, our in depth thematic analysis indicates that CCC as an object of study covers a numbers of cultural, economic, social and political dimensions which require the mobilisation of various disciplinary understanding to comprehend its manifestations. As such, the CCC field is highly multidisciplinary. However, this seems to create some barriers in the development of a unified and coherent field of study as concepts used in one discipline are then employed within another one without a clear explanation or justification. For example, the terms of cluster or district have been used in a purely geographical dimension without reference to their original economic understanding, leading to confusion. Indeed, our SLR has highlighted the lack of definitional rigour displayed by many papers as well as a dominance of descriptive case study analysis with little effort at theoretical development. In addition, the transfer of some concepts to non-Western contexts appears to create some additional definitional and understanding issues as illustrated by recent works on CCC in Asia. These findings suggest that future research and contributions on this topic needs to be more rigorous in highlighting within which disciplinary perspectives they position themselves while analysing CCC in addition to explain and justify more clearly the usage of specific terminologies.

### 4 Methodological issues

Our analysis also points to the lack of clear evaluative frameworks when looking at CCC policies as already highlighted by Markusen and Gadwa (2010) when discussing the use of arts and culture in urban or regional planning. Addressing this gap could be addressed by fostering more quantitative approach, for example. Indeed, a great majority of papers are based on purely qualitative approach and often a single case study, rendering generalisation more difficult. While qualitative approaches allow an in depth understanding of particular

phenomenon and as such provide a depth of understanding of the CCC manifestations they examine, more quantitative analyses could lead to the development of transposable indicators and a greater degree of comparison across research. We would argue that more work is needed to develop precise indicators to analyse the development of CCC taking into account dimensions related to all the actors involved (residents, artists, creative enterprises, other economic activities, tourist...). The work of Stern and Seifert (2010) is an interesting avenue for future research for example. Such quantitative work could also support a more evaluative understanding of the development of CCC over time, taking into account their life cycle, and potentially unveil distinctive trajectories and the influence of policy makers within them in a more systematic way. There is still a large debate on the approach that policy makers should adopt when fostering CCC, as described by Porter and Barber (2007) in terms of hand-on or hand-off approaches and a more systematic comparison could help with these debate.

Our findings also suggest that while more systematic analysis and evaluation could be done on the development of flagship and the potential impacts/conflicts they create for residents versus visitors or local identity and global branding. The tourism challenges are indeed little developed within the most cited papers on CCC even though they are mentioned in passing. Some questions to address could be: is it possible to reach a equilibrium or a more balanced development between the interests of residents and tourists or find ways to counteract associated gentrification processes and displacements?

Finally, despite its weaknesses, the CCC literature examined within this paper also includes some interesting contributions reconciling cultural, social, economic, urban and policy dynamics to offer a more systematic understanding of the CCC phenomenon within clear analytical frameworks and definitional exercises. This is the case of authors such as Montgomery (1995, 2003, 2004) or Santagata (2002) who present some overview or typologies covering these various dimensions. However, these works do not always talk to or build on each other as they tend to belong to distinctive disciplinary fields of research. As such, more research is necessary to test and develop these further.

## **5. Discussion and conclusion: developing a clearer research framework and approach to study CCC and a renewed research agenda**

This systematic review and analysis of the literature on the CCC phenomenon offers a thorough understanding and critical overview of the Anglophone (mostly) literature published on this topic since the mid-80's. This SLR reveals an important lack of coherence in terms of the various concepts used to study this object of study and a great variety of understandings, themes and dimensions associated with CCC pointing to some weaknesses and gaps in terms of its overall theorisation. These gaps and weaknesses are often accompanied with a lack of clarity in the methodological approach put forward to analyse CCC.

Some of these findings can be explained by the high degree of multi-disciplinarity characterising the researchers examining CCC and the theories and analytical themes they mobilised as well as the increasing spread of the CCC concepts to a variety of national contexts, adding to the complexity of its application. We could argue that the use and combination of various disciplines can be relevant to study a social sciences phenomenon such as CCC. Indeed, the various themes and issues touched upon by CCC's researchers have helped shed light on its multiple facets. Nevertheless, we feel that the lack of precision and preamble to a number of multidisciplinary studies about their approach and the loose borrowing of concepts from one discipline to another with little explanations and clear

boundary settings observed in many contributions has rendered the CCC field confusing and lacking in continuity, ultimately hindering its progress. This is why, based on this SLR, we propose a research framework that we suggest researchers who wish to study CCC should follow to support a more coherent development and a better theoretical understanding and underpinning of this object of study in the future. This research framework is presented in Figure 5 and includes four main components that researchers should clarify in their studies while examining CCC: 1) concepts and definitions 2) disciplinary approach 3) themes studied and 4) research methods. While these four components are intrinsically linked as they influence each other, we will discuss them in turn below and indicate avenues for further research within each of them.

### 5.1. CCC concepts and definitions

Our findings indicate how the usage of the various concepts used to describe CCC have varied over time with some unequal distribution across countries. These two trends may be explained by 1) the popularity of either the cultural industries versus creative industries' terminology within the country considered and/or 2) the dominance of economic or planning approaches and related theoretical underpinnings to apprehend the spatial clustering of cultural and creative activities. This, in turn, can influence how this clustering is mostly apprehended and labelled within each specific country i.e. "quarter", "district" or "cluster". In addition, over time, we notice a shift from "cultural" to "creative" and from "quarter" and "district" to "cluster" in the terminology to designate CCC. This reflects the rise of both the creative industries and the cluster discourses across the World and the increasing popularity of development strategies based on an economic understanding of the role of culture within society.

At times, a shift in terminology to qualify an object of study may be the sign of greater conceptual clarity and understanding of this object. However, this does not seem to be the case in this instance as the emergence of new CCC concepts has not often been associated with proper definitions or conceptual discussion and some new concepts are used interchangeably with old ones. As such, we seem to be in the presence of an increasing conceptual fuzziness. Considering this, we would suggest that researchers should be more stringent in their use of specific CCC concepts and in the development of new ones. To do so, we would argue that it would be important to build on the few contributions in the field that have offered concrete and recognised definitional and conceptualisation exercises or at least take them as point of departure for future changes, elaboration and discussion. The issue seems to be less related to the usage of either the terms "cultural" or "creative". While the term creative tend to be more encompassing but also more vague, the adoption of either of these terms has been associated with specific national understandings and definitions of what the cultural and creative industries encompass. While still debated, these definitions and understandings have more standing today as discussed previously in the article. Alternatively, the increasing usage of the term cluster instead of "quarter" or "district" seems to have generated much more confusion.

Through our SLR, we have broadly identified that, historically, two main schools of thoughts have primarily studied CCCs, starting in the 1990s and spreading in the 2000s. In the United Kingdom, the industrial decline provoked earlier on the appearance of wastelands on the outskirts of city centres quickly then invested by artists and later on subject to urban redevelopment strategies focusing on cultural activities. Urban planners have then started to

study the cultural and social dynamics driven by the redevelopment programs of some of these areas whereas economists have begun to measure the economic weight of cultural industries to support these developments. London, Manchester, Sheffield and other UK core cities have been the subject of numerous studies examining the planning processes and the governance associated with these programs/strategies and/or highlighting the effects of attractiveness, economic renewal and at times gentrification associated with this new artistic/cultural specialisation. These studies tend to echo earlier works from Jacob (1969) and Zukin (1982) on economies of urbanisation. These contributions use the concept of “cultural quarter” and tend to be more planning oriented. Looking across these works (see section 4.4.), cultural quarters can overall be understood as easily delimited physical concentrations of cultural activities with the aim to foster cultural production and/or consumption through the advantages of economies of urbanisation (i.e. diversity and mixed usage); as such they mix a variety of cultural activities and public and private actors as well as other related activities such as entertainment and leisure and can be associated with regeneration, urban design, branding and tourism strategies. Amongst these studies, we would suggest that the work by Wansborough and Magean (2000) and a seminal series of papers by Montgomery (2003, 2004) stand out in offering some key factors and detailed indicators to characterise these quarters applied and tested on UK, Irish and Australian case studies. These more systematic conceptual works would be worth reinvesting and tested today in new contexts.

Parallel to these works, as discussed in section 4.4, a second school of thoughts has developed around the concept of cultural district, hugely influenced by the Italian notion of industrial district introduced in the 1970’s. The initial objective of the industrial district concept was to analyse the specific economic dynamics created by the embedding of organisational networks of firms and individuals within variable-scale economic spaces called districts, with reference to Alfred Marshall's economic founding works. The assumption was that these geographically situated networks were based on economies of scales and mostly resulted from private dynamics. This approach has then been transposed to the cultural industries and has resulted in a very economical approach to CCCs as cultural districts i.e. places of cultural “production of idiosyncratic goods based on creativity and intellectual property” that “draw their inspiration from some cultural link with their original community” as defined by Santagata (2002:11). Much of the works on cultural districts tend to focus on value chain analyses and economic performance even though, as with the research on industrial district over time, there has been an increasing recognition of the influence of both public and private actors within them. Amongst this school of thought, the work of Santagata (2002) does in fact stand out by its real effort at theorisation and typologisation of cultural districts both organic and planned and, as such, should be taken as a point of departure for further research aiming to examine CCC using a more economical approach. Alternatively, more social and cultural analysis of the notion of cultural district could build on the work of Currier (2008) and Zukin and Braslow (2011) even though their conceptual discussion is more limited.

We would argue that these two long-standing principal schools of thoughts and their manifestations have historically produced two relatively coherent approaches to the analysis of CCC, still relevant today. The emergence of the concept of cultural/creative cluster within the field of CCCs seems to be more the result of the fashionable use that the term cluster and the economic Porterian approach of competitive advantage has had in economic discourse in the past 20 years rather than an heuristic breakthrough with regards to the understanding of CCCs in general. Our detailed analysis of the most cited works produced on cultural/creative



cluster highlights that authors have indeed used this concept to label what was either understood as a quarter or as a district previously in the literature without necessarily adding more to either of these original concepts. Obviously, it is important to acknowledge and recognise the growth in the usage of “cultural and creative clusters” terminology and the popularity of the Porterian rhetoric in the policy discourse and to analyse what these clusters are from an academic point of view and if they are really a new phenomenon. Nevertheless, we feel that, in doing so, researchers should make more of an effort to build on and refer back to the more established notions of “district” and “quarter” to understand the extent to which this new concept is more useful or relevant in characterising and understanding the “new” agglomeration of cultural and creative activities, be they organic or planned. At the moment, only a couple of the most cited works in the field have offered some elements of conceptual distinction between cultural/creative quarter, district or cluster (Ponzini, 2009; O’Connor and Gu, 2010; Zhao, 2010). Overall, Ponzini (2009) and O’Connor and Gu (2010) tend to amalgamate the terms of “district” and “cluster” under the same banner i.e. an economic understanding and characterisation of the agglomeration of cultural/creative activities in space and contrast it to the notion of “quarter” understood within a planning perspective as discussed above. In contrast, Zhao (2010) implies that what are labelled as creative clusters in Beijing may actually have more connection with the notion of cultural quarters as defined by Montgomery (2003). Therefore, it is clear that the CCC field would truly benefit from more works offering detailed theoretical and conceptual discussions of the three terms based on empirical evidence reflecting the increased number of CCC examples across the World. These works may need to address the challenges of interdisciplinary and comparative methodologies that such studies require nevertheless.

## 5.2 Disciplinary approach

Our discussion in the previous section suggests that researchers who wish to study CCC should: 1) be more stringent in their usage of the terminology that they use i.e. quarter, district, cluster, 2) be clearer about their definitions of such concept and 3) take as points of departure the two more established and coherent approaches developed so far in the field i.e. the one developed around the concept of “cultural/creative quarter” and the one around the concept of “cultural/creative district”. However, as mentioned, these two more coherent and established concepts can be broadly associated with particular disciplinary approaches and analysis. This mono-disciplinarity may actually be an issue and may explain the intent to develop new terminology using the cluster concept in recent years. As both our statistical and in-depth analysis suggest, CCC as an object of study covers a numbers of cultural, economic, social and political dimensions which require the mobilisation of various disciplinary understandings to fully comprehend its manifestations. Taking this into account, some would even argue that a post-disciplinarity approach as put forward by Jessop and Sum (2001) i.e. one which “*rejects disciplinary conceptualisation of knowledge by surmounting disciplinary boundaries and limitations to examine social phenomena from philosophical beginning to logical ends, rather than to the border of a particular, or even multiple, disciplines.*” (Pocock, n.d.: 4) maybe more appropriate to understand and study CCC given its complexity.

However, the apparent increasing post-disciplinarity of the field in recent years seems to have created more confusion and to hinder the development of a unified and coherent domain of study with the borrowing of terms whose initial theoretical foundations are then forgotten or used with little depth. Given this increasing confusion but in the presence of historical coherent disciplinary approaches, we would argue, that, in studying CCC, researchers should embrace an interdisciplinarity approach. However, they would need to be more explicit

about it and make the effort to explain clearly where they are starting from and which form of interdisciplinarity approach they are using in doing so: from the juxtaposition of disciplines (multidisciplinarity), sharing, combination or integration of disciplinary tools and principles (cross-disciplinarity) to their transcendence (transdisciplinarity) - see the useful work of Miller (1981). Indeed, in most works published on CCC, few authors actually discuss or deal with the issue of intersdisciplinarity even though many of them assemble or bring together concepts and theories from various disciplines. A more open and rigorous reflection and discussion on how these authors approach interdisciplinarity and their needs to do so to understand CCC would be much more valuable and helpful in the development of the field. Multidisciplinarity and cross-disciplinarity approaches would be particularly helpful in contrasting, comparing and adding to the current conceptual discussion around the terms of cultural/creative quarter, district and cluster and to their applications in the real world. More rigorous multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary studies could then lead to a more coherent understanding and theorisation of CCC as a recognised complex object of study, potentially leading to some more transdisciplinary explanations. Considering this, it would be interesting if some future contributions aim to explore in depth the challenges of multidisciplinarity both epistemologically and methodologically when exploring and analysing CCC.

### 5.3 Research Methods

As for the lack of discussion on how each paper addresses the question of multidisciplinarity, many of the most cited papers give very few information about their methodology as discussed in section 4.2. Indeed, our SLR revealed clear methodological issues and weaknesses to address to enhance the development of the field. Few papers offer clear analytical framework or discussion with many relating the development of one case study with little effort at theorisation afterwards. Much works are not necessarily offering primary evidence and the field tend to be dominated by qualitative analysis.

Considering this, we would suggest that researchers working on CCC need to make a particular effort, in addition to defining their concepts and terms, to justifying their methodology and to providing the theoretical implications of their works more clearly. In addition, it would be helpful to have researchers building on each other methods or methodological approaches to ease comparison across papers and data. Alternatively, it would be helpful if more comparative works were undertaken in the future as the field tend to be dominated by single case studies; this would be particularly helpful to assess the extent to which CCC concepts can be applied across distinctive national contexts. Given the over-dominance of qualitative research in the field, we would recommend that some effort be made to develop more quantitative approaches. While qualitative approaches allow an in-depth understanding of particular phenomenon and provide as such a depth of understanding of the CCC manifestations they examine, more quantitative analyses could lead to the development of transposable indicators and a greater degree of comparison across research. We would argue that more work is needed to develop precise indicators to analyse the development of CCC taking into account dimensions related to all the actors involved (residents, artists, creative enterprises, other economic activities, tourist...). Among our database, the work of Stern and Seifert (2010) is an interesting avenue for future research for example. Using different statistical resources, they focus on indicators of the intensity of the cultural scene in a neighbourhood and analyse the links between these indicators and the neighbourhood economic, socio-demographic and housing development. They then discussed the implications for urban planning policies. In a same way, several papers focusing on

gentrification dynamics but not using CCC concepts also propose quantitative methods trying to correlate cultural amenities with different aspects of urban development (Ley, 2003; Grodach & al., 2014). Such quantitative work could also support a more evaluative understanding of the development of CCC over time, taking into account their life cycle, and potentially unveiling distinctive trajectories and the influence of policy makers within them in a more systematic way. Obviously, research methods go hand in hand with the research questions and the themes studied. Nevertheless, a greater clarity in the choice of these methods and an effort at more comparative works would greatly benefit the field and its advancement.

#### 5.4 Research themes

The findings from our in-depth SLR have shown that a number of overlapping research themes have been explored when looking at CCCs 1) conceptual and development/typology; 2) economic value chain and the influence of the territory, milieu of innovation and networks; 3) global positioning, city attractiveness, tourism 4) urban regeneration, policy analysis, governance and policy evaluation and transfer. As discussed in section 4.5, some of these themes tend to overlap and some have been developed quite extensively while other may need further development.

We have already discussed at length the need for further conceptual development and understanding as well as clear multidisciplinary works, especially looking at conceptual and policy transfers of CCC terms. In addition, the need for greater methodology clarity and comparative research could benefit most of the works produced across the various themes discussed. Nevertheless, a few more recommendations could be made with regards to some further research needed.

Many of the most cited papers mention the economic dynamic of CCC but only a few examine in depth this dynamic using a purely economic or economic geographic perspective, especially using quantitative approaches. Indeed, a great majority tend to discuss the various policy initiatives associated with CCC and how they have been used to regenerate deprived and derelict areas or promote urban development within what Scott (2008) calls the new cognitive-cultural economy. However, more works could be undertaken exploring in-depth the economic dynamic of CCC and their economic performance in relationship with their territory, especially in a longitudinal perspective. There does not seem to exist one type of methodology for doing such analysis and more comparative and systematic works would be helpful to assess the impact of CCC. This type of works could also be combined with the development of precise indicators in the development of CCC as discussed in the previous section. Such quantitative evaluative framework could help with the lack of clear evaluative frameworks when looking at CCC policies that we found and as already highlighted by Markusen and Gadwa (2010) when discussing the use of arts and culture in urban or regional planning.

Our findings also suggest that more systematic analysis and evaluation could be done on the development of flagship and the potential impacts/conflicts they create for residents versus visitors or between local identity and global branding. The tourism challenges are indeed little developed within the most cited papers on CCC even though they are mentioned in passing. Some questions to address could be: is it possible to reach an equilibrium or a more balanced development between the interests of residents and tourists or find ways to

counteract associated gentrification processes and displacements? It also seems necessary to explore how artists could benefit more from arts-led regeneration urban programmes. From this point of view, as Matthews (2010, 673) writes, “*It is critical that future research explores the art world beyond its economic measures, and that pressure is placed on ensuring that the incorporation of art in the urban provides an opportunity for local (and contested) meaning production and expression (surrounding where art is placed, how it is selected and by whom, and what meanings are attached to the works and their producers.)*”

To conclude, our SLR has clearly shown the exponential interest in CCC as object of research in the last 10 years, reflecting the popularity that the creative industries, their agglomeration and the tools to support them as generated as discussed in our introduction. Our in-depth SLR of the field demonstrates that despite some clear weaknesses in terms of conceptual development and methodology, there is a richness of key contributions to build on to address the remaining questions to answer to fully comprehend this expanding field. We strongly hope that researchers who wish to study CCC in the future will follow our call for a renewed conceptual, methodological, thematic and multidisciplinary research framework to support the development of the field.

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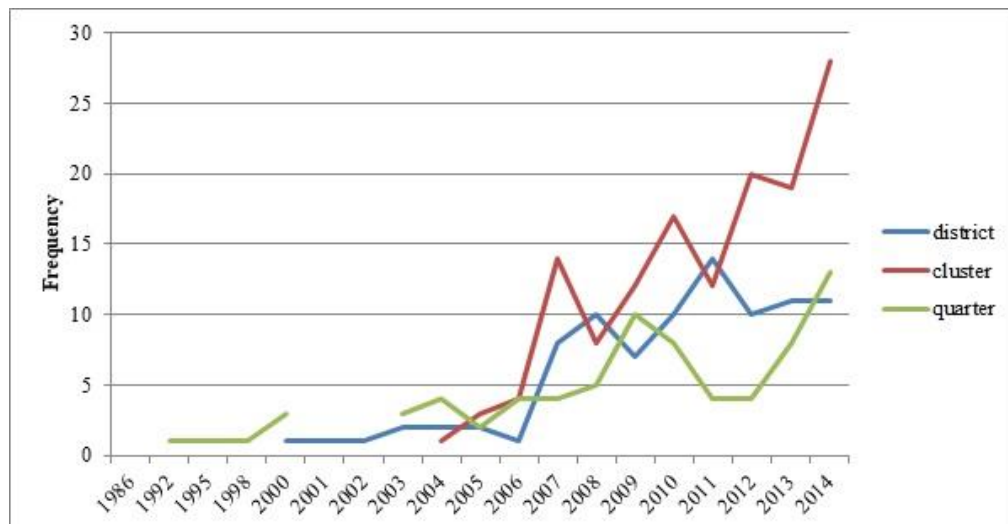
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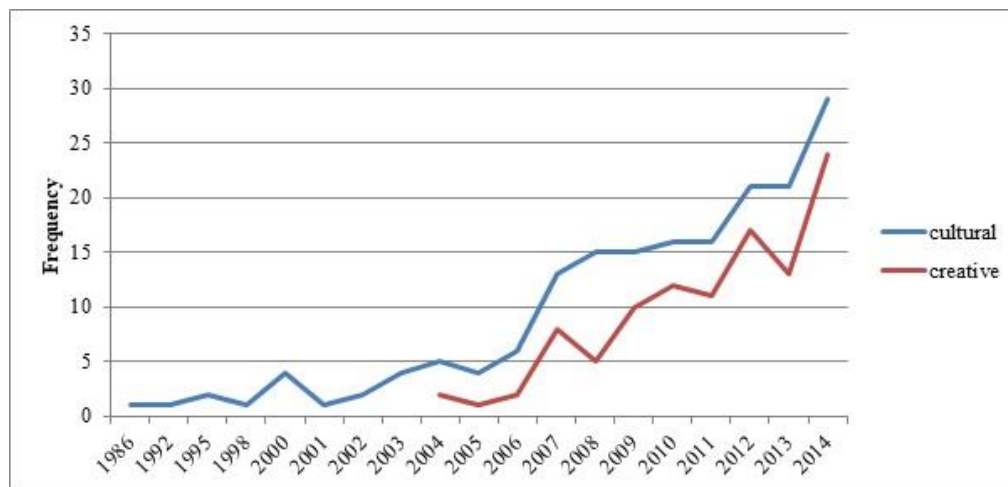
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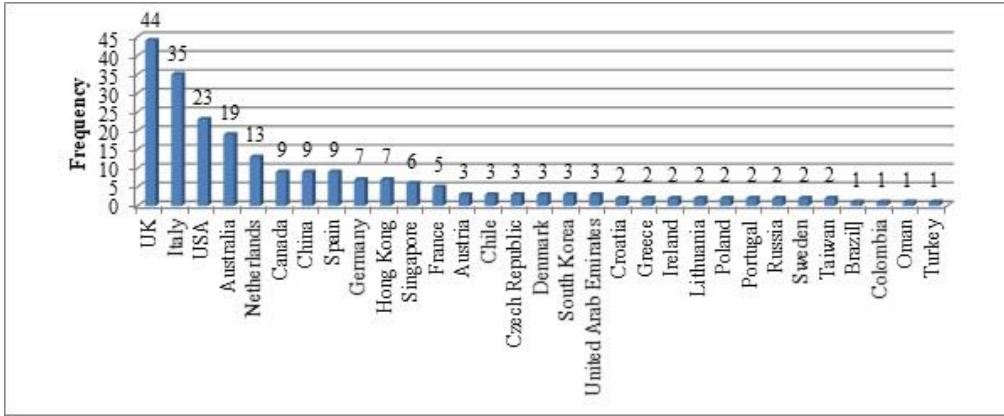
**Figure 1a: Cultural/creative district, cluster or quarter within the 226 academic references – 1986 to 2014.**



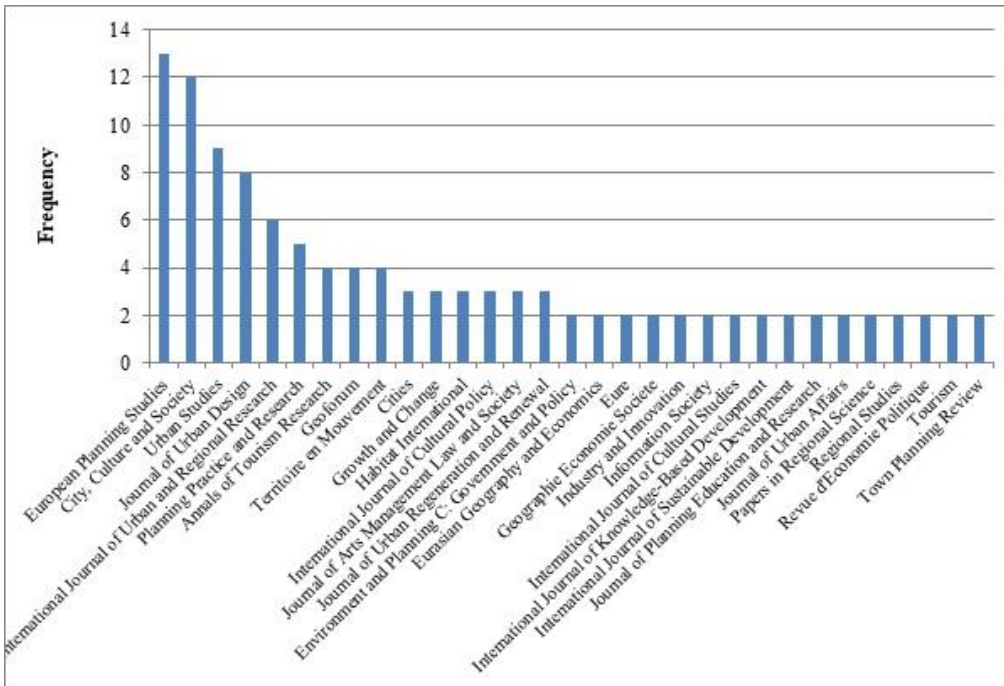
**Figure 1b: Cultural versus creative district, cluster or quarter within the 226 academic references – 1986 to 2014.**



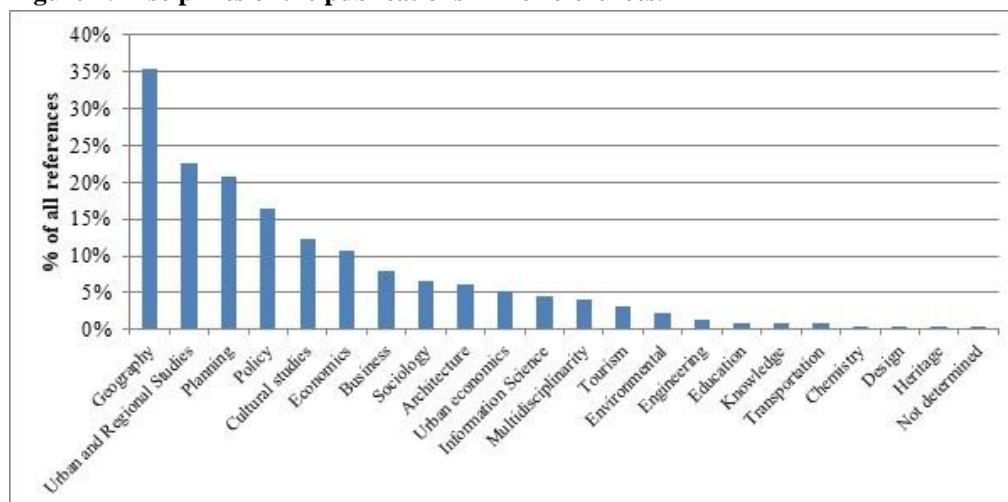
**Figure 2: Publications by country of origin of the main author – 226 references.**



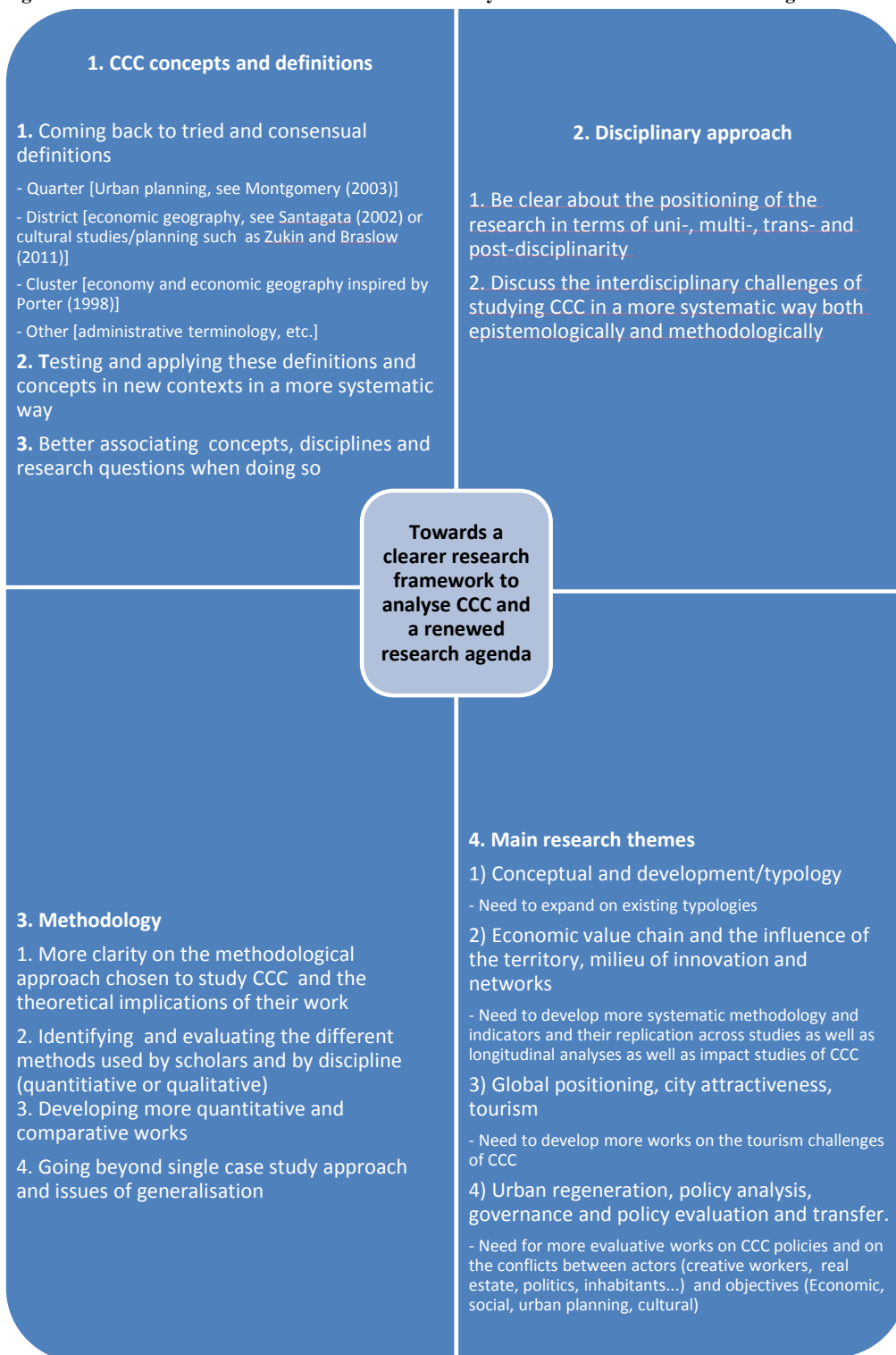
**Figure 3: Journal with more than one publication on CCC – 226 references.**



**Figure 4: Disciplines of the publications – 226 references.**



**Figure 5: Towards a clearer research framework to analyse CCC and a renewed research agenda**



## Appendix: Themes mentioned and analysis in the 48 most cited papers

	Mentioned and analysed
Is the paper offering a policy analysis of the cluster?	83%
Does the paper analyse the production side of the cluster?	79%
Are the urbanisation effects (diversity of activities) of the cluster analysed in the paper?	71%
Are cultural idiosyncrasies associated with the cluster (i.e. importance of local culture, knowledge, ways things are done...) analysed in the paper?	69%
Is the notion of governance (relationship and institutional arrangements) between actors of the cluster analysed in the paper?	69%
Are the value chain and agglomeration effects (economies of scale) of the cluster analysed in the paper?	67%
Are social networks associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	63%
Is the attractivity of firms associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	60%
Is a regeneration phenomenon associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	60%
Is the type of governance approach (bottom-up, top-down or mixed) of the cluster analysed in the paper?	60%
Does the paper analyse the consumption side of the cluster?	56%
Is the notion of branding associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	50%
Does the paper look at the global dimension of the cluster in its analysis?	46%
Are artists' dynamics and leadership associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	44%
Is the question of a large urban project development associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	38%
Is the attractivity of residents associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	35%
Is the tourism dimension associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	29%
Does the paper look at the networking dynamics of the cluster with actors outside of the cluster in its analysis?	23%
Is a gentrification phenomenon associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	23%
Is the role of flagship associated with the cluster analysed in the paper?	21%