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Basile Michel, Charles Ambrosino. Territorialised or without commitment: An in-depth analysis of “cultural and creative” activities in a post-industrial neighbourhood in Grenoble. *Espace Géographique*, 2019, 48 (1), pp.1-20. 10.3917/eg.481.0001 . halshs-03365416

**HAL Id: halshs-03365416**

**<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03365416>**

Submitted on 19 Aug 2022

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## **Territorialised or without commitment: An in-depth analysis of 'cultural and creative' activities in a post-industrial neighbourhood in Grenoble**

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### **To cite this article:**

MICHEL B. & AMBROSINO C. (2019). « Territorialised or without commitment: An in-depth analysis of "cultural and creative" activities in a post-industrial neighbourhood in Grenoble ». *L'Espace Géographique*, 48 (1), p. 1-20, DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.3917/eg.481.0001>

### **Open access online:**

<https://dx.doi.org/10.3917/eg.481.0001>

<https://www.cairn-int.info/journal-espace-geographique-2019-1-page-1.htm>

<https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-03365416>

### **Abstract:**

In the context of fusion of cultural and economic spheres, cultural and creative activities are increasingly seen as a homogenous whole despite persistent differences. In order to examine the relevance of this classification, this paper aims to examine the spirit of cultural and creative workers behind their participation in the social life of the urban neighbourhoods where they spatially agglomerate. Based on the research carried out in the post-industrial district of Berriat in Grenoble, an analysis of the cultural and creative workers' actions and networks leads to two distinct categories. Linked by common characteristics and a similar attachment to their neighbourhood, cultural workers on one hand and creative workers on the other are distinguished by the relations that they have with their home territory.

**Keywords:** art, creativity, culture, neighbourhood, worker

## Introduction

Several researchers have analysed the spatial agglomeration processes of the so-called “cultural and creative” activities<sup>1</sup> in former industrial neighbourhoods (Bell, Jayne, 2004; Evans, 2009; Ambrosino, 2013; Liefoghe, 2015a; Michel, 2018a). These neighbourhoods generally underwent radical changes spurred on by a combination (or not) of forces: urban renovation operations carried out by local authorities, development strategies of real estate professionals and establishment of activities related to the fields of culture, creation and creativity (Liefoghe, 2010). These territories thus occupied by artists, cultural players, facilities and entrepreneurs and subsequently, by various so-called “creative” organisations are often described indiscriminately as cultural (and/or creative) quarters (or clusters) (Roodhouse, 2006; Musterd *et al.*, 2007; Zarlenga *et al.*, 2013). A case of unstable vocabulary that certain researchers have incidentally attempted to resolve by trying to typify either the governance (public or private), the function (creative production, industrial reproduction or cultural and recreational consumption), or the level of intervention of the public sector (planned or otherwise) specific to each of the territories involved (Mommaas, 2004; Debroux, 2013).

There are fewer studies nevertheless which, instead of looking into the coordination modes of agglomerated players in these quarters, focused on the desire of the workers involved in “cultural and creative” structures to go beyond their professional obligations and engage in their neighbourhood territory to contribute to its unfolding social life. Apart from the analysis using the lens of gentrification (Zukin, 1982; Grésillon, 2002; Vivant, Charmes, 2008) or that of the connection between “neo-bohemia” and commerce (Lloyd, 2006; Cohendet *et al.*, 2010), there are, in fact, few studies on this specific issue. This is precisely one of the objectives of this paper. Clustering of the so-called cultural and creative activities into neighbourhoods whose image and life is fashioned by these very activities leads us to question the relations that these activities have with one another as well as with area where they are located. How do the cultural and creative workers interact with the neighbourhood where they work and in particular with their inhabitants? Do these workers wish to engage in the social life of the neighbourhood where they are established? Is there a difference in the relations that cultural workers on one hand and creative workers on the other have with the urban territories that they are involved in on a daily basis?

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<sup>1</sup> Cultural activities: performing arts, visual arts, cinema, publishing, video games, music, heritage, radio, television and video. Creative activities: architecture, design, digital sector, advertising (KEA, 2006).

With these questions, the second objective of this paper is to examine the merit of these workers gathering together to form a single category, as is the case in several institutional reports promoting “cultural and creative industries” (DCMS, 1998; HKU, 2010). What is the pertinence of distinguishing or on the contrary, grouping together the so-called “cultural and creative” activities into one single category to analyse them? To get a better insight on this issue, involvement in the neighbourhood’s social life, which qualifies as a form of openness to the local territory, is considered in this paper as a key analytical criterion that needs to be tested in order to highlight the similarity or difference between the cultural and creative workers. This paper does not by any means consider it morally and politically necessary for these workers to show this involvement. In addition, the level of commitment of these workers to their neighbourhood and the networks that they develop at this scale will be analysed.

In an attempt to throw light on these issues, we propose a micro-level analysis of the professional practices and relational networks of the cultural and creative workers in a neighbourhood, which is identified as being cultural and creative at the same time. This input makes it possible to highlight dimensions that are rarely the focus of research work on territories and cultural and creative fields (Comunian, 2012). It also makes it possible to raise the issue of government policies: to what extent does supporting and promoting these forms of activities (mostly as part of knowledge economy) become an opportunity for the authorities to participate in the development of social life in peri-central urban territories? The analysis will be based on studies carried out in Berriat (Grenoble). This former industrial and working-class neighbourhood has the advantage of currently agglomerating several cultural and creative activities after having hosted a number of alternative initiatives and players who were initially living in art squats.

This paper has three parts. The first one lays theoretical foundations to the existing debate about the notions of creative economy and cultural and creative industries before highlighting territorial dynamics that are specific to these with the category of “cultural and creative quarters”. After a box specifying the methodology used and the studies carried out, the second part presents the way culture finds itself at the core of Berriat’s social life as a result of art squats since the 1980s followed by the way in which the neighbourhood changed to become a “creative quarter” during the course of the 2000s. The third part shows how the cultural activities on one hand and the creative ones on the other differ with respect to openness to Berriat’s social life.

## Cultural and creative industries in cultural and creative quarters: Theoretical framework

### *Creative economy and cultural and creative industries: Categories in question*

Since early 2000s, creative activities have been considered as belonging to the artistic sector to form a vast group labelled as cultural and creative industries (Scott, 2000; O'Connor, 2010). It is the British Labour government which is partly responsible for the emergence of this categorisation and more generally, of the concept of creative economy through the publication of several reports on the topic (DCMS, 1998 and 2001). The main objective was to overcome the industrial crisis by highlighting the "cultural and creative" sectors identified as vectors of a possible economic revival and improve the country's image (Garnham, 2005). Thus, activities as varied as theatre, visual arts, design, publishing, architecture and music formed a homogeneous socio-economic group for the promoters of such labelling.

Since then, the category of cultural and creative industries has been re-used in several reports aiming to emphasize their economic importance in France (Jauneau, Niel, 2014; Ernest Young, 2015), Europe (KEA, 2006) and in the world (UNCTAD, 2010). The increase in the number of reports presenting these industries as one of the motors of economy in addition to the publication of books proposing "creative" development solutions for cities (Landry, 2000; Florida, 2002), generated interest among academic researchers who took on the subject using the same terminology (O'Connor, 2010; Comunian, 2012; Liefoghe, 2015b). Combining cultural and creative activities is based on the idea that the act of creation which characterises them constitutes a "work" (Menger, 2009) in its own right marked by the importance of the workers' creativity (Florida, 2005; Liefoghe, 2010), small size of the concerned companies (Grefe, Simonnet, 2008), employment conditions which are temporary, precarious and unstable all at the same time (Menger, 2002), promotion of personal dimensions in professional exchanges (Comunian, 2012), permanent "self-staging" (Vivant, 2011) and a strong capacity of adaptation shown by the players involved when faced with a competitive and uncertain context (Caves, 2000).

### *Artists, cultural and creative entrepreneurs: Converging professional trajectories?*

Research on the professional trajectories of artists, cultural and creative entrepreneurs reinforces the motives behind such a merger. For example, Ann Markusen and David King (2003) demonstrate how certain artists (from the fields of performing arts, visual arts, literature or music) trade their skills and their ideas for use in design, multimedia, communication and advertising sectors in the United States. In the same way, several case studies in Montreal in the field of digital art (Charrieras, 2010), design (Yagoubi, Tremblay, 2017) and video games (Roy-Valex, 2010) – fine-tune this perspective of inter-sector relations in metropolitan areas. The

logic of project-based work, competition for getting orders and an increase in the number of constraints thus pushes several creators and creative people to show entrepreneurial skills, which become necessary for their professional mobility. Despite this convergence of professional trajectories in the cultural and creative sectors, differences continue to exist between the fields of creation and creativity.

### ***Art versus cultural industries versus creative industries?***

This is the reason why certain authors try on the contrary to deconstruct this merger of artistic, cultural and creative work. For example, Boris Grésillon (2014) proposes to consider separately arts (performing arts and plastic arts), cultural industries (cinema, publishing, recorded music, etc.) and creative industries (architecture, design, etc.). According to him, the differences between these three types of activities in terms of the how coherent they are with market-oriented rationale justify the need to examine and analyse them separately. Though they are affected by the economic dynamics of the art market and money-related issues, artists focus on the creation of unique works of art without considering the sale or the consumption of the said work as the primary objective. They have a certain amount of freedom in their work and set up art projects (Paris, 2007). As for the cultural and creative companies, they try to create more reproducible products with the objective of selling them and getting a monetary profit. They function mainly in response to external client orders.

This categorisation has its limitations: not all the artists are committed to creating non-reproducible works without any business intent and not all cultural companies cater to external orders. However, the advantage is that it allows us to shift away from the broad typology of creative industries initially proposed by the British Labour government. For Gaëtan Tremblay (2008), this typology validating the consolidation of the cultural and creative activities is a ploy that allows the creative sector companies to benefit from the aura and prestige of arts and even apply for public aid on the same account as artistic activities. It would also correspond to the desire of its promoters (European Commission, United Nations, etc.) to artificially increase the economic weight of the cultural and creative sectors through a broad and disparate amalgamation with the final aim of accentuating creativity as the primary driving force behind current and future economic development. In doing so, a positive image of the “creative industries” is propagated, often hiding the fragility and uncertainty characterising artistic, cultural and creative professions (Vivant, 2011).

### ***Cultural quarters versus creative quarters***

Grouping together numerous activities under the label of creative economy adversely affects the analysis of the spatial and territorial dimensions of these activities. The notion of cultural or creative quarter is thus developed to characterise

the spatial agglomeration of activities in specific urban neighbourhoods (Montgomery, 2003; Bell, Jayne, 2004; Evans, 2009). This spatial agglomeration can be combined with relational networks connecting activities with one another (Vivant, 2009; Michel, 2018a), turning “cultural” or “creative” quarters into cluster entrenchment places (Roodhouse, 2006). These quarters are distinguished on the basis of three main criteria. First of all, the process of construction of creative quarters may correspond to top-down planning by the authorities or result from a bottom-up spontaneous agglomeration (Mommaas, 2004). Secondly, the position on the activity value chain pushes some quarters towards creation and production while others are committed to consumption and cultural dissemination (Mommaas, 2004; Evans, 2009). Thirdly, because of the nature of the live events, the type of the products generated in the quarter vary between artistic creations (art works), industrial reproductions (films, books, design objects, etc.) and production of creative goods and services (architectural projects, web design, etc.) (Debroux, 2013).

The combination of the last two criteria allows us to distinguish between “cultural quarters” and “creative industry quarters” with different functioning principles (Evans, 2009, p. 39). The former are mainly focused on local cultural development while the latter are oriented towards production and innovation in the creative sectors. The two principles may intersect in a territory such that the distinction between cultural and creative activities is blurred. Hence, the question arises about the impact of these activities on the functioning of cultural and creative quarters. Is the role played by cultural activities on one hand and creative activities on the other in these neighbourhoods similar? Do the differences between these activities as pointed out in the literature lead to different positions with respect to their desire to open up to the neighbourhood? Are their contributions to local social life thus different? The analysis of the Berriat district should allow us to shed some light on the question.

### **Berriat: From art squats to a creative quarter**

The Berriat district is interesting for this research as it was at the core of a spatial agglomeration of artists, cultural players and creative industries which led today to the copresence of cultural activities and creative activities. The methodology and studies carried out on this district are explained in detail in the box below (Box 1).

#### Box 1/ Methodology and field studies

This paper is based on qualitative research work carried out in two distinct periods in the Berriat district (in 2005, and subsequently in 2016)\* with a mix of semi-directive interviews, analysis of social networks, documentary research (archives, local press, etc.) and observation (in the cultural and creative activity work places and during cultural events). The 43 interviews were carried out in the neighbourhood (with an

average duration of one hour and ten minutes): 11 development officials and residents and 32 cultural and creative workers, defined in this paper as individuals working in cultural and creative sectors associations and industries. The interviews of these workers aimed to explore the following: the reasons for their choice of location; characteristics of the activity; the actions initiated at the neighbourhood level; relations with other players in this area (other cultural and creative activities, residents, etc.); their practices and representations of the neighbourhood. Following the interviews, an analysis of social networks was carried out in order to identify the personal and professional social relations developed at the neighbourhood level by each worker interviewed (use of Ucinet and Netdraw software). The observation phases and the analysis of the documentary sources (internet sites of the activities, etc.) allowed us to expand the research and confront the players' discourses interviewed with factual evidence.

In order to select players for the interviews, it was decided to include in the target population, all the activities grouped under cultural and creative sectors as defined in the institutional reports (KEA, 2006) in order to be able to explore its pertinence. Secondly, we distinguished cultural activities from creative activities by considering that the former are composed of companies and associations from the art sector (independent artists, artistic companies, theatres, etc.) while the latter included those from the cultural and creative "industries" (architects, designers, etc.). This classification does not correspond to an analytical framework laid down before carrying out the fieldwork. On the contrary, it emerged while analysing the interviews and was defined a posteriori in order to characterise the differences observed between these activities in terms of openness to the neighbourhood and its residents.

The sample of cultural and creative workers interviewed was chosen such that they were representative of the type of cultural and creative activities present in Berriat with 38 % of the persons working in the art sector, 25 % in architecture and 13 % in graphic design. They are composed of mainly young (57 % 20-39 years of age) women (69 %) and men (31 %). They live in the Berriat district (42 %) or elsewhere in Grenoble (42 %) and in the agglomeration (16 %).

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\*The main author carried out field interviews in 2016 while the second author carried out the ones in 2005. These two studies were carried out among the same types of players and with the same methodological tools. Pooling the material gathered during the course of these studies allowed us to retrace the evolutionary path of Berriat and led to a reflection about the interactions developed by the cultural and creative workers with their professional neighbourhood.

**Berriat: A creative quarter in the scientific metropolis of Grenoble**

Historically speaking, Grenoble is characterised by a development focused on technology and science, which made it a technopolitan city or even a scientific metropolis (Novarina, Seigneuret, 2015). In France, the city is reputed to be the second technological and scientific hub behind Paris (Courlet, Pecqueur, 2013).

Grenoble appears today at the forefront in microelectronics, nanotechnologies and biotechnologies with the presence of multiple players of these two sectors. Grenoble has in fact research organisations<sup>2</sup>, training institutes (Minatec campus, for example), a fabric of micro enterprises, major corporations (Hewlett-Packard, STMicroelectronics, etc.) and structuring facilities such as the synchrotron (particle accelerator).

The importance of technopolitan and scientific approach of the city is coupled with a strong development of cultural initiatives. Grenoble is known for its numerous festivals (Détours de Babel, Grenoble Jazz Festival, etc.) and cultural venues in the field of music as well as the presence of Musiciens du Louvre (an orchestra with an international reputation) and National Centre of Contemporary Art (Centre national d'Art contemporain or CNAC), Le Magasin (Photo 1). Generally speaking, Grenoble's inhabitants are satisfied with the local cultural events on offer (Bozonnet *et al.*, 2008). However, the degree of satisfaction varies significantly depending on the neighbourhood of residence. Berriat emerges as the most appreciated geographical sector for its diversity and abundance of cultural events as compared to Teisseire and Très-Cloître.

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<sup>2</sup> Commissariat à l'énergie atomique et aux énergies alternatives [Nuclear and Renewable Energy Commission], laboratoire d'électronique des technologies de l'information [Electronics and Information Technology Research Institute]...

**Photo 1/** National Centre of Contemporary Art: Le Magasin in Berriat



Photo taken by Michel B, 2016.

This popularity rating of the neighbourhood in terms of cultural events is explained by the concentration of the cultural players and facilities in this area as compared to the rest of Grenoble. For example, 8 of the 32 theatres and performance venues listed by the Town hall are located in Berriat, which makes it the main hub ahead of the city centre, which has only 7 such venues. A statement by the Project Manager at the city's Department of Cultural Affairs (Direction des Affaires culturelles or DAC) illustrates this concentration:

“If we take Berriat: a concert hall with a capacity of 800 seats, two theatres, two small modern music venues, well three if we include Le 102 plus the collective Mann'Art(e), I mean its incredible. In a neighbourhood like Berriat in a city like Grenoble, it is totally amazing so we are going to do everything to preserve it” – interview in April 2016.

Because of this concentration, the neighbourhood is identified as a “cultural” or “creative” quarter in Grenoble. This image is the result of historical anchorage of artistic dynamics in this area. The local authorities are well aware of this:

“Berriat has always been a cultural district in Grenoble” – Project Manager at the DAC of Grenoble, interview in April 2016.

It is hence important to analyse the historical dynamics, which make Berriat a neighbourhood known today as a “cultural” or “creative” place in Grenoble.

### ***Art squat maze: Culture at the core of social life in Berriat***

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Berriat flourished with the establishment of industrial activities: food industries, glove industries, mechanical and metallurgical industries (Giroud, 2007; Ambrosino, 2009). It emerged as the main industrial and working-class neighbourhood of Grenoble with 75 % of the workers and employees in 1930 (Barou, Duclos, 2003) notably employed in the penstock company Bouchayer-Viallet established in 1870.

The decline of industries in Berriat started in the 1950s and led to wasteland situations (Ambrosino, Andres, 2008). The slow and gentle urban transformation launched by the socialist government of Hubert Dubedout in the municipality in 1965 allowed conservation of empty spaces in the neighbourhood<sup>3</sup>. Located close to the city centre and the basic cultural infrastructure<sup>4</sup>, these empty spaces attracted several artists. In the early 1980s, they started settling here randomly before changing subsequently into “a true movement of invasion” (Ambrosino, Andres, 2008, p. 42). The artists emerged by way of collective art squats. Various places were occupied such as 102 rue d’Alembert (former cardboard factory), Frise brewery and Terray factory before the wasteland resulting from the departure of Bouchayer-Viallet company was occupied by several collectives. Thus, the neighbourhood emerged as the place with a high concentration of art squats in the city:

“We called it the squat maze”— artist member of a squat in the 1990s, interview in June 2016.

This spatial concentration of Grenoble’s informal artistic players was coupled with a local social network connecting them with one another through informal exchanges and mutual aid (Ambrosino, 2009). The players of this cultural cluster developed relations with the Berriat district. Culture was at the core of the social life of the neighbourhood with the presence of artists and the activities that they undertook (Ambrosino, 2009). The case of Brise-Glace, one of the most important art squats in the history of Berriat illustrates the case in point.

In 1995, this former building of the Société dauphinoise d’Études et de Montages is occupied by around ten artists who formed a collective association. Common events such as Open Doors were organised. This allowed them to open the place to local

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<sup>3</sup> The municipality wanted to rehabilitate the neighbourhood by giving priority to preserving the existing urban fabric and retaining its residents.

<sup>4</sup> Le Centre dramatique national des Alpes [National Drama Centre of the Alps] was established in Berriat in 1982 before being joined in by the CNAC Le Magasin in 1986.

people especially those living in the neighbourhood. In the collective, the company Ici-même developed an interactive and participative approach:

“We shifted from performances where the public is expected to watch and listen to performances where they interact. The interactive dimension is present all the time in all our events from the 2000s. That is, we ask the public to walk with us, to share an experience where we are side-by-side, where without the public, our performances do not exist” – founding artist of the company, interview in June 2016.

This approach was concretised in the company's art events. In 2000, with the project “Ici comme ailleurs vous êtes ici chez vous” [Here as elsewhere you are at home here], the artists proposed a survey of the Berriat district by following various art events. The objective was to encourage the residents and other users of Berriat to take ownership of public space. The events interlinked the neighbourhood and took on various forms: dances, readings, organisation of debates, film projections, etc. In 2001, the project “Espace à saisir” proposed a free visit of the Bouchayer-Viallet wasteland to the public while access to the place was legally prohibited. This visit was dotted with various artworks and gatherings: botanical garden, sound installations, etc. The participants were encouraged to lose themselves in the place and feel the state of abandonment. Through their actions, the artists of Brise-Glace and other Berriat squats rehabilitated an abandoned land. They gave back life to it by taking over the spaces present in the area. They associated the residents with it and created new practices of the wasteland. They belonged to the figure of the “geo-artist” who “shifts the centralities, contributes to the recreation of public space and participates in the emergence of a new ergonomics of the city” (Gwiazdzinski, 2014, p. 176).

### ***From art squats to creative quarter: What is the continuity of the relationship with the neighbourhood?***

Since 1983 and the arrival of Alain Carignon (Rally for the Republic) municipality's Mayor, urban renovation operations increased in the neighbourhood: Europole urban project, construction of a tramway line, reconversion of the Lustucru factories, etc. (Giroud, 2007). Following the change of Mayor with the election of Michel Destot (Socialist Party) in 1995, this pattern of urban revitalization was continued with, for example, the establishment of the urban planning area of Bouchayer-Viallet. New housing and office buildings were thus constructed with the price of real estate among the highest in the Grenoble agglomeration in the early 2000s (Giroud, 2007). They replaced spaces left as wasteland with the departure of the industry. In this context, the population of the neighbourhood evolved. Formerly a working class neighbourhood, Berriat underwent a gentrification process symbolised by an increase in the number of executives among the residents (from 14 % of the

population to 23 % between 1990 and 2013) and a decrease in that of workers (from 20 % to 7 % of the population between 1990 and 2013)<sup>5</sup>. A form of continuity of the working-class nature of neighbourhood is identified with the continuance of a strong cultural diversity and low-income groups (Giroud, 2007).

Tolerated during the wasteland time, and even heard during M. Destot's first term (1995-2001), the squat artists see free and re-adoptable places get reduced with progress in the renovation of Berriat neighbourhood, leading to the shift to the post-wasteland stage<sup>6</sup>. Henceforth, the underground cultural dynamics declined with the closure of several squats (Mandrak in 2003, Brise-Glace and the 400 covers in 2005, etc.). However, the activist movement of artists and historical cultural players such as the Cap Berriat association allowed them to restrict this decline (Photo 2). Some squat artists were rehoused in the neighbourhood by the city of Grenoble while others remained in their initial location by capitalising on an occupancy agreement. In addition, institutional and intermediary cultural players were retained in the neighbourhood (concert halls, theatres, CNAC) and were joined by Scène de musiques actuelles (SMAC) La Belle électrique in 2015 (Photo 3). Finally, numerous so-called "creative" enterprises were established in the neighbourhood in the 2000s. These enterprises were attracted by the combination of centrality, real-estate prices lower than the city centre and the artistic and industrial vibe inherited from the neighbourhood's history. Some of them were grouped together in private shared work spaces<sup>7</sup> and in the former chocolate factory Cémoi which was bought back by the city in 1979 and transformed into a business and association centre<sup>8</sup> (Photo 4).

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<sup>5</sup> INSEE figures.

<sup>6</sup> Some art squat collectives were able to benefit from a convention of precarious occupation accorded by the Town Hall, sometimes after strong protests by the artists and the residents (For example, Le 102 under Alain Carignon). Under Michel Destot, collectives like Brise-Glace benefitted from political attention through Deputy Mayors in charge of culture and economic development. In the early 2000s, the renovation of the last wastelands along with the change of Deputy Mayor in charge of culture following the re-election of M. Destot in 2001 made it more difficult to keep these collectives in Berriat.

<sup>7</sup> These spaces are offices shared by several independent small companies and associations which want to pool material, exchange or even cooperate with one another. These are coworking spaces used exclusively by permanent workers, that is, with an office assigned to the place (Michel, 2018c).

<sup>8</sup> The rates for renting proposed by Grenoble-Alpes Métropole are attractive in comparison to the private market as the objective is mainly to support the projects of young entrepreneurs.

**Photo 2/** Cultural association, Cap Berriat



Photo taken by Michel B, 2016.

**Photo 3/** La Scène de musiques actuelles [Contemporary music scene],  
La Belle électrique



Photo taken by Michel B, 2016.

**Photo 4/** The renovated Cémoi building in Berriat

Photo taken by Michel B, 2016.

Thus, the evolution of Berriat district follows the oft-observed trajectory of former industrial neighbourhoods occupied by artists followed by cultural and creative enterprises (Lloyd, 2006; Liefoghe, 2015a). While the alternative artistic dynamics declined because of the renovation projects, the cultural dimension of the neighbourhood did not disappear and was followed by a “creative” development. Berriat emerged as a neighbourhood with a “creative” image with a combination of cultural activities and creative activities (Fig. 1). The process of clustering these activities is mainly part of a spontaneous dynamics (bottom-up) though the municipality also played a role in the establishment of certain cultural venues in Berriat (for example, for La Belle électrique). In 2018, 174 cultural and creative activities were established in the neighbourhood, including 47 % in the former Bouchayer-Viallet wasteland which has now been renovated. These activities belong mainly to the sectors of art (41 %), architecture (26 %) and graphic design (9 %). Like the configuration of the cultural and creative sectors (HKU, 2010), they are characterised by a high number of very small-sized structures (81 % of the activities surveyed have less than five workers). In the Berriat district, these activities are mixed with economic players of other sectors. In Bouchayer-Viallet, major corporates of management and innovations in information technology (Atos, Bonitasoft, etc.) as well as players in entrepreneurship (Chambre de Métiers et de l’Artisanat, Réseau Entreprendre Isère, etc.) were established. Several local businessmen, restaurant owners and bar managers are also present, particularly in

Cours Berriat and Saint-Bruno Square. Their presence offers sites suitable for the development of a vibrant social life in the neighbourhood. Consequently, it is often called a “village” by its residents and other users (Szántó, 2004; Michel, 2018b).

**Fig. 1/** Location of the cultural and creative activities of the Berriat district



In this new context, what has happened to the relations developed with the neighbourhood by squat artists during the wasteland period? Did the subsequent cultural and creative activities have the same role of creating spaces for meeting and exchanging with Berriat residents?

## **Engagement with the social life of Berriat. The difference between “cultural and creative” activities**

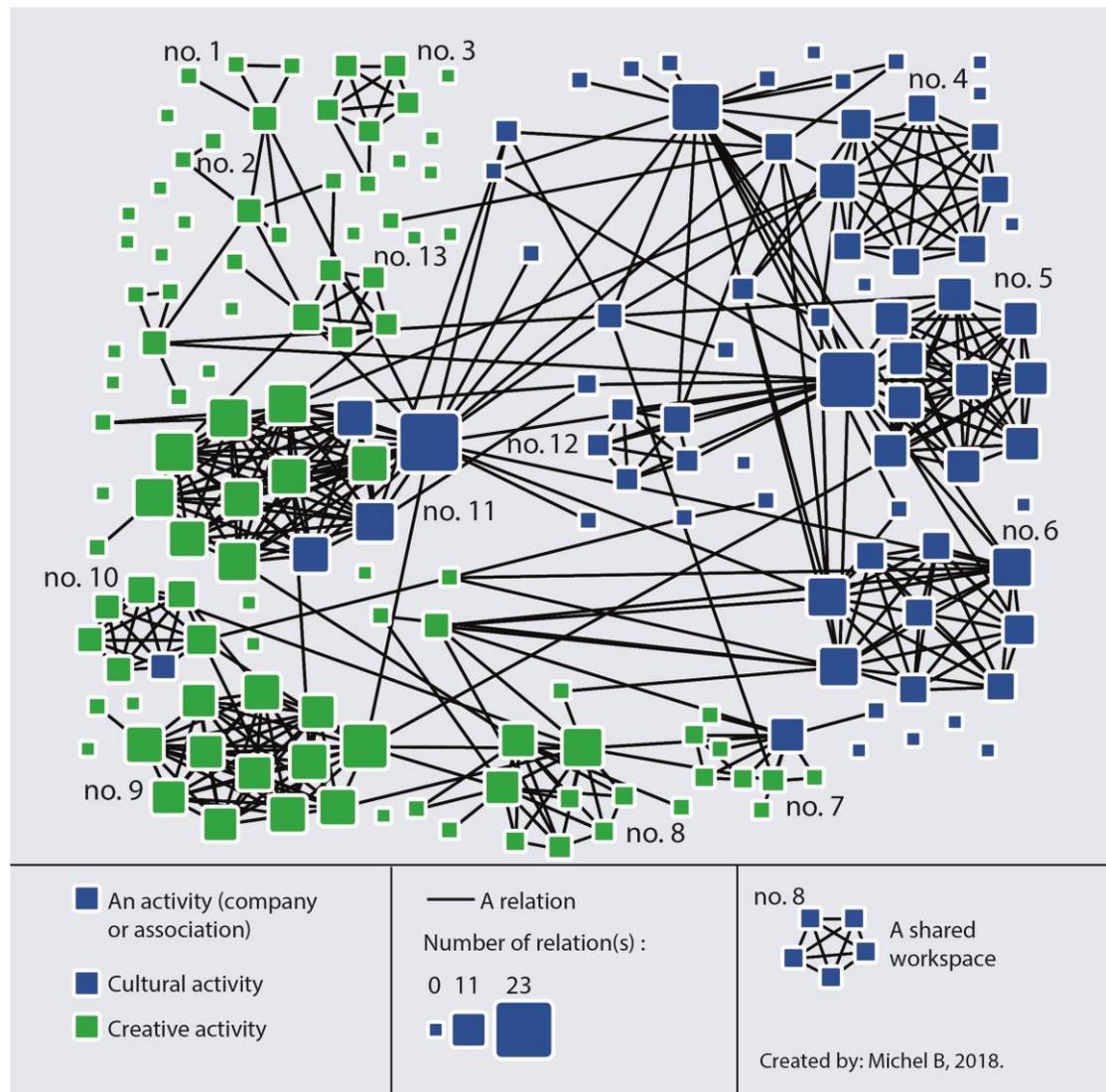
### ***The two distinct sub-networks of the cultural and creative cluster of Berriat***

In the Berriat district, the cultural and creative activities build collaborative relations. They exchange information, loan equipment to one another and set up projects together. A true local collaborative network is built on the basis of a strong spatial proximity (location in the same neighbourhood) and affinity-based proximity (affiliation to the same networks) among the workers. The cooperation and the products resulting from this clustering are divided into two main categories. Firstly, the artists and the cultural structures create collaborations based on the showing of the artistic creations. Collective events are organised and help to provide visibility to the local cultural program and attract public. Secondly, architects, designers and other creative industries collaborate in a business-to-business model without any direct link with the public or the consumers. The objective of the relations is the production of “creative” goods and services.

Thus the cultural and creative cluster embedded in Berriat is in reality made up of two distinct sub-networks that co-exist with limited interactions: one composed of cultural activities (71 activities) and the other of creative activities (103 activities). The internal relational network in each of these sub-networks is dense with a respective average of 5.3 and 4.1 relations per activity. The density of the networks connecting the two sub-networks is significantly lower because the average number of relations per activity is 0.8. The existence of these sub-networks connected internally but partly isolated from one another is highlighted by Figure 2.

The presence of these two distinct sub-networks in Berriat demonstrates a difference in the position taken by the cultural activities on one hand and the creative activities on the other with respect to their openness to the neighbourhood.

**Fig. 2/** Collaborative network of the cultural and creative activities in the Berriat district



**Cultural activities: A commitment to Berriat neighbourhood's social life**

The majority of the cultural activities in Berriat stand up for a philosophy of opening culture and cultural places to the neighbourhood residents and users (75 % of the interviewed cultural workers). It is manifest in the importance of the structures that are part of social economy (économie sociale et solidaire - Ess) in the neighbourhood's cultural activities (75 % of the associations for the survey sample). Social economy is presented as an alternative to capitalism whereby organisations try not to follow the logic of economic profit, function democratically and develop an activity for general interest (Laville, 2011). However, recourse to the status of an association, which is a part of social economy, is an operational and a nearly mechanical choice in the cultural sector (Hearn, 2014). For some project initiators, it seems to be the easy solution and does not correspond to a political and social commitment. Thus, in the case of Berriat, opening up to the local territory advocated

by cultural activities is part of a strategy seeking visibility as well as to attract and retain local audience. However, it also corresponds to their desire to be involved in ensuring local entertainment in order to blend in and play a social and cultural role. One of the founding members of the artist collective, Barbarins Fourchus, established in Berriat since 1999, talks about this commitment:

“We saw some places that were not open to the outside at all, which are open from 8pm to 10pm and that’s it. That’s not how we saw things, we thought “no no, we have to be open, meals, public rehearsals, etc.” – Interview in June 2016.

This commitment is concretised by means of several actions aiming to create moments for meetings and exchanges in the neighbourhood. In the venue managed by them, Barbarins Fourchus create writing workshops, concert-cocktails, music workshops, ball dances, film projections, neighbourhood feasts, public rehearsals, etc. They facilitate interactions between their cultural project and the Berriat neighbourhood. These actions are merged with initiatives developed by other cultural workers in the neighbourhood. The Mann’Art(e) collective organises several open events for the inhabitants such as Christmas in the Balcony. The associations Histoires De created a board game “Memory of my neighbourhood” with students and old people in the neighbourhood, followed by a multimedia guide “Raconte-moi Berriat Saint-Bruno”<sup>9</sup>. All these actions illustrate the manner in which cultural activities are introduced in the neighbourhood and help to enliven the local social life. Like the association Et à Fond dedicated to batucada practice<sup>10</sup> and which organises concerts and shared meals in neighbourhood public places, cultural workers integrate the Berriat neighbourhood in their project and professional practices:

“Since several years, the association Et à Fond had the intention of adhering to this area [Berriat]. It's something we repeat often and we have put it into practice by creating and developing meetings with individuals as well as practice venues for the local people” – manager of the association Et à Fond, interview held in April 2016.

The collective dynamics that links the local cultural activities with one another reinforces the scale of the actions developed. The neighbourhood’s annual feast is an example. The cultural association Le Stud which manages the performance hall Ampérage, coordinates this gathering in partnership with Union du Quartier (resident association). The association calls for proposals whereby all the cultural activities of Berriat are requested to help in providing entertainment at this festive

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<sup>9</sup> The guide is available online: <http://www.histoiresde.fr/raconte-moi-Berriat-Saint-Bruno/>, consulted on 23/01/2018.

<sup>10</sup> La Batucada is an orchestra of Brazilian percussions.

event taking place in public places and markets. This way of functioning generates a single cooperation mode based on the participation of the community of cultural workers in the organisation and production of cultural events open to one and all. Other events of this type emerge from the collaboration of cultural activities. As part of the Day and Night Festival that it organises, La Belle électrique develops concerts in Berriat's cultural places (Salle Noire, CNAC Le Magasin, Ampérage), creates a discovery tour of the neighbourhood with Histoire De and organises meets between Cap Berriat's graffiti artists and the residents.

In the end, the involvement of cultural workers in opening up to Berriat's inhabitants results in an attachment to this neighbourhood. The long work of integration in the area carried out daily helps to create a lasting connection between the cultural players and the neighbourhood. It is this connection that led Barbarins Fourchus to remain in Berriat despite having been forced to change their location:

“For a performing arts company, to arrive in a neighbourhood, it takes years of work because things don't happen fast and because we don't just land up at someone's place and say “Hi, its me, come see how amazing what I do is”. And as we worked our asses off for a certain number of years to open this famous Théâtre 145 by saying “but look, there is nothing sacred inside, everyone can come, we can do things”, we wanted to pursue the work here (in Berriat)” – the collective's founder, interview in June 2016.

### ***Creative activities: A more limited involvement in the neighbourhood***

The majority of the creative workers based in Berriat do not have any connection with the local residents and do not express any desire to develop one (64 % of the creative workers interviewed<sup>11</sup>). This finding is based on the nature of the activity of these workers. Architects, designers and graphic artists are engaged in professional projects, which demand a lot of investment in terms of time and economic gains without having to develop relations with the local population. Hence, openness to the neighbourhood is not a concern. The absence of structures belonging to social economy in the local creative activities symbolises the difference in the objective differentiating them from cultural activities. Priority is given to the development and the survival of the enterprise, especially in the case of very small structures. In order to survive in the context of uncertainty and competition that characterises the “creative” sectors (Caves, 2000; Menger, 2002), the latter are encouraged to cluster and join peer networks (Grefe, Simonnet, 2008). The aim of these networks is to stimulate innovation and growth of the companies and not of opening out to a local

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<sup>11</sup> The remaining 36 % of the creative workers have informal relations developed spontaneously with the local residents (mutually beneficial neighbourhood relations, friends living in the neighbourhood).

area with a purely social objective. The presence of a sub-network of creative activities collaborating on a business-to-business model in Berriat fits into this framework.

Collaborations developed between the local creative activities aim to produce “creative” projects. An independent graphic artist is, for example, sought after by a communication agency on occasional projects in order to produce exhibition panels, brochures, corporate identity graphics, etc. Another independent graphic artist produces illustrations of real estate projects secured by an architect. The most common case is the association of several architects and landscape architects of the neighbourhood to respond collectively to calls for proposals in the building construction sector and complete the projects obtained:

“When there is a call for proposals, we make teams and there you go, it’s smooth, it’s fast. In two minutes, the team is created and we are ready!” – architect, interview held in June 2016.

These different examples show that the issue of openness to the neighbourhood and its residents does not appear in the reality of the networks of creative activities. In this perspective, some of the creative workers do not develop any specific attachment with the neighbourhood. For them, Berriat is neither more nor less than the place where their office is located:

“I just cross the neighbourhood when I am going to work or I go to buy something to eat at noon. So, I don’t take part in the neighbourhood life [...] I am just a neighbourhood passenger” (architect, interview held in June 2016).

However, this position remains that of a minority (46 % of the creative workers interviewed). Most of the creative workers are interested in the neighbourhood. They are concerned by the place in which they are professionally rooted and are attached to it, which tends to bring them closer to the cultural workers in terms of relationship with the neighbourhood. The key words<sup>12</sup> that they use to define Berriat, which are identical to the ones cited by the cultural workers, demonstrate this fact. For them, this neighbourhood is a “convivial” and “lively” “village” marked by a “cultural diversity”. A landscape architect speaks of this attachment:

“In fact, I started having roots in the neighbourhood and then finding it quite nice [...] personally, I like the social diversity here” – interview held in April 2016.

While the involvement of the cultural workers in the social life of Berriat is not present among the creative workers, the latter nevertheless develop an attachment

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<sup>12</sup> At the end of the cultural and creative workers’ interviews, they were asked to list some key words defining the Berriat district according to them.

with the neighbourhood, which softens the opposition between cultural and creative activities with respect to their position regarding this neighbourhood.

## Conclusion

The case of Berriat illustrates the dynamic trajectories that former working-class neighbourhoods might undergo after artists settle in following the industrial decline in the second half of the twentieth century. As is the case of the Olivettes neighbourhood in Nantes (Michel, 2017) and Poblenou in Barcelona (Ballester, 2013), the underground artistic dynamics which emerged during the wasteland time and which led to the revival of enthusiasm for the spaces, becomes weak as urban renovation progresses, but not without opposition. Continued presence of artists and the arrival of creative companies thus create a co-presence of workers from the worlds of culture and creativity whereby tentative connections between them are forged.

The analysis of professional practices and relational networks of these workers, carried out at a micro-level in this paper, makes it possible to streamline elements of comprehension of post-industrial dynamics at play in this type of neighbourhood. In the case of Berriat, this analysis throws light on the different positions of cultural workers on one hand and the creative workers on the other in terms of openness to the neighbourhood:

1) The former are involved in the creation of place and time for exchanges with the residents and develop collaborative networks aiming to amplify their own individual actions<sup>13</sup>. Over time, the initiatives led by them are territorialised and end up influencing the neighbourhood's identity.

2) By the very nature of their work, the latter are focused on the production of goods, services and creative projects without any direct link with the neighbourhood residents and users. For all that, their anchorage is not less (partially) local, but it is deployed via peer networks that are activated with the aim of developing projects and ensuring the survival of companies subject to an extremely competitive economic system. While the spatialisation of these activities is evident, their embedding in the neighbourhood social structures remains more tenuous and selective<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> This position is of course not shared by all the cultural players but by a large majority (75 % in the case of Berriat).

<sup>14</sup> The absence of involvement by the creative workers in the social life of their work neighbourhood has some exceptions such as creative enterprises with the status of social economy (ESS) dedicated to social entertainment in the creative quarters of Les Olivettes and Le Panier (Michel, 2017).

Thus the development model of the cultural and creative quarters appears better integrated in its immediate environment with the presence of cultural activities in that more connections are developed with the local territory (residents, users etc.) by the latter than by the creative companies. With the aim of promoting social life in the neighbourhoods, support for cultural activities, in particular those coming under social economy, thus appears to be a possible lever for the authorities while support for creative activities falls more under the domain of economic development.

The case of Berriat helps us to distinguish the cultural activities and the creative activities clearly in terms of interactions with the neighbouring territory. From this point of view, these activities belong to two distinct categories, which should be considered separately and not as a homogeneous group. The co-presence in the neighbourhood of two networks that are partially isolated from one another provides an additional element for their distinction. The common points connecting these activities are based on the importance of creation work, their tendency to be spatially present in the same neighbourhood and develop a form of attachment with it.

On the basis of these common points, various studies have analysed these activities together, more or less highlighting their differences (Scott, Leriche, 2005; Foord, 2008; Michel, 2018a). In view of the conclusions of this paper, and with the objective of pursuing research on the topic, it seems necessary not to assimilate them into a unified group. It also seems essential to systematically question the pertinence of the classifications applied to these activities by taking into consideration the general data on the cultural and creative sectors as well as the specific contexts on the field.

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