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Working Carnival
Ethnic cultures and the regeneration of the global city

Lionel Arnaud
Centre de Recherches sur l’Action Politique en Europe (CRAPE)
Université Rennes 1 (France)
Challenges for the « Global City »

• To be competitive
  ➔ economical development

• To be attractive
  ➔ cultural development

➔ Use of **festive time strategies** to combat the deleterious impact of globalization on local economies
Hypothesis

« Ethnicity » as a new cultural capital?

Community links, multiple identities, cultural resistance, a general resiliency associated with the ability to endure hardships and overcome obstacles are now turned from handicap into resources in the liberal cosmopolitan city.

(Cf. Bourdieu 1979; Putnam, Leonardi, Nanetti, 1993)

Process of cultural and economical enhancement
State of the Art

The Cultural Economy of Cities

- Governance and urban competition (Le Galès 1995, Scott 2000)
- Culture industries and re-embeddedness (Basu and Werbner 2001, Granovetter 1985)
- Confluence between commercial culture/ethnic identity (Root 1996)

The New Middle Classes & The Fantasy City

- Increasing role of “professionnals” and “creativity” (Florida 2002; Lash & Urry 1987)
- Gentrification process (Ley 2003, Zukin 1995)
- Political interdependances and civilization process (Elias 1939, 1969)
Methodology

**Comparison** of two large urban festivals which involved ethnic minorities

The Notting Hill Carnival  
*[London]*

Le Défilé de la Biennale de la danse  
*[Lyon]*
Interviews with professionals and participants \((n: 37)\) from 2000 to 2005

Participant observation
in Lyon (July 2002): *Maravilhoso Project*
in London (August 2002): *Yaa Asantewaa Arts & Cultural Centre*

Ethnographic materials *(reports, leaflets & websites)*

Local & national press releases
from 1976 to 2002 *(London)*
from 1996 to 2002 *(Lyon)*
- Part I -

*Ethnic Minorities*
From Political Exclusion to Cultural Re-Invention

- Part II -

*Multiculturality*
From Handicap to Resource

- Part III -

*Carnival*
From Culture to Economy
Ethnic Minorities

From Political Exclusion to Cultural Re-Invention
The Failure of a Unitary Political Mobilisation

White & Black Split

- Spatial divisions
  Segregation in London
  Relegation in Lyon

- Racist attacks
  *e.g.* Notting Hill White Riots (1958)
  *e.g.* Les Minguettes’ Murders (1981-1983)

Communautary Divisions

- Inside the Caribbean community
  *e.g.* failure of the *West Indian Standing Conference*

- Inside the anti-racist movement
  *e.g.* failure of the *Marche des Beurs* (1983)
Carnival as a New Form of Cultural Mobilization

From Trinidad to Notting Hill

- **1958**: Creation of the first Caribbean Carnival
  → Claudia Jones

- **1965**: Integration of the festival into the Notting Hill Fair
  → Rhaunee Laslett

- **1975**: Creation of the Carnival Development Committee (CDC)

From Hip Hop to Contemporary Dance

- **1980’s**: Development of hip hop culture in the Great Lyon
  → Rillieux, Vaulx-en-Velin, Vénissieux,...

  → Jack Lang

- **1996**: Défilé de la Biennale de la Danse
  → « Projets culturels de quartier »
  → Guy Darmet
Emergence of a « new ethnicity »

- Marginalization
- Socialisation in the chinks of the public space
- Identititary re-creations

➔ Sub-cultures of exclusion

PROBLEM FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

How to channel these minority cultural expressions?
Multiculturality

From Handicap to Resource
A Problem of Law & Order

- Criminalization (1976, 1986)

A Problem of Culture

- High Arts vs Popular Arts
- "Cultural colonialism!"
Carnival ➔ A Strategy

**A counter-cultural strategy**
*Cf. Great London Council (1981-1986)*

➔ A counter-hegemony strategy
➔ “Learning from Thatcherism”

**A bypassing strategy**
*Cf. Ministère de la Culture (1981-1986)*

➔ “La démocratie culturelle”
➔ Give the speak to the “immigrés”
Emergence of a « new ethnicity »

- Marginalization ⇒ Interdependence
- Socialisation in the chinks ⇒ Globalisation
- Identitary re-creations ⇒ Creativity

⇒ Sub-cultures = New Cultural capital

CULTURAL STRATEGY
OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
Carnival

From Culture to Economy
The Notting Hill Carnival as an “international class event”
(Interview, Senior Cultural Project Officer, GLA, 20/09/2002)

“Notting Hill Carnival is a showcase of Caribbean culture, but it is also a showcase for London”
(Lee Jasper, Chairman of the Mayor's Carnival Review Group, 27/08/2002)

Le Défilé as a « rituel d’agglomération »
(Millénaire 3/Grand Lyon Prospective, 2002)

“L’organisation de fêtes publiques rencontre un besoin profondément ancré d’appartenance et de communion avec la société environnante”
(Millénaire 3, 2000)
### Creative industries

“Creativity: London’s core business”  
(Mayor of London, 2002)

- London Development Agency
- Carnival Review Group
- Mayor’s Economic Agency

### Art therapy

“Le détour créatif est au coeur de l’insertion”  
(C2D-Tremplin ANEPA)

- Politique de la Ville
- Volet insertion
- Plan local d’insertion par l’économique (PLIE)
The æsthetisation of multiculturalism

**Regulation**
- Policing
- Management

**Art to serve the economic and social development of cities**

**Rationnalization**
- Didactization
- Production

**Searching a « new multicultural æsthetic »**

Project-Identity
Conclusion

From Marginality to a New Cultural Capital

To be attractive?

Community
↓
Social capital
↓
Cohesion

To be competitive?

Expression
↓
Creativity
↓
Innovation