



Challenges of Creative and Sustainable Cities in Chile

Antil Camacho

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The relationship between culture, creativity and sustainable development has been included in the agenda of institutions that promote human and sustainable development at an international level, such as the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments, United Nations Development Goals and UNESCO Creative Cities Network. Given this, it's worth researching how his focus is being implemented in the development strategies of cities in Chile. Secondly, there are cases of cities in Chile that are implementing culture and creativity linked to their local development strategies with positive results in some dimensions of sustainable development: culture, social development, environment and economic development. As a conclusion, recommendations are included for the implementation of creative cities with sustainable development as an intervention model.

Antil Camacho
Scholar at Playa Ancha University
acamacho@upla.cl

1. Introduction

Why culture and sustainable development?

In this article we would like to review the relationship between culture and sustainable development in approaches and programs of international organisms, the policies and strategies of cultural development in Chile, to then propose the city as an intervention focus for cultural policies in Chile and finally propose some elements to consider for this intervention model.

The city crisis proposed by theorists such as Richard Florida and the undeniable unleashing of the environmental crisis at a global level have made the implementation of strategies of sustainable development of cities and human settlements an urgent matter.

According to the United Nations, sustainable development is “a development model that contemplates the satisfaction of needs of the present without endangering the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs” (1).

Since the 1980 decade, there have been proposals to change the way of understanding development strategies in general and urban development in particular, where the social, the environmental and lately the cultural dimension have been added to sheer economic development. Theorists such as John Hawkes and Eduard Miralles (2) situate culture as the fourth pillar of development, reaching the term “cultural shift” in sustainable development strategies.

Coincidentally along with this, the main international organism that promotes local development and culture such as the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments and the UNESCO have incorporated culture in a multitude of documents that guide policies, conventions and programs (3).

2. Culture and development in international organisms

Since the decade of the 80s, culture has been proposed as an axis of sustainable development along with a set of documents that guide policies and programs from different international institutions, such as Cooperation programs for development and national plans that we will name ahead:

UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (4) proposed that within the framework of the growing globalization of economy and culture, the recognition and preservation of the diversity of cultures is a necessary factor for adequate human development.

In the year 2005, the UNESCO also promoted the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions* and in Article 13 culture is included for the first time as a factor of sustainable development (5).

In 2004, the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) published *21 Agenda for Culture* (6) which has been an inspiration and a guide for the implementation of cultural policies at the local government level. An instance created based on its proposals is the Interlocal Network of Cities for Culture.

In 2010 UCLG published *Culture, The Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development*, where a perspective is established which points to “the relationship between culture and sustainable development through a double focus: developing their own cultural sectors (namely: heritage, creativity, cultural industries, art, cultural tourism); and advocating so that culture is integrated in all public policies, particularly in those related to education, economy, science, communication, environment, social cohesion and international cooperation” (7).

After a decade of the publication of *Agenda 21 for Culture*, the UCLG promotes the document called *Culture: 21 Actions* (8). In it, the role of culture becomes more explicit as a transversal component of sustainable development that is present in nine key areas: 1. Cultural rights 2. Heritage, diversity and creativity 3. Culture and education 4. Culture and environment 5. Culture and economy 6. Culture, equity and social inclusion 7. Culture, urban planning and public space 8. Culture, information and knowledge 9. Cultural governance.

This document is published in parallel to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and pretends fill the void in terms of cultural matters, given that no other specific objective was included regarding this area.

This is why UCLG's Committee on Culture elaborated documents called *Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) A Practical Guide for Local Action* (9) whose objective is to demonstrate that cultural aspects are key to reaching the proposed objectives. In the document guidance is provided in order to address each of the SDGs form cultural strategies and concrete cases of cities all over the world are mentioned.

Also Agenda 21 for Culture includes an Initiative Culture 21 Lab with nine culture and sustainable development indicators that allow each city to compare itself to an international world average of cities, based on the previously mentioned factors (10).

On its behalf, in the year 2004 the Creative Cities Network in order to promote cooperation for and between cities that identify creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development and “to position creativity and cultural industries at the center of their local development and actively cooperate with this issue at an international level” (11). The cities apply to be part of this network that includes seven categories of cultural activity; handcrafts and popular art, digital arts, cinema, design, gastronomy, literature and music. Currently 190 cities from all five continents are part of it. The network is explicitly conceived with a focus on sustainable development. It is conceived as a key member for the implementation of UN sustainable Development Goals 2030 and it is recognized as a contribution to Goal No. 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, geared to generate inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.

3. Creative Cities for Sustainable Development

Just as it is anticipated by a United Nations Report (12) of the year 2018, by 2030 68% of the world population will live in cities and only 32% in rural sectors. Given this, the city has become a priority focus of sustainable development. The explosive growth of cities in the last five decades has revealed a set of problems and conflicts. Social segregation, increase in poverty, insecurity, unregulated urban growth, pollution, disappearance of species and natural landscapes have led to the proposition of the crisis of cities, such as it is addressed by Richard Florida in his book “The New Urban Crisis” (13).

According to Herrera, Bonilla and Molina-Prieto in their article “*Creative Cities, An Economic Paradigm for Design and Urban Planning?*” creativity has emerged as a motor for sustainable urban development and is proposed as an alternative to the industrial development model (14). Creativity as resource is practically unlimited, and it is in line with sustainable development given that as an intangible resource it has less negative effects in social and environmental terms.

Yet it is before in 1985 that the Swedish economist Ake Anderson names this concept for the first time in his book “*Creativity. The Future City*”. In it, creativity is raised as the future of cities along with the emergence of a society of knowledge. It was in 1997 that the concept appeared strongly in the Anglo-Saxon world in the book by Charles Landry “The Creative City” (15), but it is until the publication in 2010 of the book “*The Creative Class*” by economist Richard Florida (16) that the concept is finally installed in the debate. This work established the importance of people from creative areas, artists, designers, architects, among others for urban revitalization; therefore, cities should generate measures in order to attract them. In this way, creativity is consolidated as a main economic resource of these times.

Yet, creativity on its own will not necessarily generate a sustainable city. For this, a focus that explicitly demonstrates the connection of culture with the various aspects of sustainability in a systematic way is required, as it has been previously proposed. This is shown in many cases where the homogenization of culture of globalization suffocated local cultures; which brings the weakening of referents with which people build their identity and social links. In terms of social integration, the arrival of the creative class can bring with it the displacement of traditional inhabitants generating urban segregation through a means called *gentrification*. In environmental terms, the massive events that generate large income for the city can have negative consequences in cleanliness and quality of life of its inhabitants. In economic terms, the generation of entrepreneurship and hotbeds of business in the area of creative economy could not be economically sustainable if they don't benefit the local economy. Given this, a creative city requires in this sense an explicit focus in order to also become a sustainable city.

4. Creative Cities for Sustainable Development in Chile

In this section we will review cultural policies instruments of cultural policy in Chile in search for the inclusion of creative cities as an element of sustainable development.

Public Cultural Policy 2017-2020 of Ministry of Cultures, arts and Heritage recognizes in its introduction the link of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development, through “the recognition of cultural diversity of our country, the importance of the territorial and local factor, the role of artists and cultural workers to design together a development strategy that commits to the decrease of inequalities and the widening of rights. An objective in which culture can and should play a specific role, as a carrier of a development notion that does not only consider economic growth but also social and environmental sustainability”. It also contemplates as a work focus a “systemic, holistic and integrated vision, that considers the economic potentialities as well as the social, cultural and environmental ones, articulating at the same time the different actors, the production of goods and services, and the diverse sectorial policies of intervention that contribute to the integrated development of the communities that inhabit it”. (17)

In its principles and strategic objectives, it explicitly establishes culture as a pillar of sustainable development and identifies the cities and territories as the most appropriate setting for it.

- a) Culture as a pillar of sustainable development, safeguarding cultural rights of generations to come both at a local and national level:

Boost collaborative management models at a local level, with an emphasis on municipalities that contribute to city planning and the integrated, participative and sustainable territories situating culture as an axis of the strategies for local development, in its rural and urban dimensions.

5. Creative Cities and Sustainable Development Experiences

Cultural Strategic Plan for Concepcion

There are some cities in Chile that are starting to implement cultural strategies aligned with the perspective of sustainable development. That is the case of the Culture Plan of the city of Concepcion in the Bio Bio Region. With 230.000 inhabitants, Concepcion began to develop in 2013 a Strategic Plan for Culture as part of pilot project of 10 cities for the application of Agenda 21 for Culture in the world. The district was undergoing a difficult time in economic terms due to the weakening of traditional productive activities, the depletion of sea products and the devastating consequences of the 2010 earthquake. The city bets on culture as one of its four axis to reactivate city development in the medium term and transform Concepcion into a culturally vibrant, dynamic and inclusive city, thus being a driving force for the city's sustainable development (18).

In order to do this, a participative process was held that lasted ten months and included more than 3000 people, among them artists, cultural workers, and city neighbors. As a result, four axis of work were established: interculturality, participative governance, neighborhoods, creative economy, environment and urbanism. The focus of sustainability is present given that culture was considered a transversal component of other areas of communal development.

Frutillar: Musical City

This city with 17,500 inhabitants, located in the side of the Villarrica Lake, Los Lagos Region is a reference in the area of scholar music. First with the Frutillar Musical Weeks Festival with more than 50 years of history and then with the construction of the Teatro del Lago, a first class infrastructure which holds international level programs. It is the first Chilean city that is part of UNESCO Creative Cities Network. It is important to highlight that the promotion as a musical city was boosted by Frutillar Sustainable Development Foundation and not by the municipality as it happens in most cities that belong to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. In this case, as in the one previously presented, culture and creativity cross in a transversal way with other dimensions of sustainable development. Today music is a social inclusion factor given that it integrates inhabitants from the city`s poorest sectors. It is also a factor of economic development through tourism (19).

Valparaiso, Musical Port

With a rich musical heritage that includes *bolero*, *cueca porteña* and *rock* among other genres and a vibrating musical scene that includes two professional music schools, an emerging industry and a touristic night circuit linked to the port`s bohemian lifestyle, the city of Valparaiso is profiling itself as a musical city. The emergence of an economy linked to the creative sector is seen today as an alternative to the extenuating port activity and of services that have kept this district with high unemployment rates for a long time. This is the second city to become part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in November 2019. For this, a work plan was designed that includes four axis that go beyond the strictly musical and reconnect with the sustainable development focus: education, tourism and promotion of the musical sector, music and community. The execution of the plan will be in charge of the music office located at the municipality and a composed council of the musical city integrated by a wide spectre of musical actors, among public and private institution and associations (20).

Limache, Creative and Sustainable City

San Francisco de Limache is a small city with 40,000 inhabitants located in the inner region of Valparaiso that has currently turned into a destination for those who wish to leave behind the hustle of big cities in order to enjoy a human-scale city. This city was founded in 1856 along with an urbanistic project inspired on the garden city model and the hygienist movement that promotes a city at a small scale, socially and environmentally integrated. From that moment, during the 20th century this city was chosen as a resting place for families from Viña del Mar and Valparaiso. Yet 15 years ago, Limache began experimenting the arrival of people from the creative area, attracted by the city`s characteristics and by the creation there. This has changed Limache into a cultural hub with a set of initiatives that integrate the environment, cultural heritage, community such as children`s literature emerging focal point with a publisher and a bookstore, cultural centers, Limache Estuary Preservation Committee, social economy initiatives associated to a cultural center such as Alma Consumer Cooperative. In this case, it is a phenomenon promoted by the community where the municipality is starting to notice this phenomenon.

6. Conclusion: Proposals towards the Implementation of a Creative City for Sustainable Development.

As a conclusion in this article we would like to suggest a series of proposals to promote the development of creative cities with a focus on sustainable development both from the public sector, as well as from civil society and the private sector.

- Incorporate the systemic focus of culture as a pillar of sustainability development both as a sector and as a transversal component present in all dimensions of development.
- Incorporate culture and sustainability in the design of regulation plans and other urban development regulations.
- Consider all diverse axis of sustainable development as established in UCLG's documents *Culture, the Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development*
- Generate multi-actor development strategies. Development strategies must contemplate collaborative work, integrated amongst public, private and civil society entities.
- Identify and strengthen priority areas of cultural intervention inherent of each city in order to promote their development.
- Generate governance or management structure for the implementation of already existing plans or initiatives.
- Generate indicators that measure the contribution of culture to sustainable development of the city.
- Generate skills for project and entrepreneurship management that allow the implementation of initiatives defined by the plan or strengthen those that already exist. Contemplate the training of cultural workers and agents for this model of creative cities for sustainable development. Create hubs, incubators and collaborative work platforms that strengthen projects and entrepreneurships from the point of view of culture for sustainability.
- Create initiatives with the purpose integration amongst different social members and avoid social urban segregation as a consequence of the process of gentrification that creative districts lead to.
- Consider integration, connection and permanent dialogue between urban and rural milieu. Also cover environmental initiatives for the city with the creative strategies.
- Implement cultural and sustainable development in small and medium-sized cities that possess human-scale conditions, social integration, local economy and environmental equilibrium.

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