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What tourists ignore

Ambivalences, conflicts and compromises in a changing neighbourhood

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Abstract

In recent years, the commodification of the urban culture and the promotion of visitors' economy have become relevant strategies in urban redevelopment. This is especially true for those cities that want to move away from a fordist past and to re-invent new patterns of development. Through the analysis of the transformation of the multicultural, mixed class neighbourhood of San Salvario (Turin, Italy) into a place of leisure, entertainment and consumption, the paper examines the ambivalences and the social impacts of these patterns. Investigating discourse, practices and forms of resistance and protest, it highlights the relevance of observing the everyday dimension. It argues that even if it is possible to identify three main set of actors, namely local authorities, residents and commercial owners, each set is far from being homogeneous and uniform: different discourses, positions and reactions are present within each set of actors.

Introduction

This paper intends to investigate narratives and practices that react to the affirmation of urban areas as places of leisure and consumption. In recent years, the commodification of the urban culture and the promotion of visitors' economy have become relevant strategies in urban redevelopment. However, these development patterns do not take shape in previously empty spaces, but in areas of the city where other functions were already existent. That may lead to different form of reactions and interaction between different discourses and practices. Ambivalences and differences are always present in the use of space: there is a continuous negotiation, a constant co-existence of different visions, interpretations and thinking over of the same urban space. In certain moments these ambivalences may originate tensions and, eventually, protests and conflicts. While considering their connection to broader dynamics of change, this paper mainly highlights the common, ordinary, everyday-life expressions of these phenomena. To observe the everyday level allows us to perceive the tangible form and the concrete impact of these dynamics, tracing practices and narratives while they take form.

To deepen these arguments, the case of the neighbourhood of San Salvario (Torino, Italy) is taken under analysis. Over the time different narratives have shaped the popular thinking about this area. The one concerning its transformation from a mixed class, gritty, multicultural neighbourhood into a new place for leisure, night-time entertainment and tourist consumption, is currently the more relevant one. This case therefore offers the chance to investigate narratives and practices of resistance and protest that have risen around this transformation. In addition it allows some remarks over the main actors of these

dynamics and their interactions. The first paragraph outlines the theoretical framework of the analysis. After some methodological notes, the research setting will be investigated, illustrating how Turin, a typical example of fordist city, has adopted a pattern of redevelopment connected to urban tourism and consumption. The role and position of the neighbourhood of San Salvario in these broader dynamics of change will be then considered. Finally, the paper will focus on sources and forms of protest and conflict, highlighting their protagonists and the relevance of the continuous interaction between them.

1. Cities and neighbourhoods as places of leisure and tourist consumption

It has been largely acknowledged that cities have become central knots of political and economic power, globally competing within each others in attracting scarce resources (Ache *et al.*, 2008; Brenner, 2000; Harvey, 1998). The logic of global competitiveness often enhances discourses and approaches focusing more on economic growth and development rather than on issues of social cohesion and collective well being (Bourdreau, 2003). At the same time, the progressive decline of industrial model has lead to the affirmation of new discourses of development: a new economic order, variously referred as symbolic economy (Zukin, 1995), experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1998), cognitive and cultural economy (Scott, 2006), has made its appearance. In this new model, leisure, entertainment and consumption have acquired a central role. While much consumption still involves the satisfaction of everyday basic needs, the concept has shown a certain pervasive power. Anything can become an object of consumption: not only goods and services, but also cultures, experiences, places. Tourism might be considered a form of consumption itself (Dodson, 2000; Urry, 1995). Combining tourism, culture and consumption has become a common strategy in planning city remaking (Aytar and Rath, 2012; Fainstein, 2007; Zukin, 1995). Moreover, interpreting the city as an entertainment machine has drawn the attention on amenities as drivers of urban growth (Clark *et al.*, 2002). The recent interest of cities in urban branding (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005), falls within this course: in order to attract global flows of tourism, investments and people, the construction of a positive an interesting images of the city is considered a fundamental tool. In a time when the boundaries between production and consumption, work and leisure, economy and culture become blurry, also the one between 'home' and 'abroad' may in some cases be ineffective (Dodson, 2000):

practices of leisure and consumption bring together tourists, city users, visitors and temporary urban citizens of different kind.

In this frame, specific districts have been selected, developed and marketed as new destination for both internal and external users of the city. If different types of tourist city may be identified (Fainstein, 2007), it is also possible to underline that even within the same city different portions of space might be enjoyed, for different reasons, by different kind of users. The trend towards a diversification and individualization in the mode of travelling and tourists' interests, the quest for urban authenticity (Zukin, 2008), the affirmation of consumption as a means for social distinction (Bourdieu, 1984) may then explain the recent development of tourism in neighbourhoods "beyond the beaten path" (Huning and Novy, 2006). These neighbourhoods, gritty and diverse areas, often on the fringe of city centres, are made accessible, safe and visually appealing to visitors who are usually considerably more affluent than the local original population (Shaw *et al.*, 2004). A relevant aspect, as well as a marker, of this trend is the growing development of night-time urban playscapes, namely spaces where the interrelation among production, regulation and consumption of night-time activities takes place (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002). A buzzing, vibrant, lively nightlife is almost all the time present in the advertisement of the main tourist cities – and a must-have for every aspiring one. It is in fact considered a central component of the mix of lifestyle options that local government should offer in order to promote the city and attract new flows of resources and people (Florida, 2002; Vanolo, 2008). It is also often considered a valid instrument to redevelop previously derelict neighbourhoods and to foster the neighbourhood economy (Hae, 2011). While some scholars argue that leisure and entertainment may revalorize deprived neighbourhood only at the expense of long-term residents and businesses (Zukin, 1995; Shaw *et al.*, 2004), others underline that empowering visitor economy in these areas may benefit exactly those already living, working or doing business there (Rath, 2007). In these cases, the institutional and regulatory system that frames this process appears to be crucial (Aytar and Rath, 2012).

Such destinations can also be sites of tension and conflict, particularly whenever the new trends challenge existing place values and established routines (Cooper and Mele, 2002; Deener, 2007; Dredge, 2010). In fact the development of neighbourhoods as spaces of leisure and consumption involves the construction of specific discourses, narratives and models of re-development, that selects some functions, uses and images of the city over

others. The construction of selective narratives is a common and often hidden practice in which chosen elements of the past and the present are assembled together in creating a preferred identity and in emphasizing specific cultural, social, economic and political characteristics over others. These narratives are indeed not only descriptive but also directional, since they produce coherent stories, prescribing and proscribing certain paths of development and change (Cooper and Mele, 2002). Cafés, restaurants, clubs, embody a powerful discourse of urban change that may benefit some and exclude others, institutionalizing the consumption practices of more affluent residents and users in place of others (Zukin *et al.*, 2009). The creation of urban entertainment zones transforms certain urban neighbourhoods into nocturnal playgrounds for specific kinds of cultural consumption, attracting a mix of tourist and city residents and institutionalizing uses and practice in place of others (Crivello, 2011; Hae, 2011; Ocejo, 2011). From the clashes between different uses and practices, forms of resistance and conflict may therefore emerge.

2. Methodological note

The considerations and the analysis in this paper are based on an ethnographic research carried on in the neighbourhood of San Salvario, Turin. As part of my PhD research project, I spent about a year and a half, from February 2011 till August 2012 observing and analysing the change of the neighbourhood of San Salvario and the social impacts of this transformation. A specific attention has been devoted to observe dynamics and actors of the process of commercial gentrification. The attention towards everyday life actions and practices has been combined to a multilevel analysis, careful to broader economic, political and social dynamics, focusing on their intersections in a specific setting. I have adopted different data collection methods, mainly participant and naturalistic observation, in-depth interviews and archival researches. The participant observation has been done in different sites: the everyday actions and interactions taking place in different spaces and places of the neighbourhood (streets, shops, clubs, cafés), the Italian courses for foreign women in the Mosque, and the Casa del Quartiere di San Salvario. This is a space dedicated to cultural and social activities, promoted and managed by the Agency for the Development of San Salvario, that I used to attend weekly, both as a user and as a volunteer of two of the associations using that space for their activities. As soon as I decided to focus my attention on this neighbourhood I started looking for an accommodation in the area and I managed to move

in San Salvario in June 2011, staying there till August 2012. Living in the neighbourhood has given me the chance to know the area under different aspects, times of the day and periods of the year, observing the everyday "ballet of the sidewalks" (Jacobs, 1961) and to get in touch with other residents, associations' representatives, shopkeepers and users in an informal and familiar way. The method of qualitative interviews has been adopted as well. The result is a body of around seventy recorded interviews, lasting between 30 and 120 minutes each. The interviews have been conducted with different kinds of actors: politicians (of both neighbourhood and city level), residents, associations' representatives, shopkeepers and entrepreneurs (owning or managing shops, café, restaurants, pubs, studios or working in the hospitality sector). Lastly, archival records were used to find more information about the area as well as a source of narrations and representations of the neighbourhood itself. I have regularly visited the online blogs of associations and retailers and I have picked up local booklets, brochures and publications about the neighbourhood. I have also collected newspaper articles from the local editions of La Stampa and La Repubblica from June 2011 to October 2012, with some incursions in the previous and following periods.

In the second part of my fieldwork the pace of the transformation's process became faster. Along with a process of commercial gentrification, a growing affirmation of nighttime businesses started to shape the character of the area, raising new issues and tensions. Even if that was not the core of my research project, this paper is a restitution of my attempts to investigate those dimensions as well.

3. Toward a post-fordist city?

Turin is the capital of the Piedmont region, in the North-West of Italy, and it is the fourth Italian city in terms of population, with around 900.000 inhabitants in 2011. The city used to be considered an industrial city, worldwide known as the city of FIAT, the largest automobile manufacturer in Italy, having its headquarters in Turin since its foundation in 1899. For almost a century, the whole city, its external image as well as its own identity have been strongly tied with the industry. Its economy, its rhythm, its social and cultural life, its demographical changes: everything was shaped around the FIAT industry and its satellite activities, making Turin a typical company town and assessing the industrial work as a central feature of Turin's social identity (Bagnasco, 1986).

The general crisis of the fordist mode of production and of the industrial centred economy hit the city between the end of the Eighties and the beginning of the Nineties. The crisis of the one-company town model occurred in a specific political juncture characterized by wide crisis and lack of legitimacy that caused a transformation in the balance of the local politic assets. In that phase, the needs to put the city forth, to differentiate the economic base and to imagine new path of development were considered as central. Part of the efforts has been devoted to affirm a new and attractive image of the city, in order to globally compete with other cities in attracting flows of people and resources. In some aspects, "the history of urban branding in Turin may be read as a history of progressive emancipation from FIAT" (Vanolo, 2008: 374). Municipal and regional governments, business communities and private-public actors have gathered around the adoption of a pro-growth approach. This model has been then modulated along three different lines: the development of infrastructures and built environment, the development of research and knowledge centres, and, finally, the development of leisure, entertainment and tourist consumption (Belligni and Ravazzi, 2013). The adhesion to a pro-growth rhetoric has been extensively shared not only by political and economic forces, but also by intellectual and associative ones. The three lines of redevelopment have known different fortune and relevance in the last twenty years, but the prominent one has appeared to be the one related to leisure, consumption and creativity (Belligni and Ravazzi, 2013). This new direction took form in the first strategic plan of the city, approved in 2000, and it was confirmed in the second strategic plan, released in 2006 (Crivello, 2011; Vanolo, 2008). Municipal governance and local economic forces have worked together to brand a new image of culture, creativity and tourist charm and to set up a supply of spaces and services for leisure and entertainment (Belligni and Ravazzi, 2013). Mega-events such as the Winter Olympic Games in 2006, Turin World Design Capital in 2008, Italia 150 in 2011, are just a part, even if probably the most visible one, of this strategy. These mega-events had the merit of giving new visibility to the city, opening Turin to both a national and an international audience. The number of tourists has risen from 2.2 in 2000 to 3.8 milion in 2012[1]. Apparently, the efforts of the city have been noticed also abroad: in June

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[1] Exactly 2,199,480 presences in 2000 and 3,841,306 in 2012 in the metropolitan area of Turin. Data from Osservatorio Turistico Regionale Regione Piemonte. Annual reports available at http://www.regione.piemonte.it/turismo/cms/turismo/osservatorio-turistico.html .
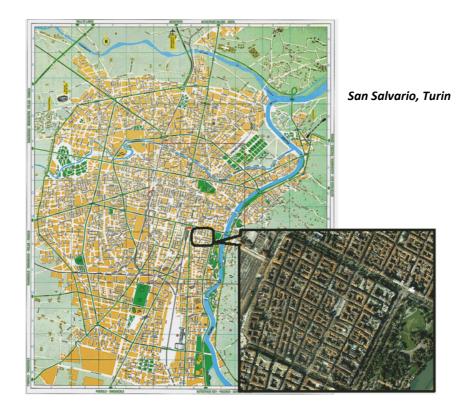
2012 an article on Turin has been published in the travel section of the New York Times, stating that "Turin is revving its engine"[2]. Some assets and resources, already existing but previously left in the background, started to be reinforced and marketed for the sake of tourist and city users (Vanolo, 2008). Between them: the rich historical heritage, the museum centers, the excellence in food and wine. Along with these dimensions, a growing relevance was given to nighttime entertainment activities too (Crivello, 2011). The celebration of Turin as a lively, exciting city as well as the promotion of the features of creativity, urban culture and street life have acquired a central position in city branding (Vanolo, 2008). The promotion and the celebration of a vibrant nightlife, of a dynamic cultural and artistic scene, of an alternative and authentic atmosphere go together in this direction. This model of development has inspired and shaped the political agenda, the actions and the discourses of local authorities over the last fifteen years. The vision of Turin as a city that has been able to embrace the challenge of the transition to a post-fordist society and to get the most out of a situation of crisis is a rhetoric that is widely spread in the local society. Its diffusion is so intimately deep-rooted that any critics or doubts seem to violate a sort of mutual agreement. The implicit social costs of this transition seem far to be fully acknowledged (Belligni and Ravazzi, 2013). In these broader dynamics of change, analyzing the trajectory of the neighbourhood of San Salvario allows us to reflect on the pervasion of these narratives and on their impact on everyday life practices. It also offers us the chance to track the presence of different discourses shaping the image of the neighbourhood, unveiling ambivalences and sources of tensions.

4. The neighbourhood of San Salvario between discourses and practices

The neighbourhood of San Salvario was developed between the middle and the end of the Ninetieth Century, in the period right after the demolition of the city walls. It is placed on the edge of the historical city centre, tightened between the central railway station and the big park that runs along the Po river. The streets are narrow, usually one-way only, the fabric is dense. According to the original urban plan, the area combines both commercial and residential use: almost each building has a commercial space on the ground floor and

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[2] June 28, 2012, New York Times, "36 Hours in Turin". The article may be consulted online at
http://travel.nytimes.com/2012/07/01/travel/36-hours-in-turin-italy.html

San Salvario, Turin

residences at the upper ones. These commercial spaces, once occupied by day-time stores and craftsman workshops, now host mainly cafés, restaurants and clubs. The upper floors maintain for the most part the residential vocation: the commercial and residential functions therefore share the same urban space. Since it was developed around the period of the declaration of freedom of worship of 1848, the area hosts Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and lately Muslim places of worship. The neighbourhood has been always characterized by a high degree of social mix, with a spatial distribution of working class in the area right next to the station and of middle and upper classes in the area near the river and the park, also because of the presence of the Valentino Castle, heritage of Savoy's period now hosting a section of the University of Turin (Ires Piemonte, 1995). The proximity to the station strongly characterizes the neighbourhood: the area has always been a first landing zone for people arriving in Turin, firstly from the rural area around the city, then from the South of Italy and, since the Eighties, from other countries.

In the mid-Nineties, the neighbourhood experienced a climate of social tension and distress, in which issues of inter-ethnic coexistence, building deterioration, small retailer crisis and industrial decline merged together. San Salvario became nationally known as an emblem of urban crisis in which simmering tensions, mainly connected to migrants' presence, suddenly exploded in concrete manifestations (Allasino *et al.*, 2000). In that period, the

neighbourhood was the scene of several demonstrations against migrants living, working or simply hanging around the district: according to the protesters, the entire area was becoming increasingly dangerous, degraded and unattractive owing to their presence. The explicit manifestation of the crisis triggered the intervention of both public institutions and civil society. The concrete interventions of municipal authorities were mainly related to the issues of public safety and building deterioration, with some infrastructural actions on public spaces. At the same time, residents' committees and social associations carried on initiatives and projects to mediate the conflicts and to facilitate a pacific coexistence. Few years later, the neighbourhood began to be considered a model of successful multi-ethnic integration. Besides, a growing population of students, young artists, architects and designers started to live and/or work in the neighbourhood. The cheap rents, the empty storefronts, the proximity to the city centre and the University together with the traditional presence of craftsmen and workshops, and a gritty, a little bit dangerous, ethnically diverse, authentic atmosphere contributed to attract new inhabitants. Along with old stores and ethnic shops, new stores, restaurants and clubs started spreading over the neighbourhood. The owners of these new commercial and recreational activities were mostly part of the new population of the neighbourhood with whom they shared tastes and needs. A number of independent artistic and musical events have taken place in the last few years, contributing to characterize the neighbourhood as the new fancy area of the city. Over the last couple of years, the popularity of the neighbourhood has grown to a fast pace. The number of new openings has been constantly rising, with a growing predominance of night-time entertainment businesses: restaurants, cafés, clubs are now the main markers of the commercial landscape of the area. The neighbourhood economy is shifting from a prevalence of day-time to night-time activities, with a progressive replacement and displacement of ethnic shops or traditional retails. These new activities are often owned and managed by a second wave of entrepreneurs, professionals of the entertainment economy who often own other venues in other areas of the city.

The image of the neighbourhood has deeply changed along the last twenty years, knowing different moments of decline and rise. In the mid-Nineties the neighbourhood was depicted by media and local authorities as a national example of urban crisis and inter-ethnic tensions (Allasino *et al.*, 2000). Ten years later it was considered a positive model of multicultural integration, a colorful, multi-ethnic area where it was possible to have a taste of something

more exotic. Then it was the turn of underlining the commercial and recreational redevelopment. In the last couple of years there have been the affirmation of a growing numbers of restaurants, cafés and clubs that, firstly welcomed, have shifted the neighbourhood towards nighttime entertainment and visitor economy. Alternate moments of fortune and decline have been present within each phase of change, and each of these discourses have framed the space in which tensions, conflicts and negotiations have taken place. Change is a cumulative and continuous process, and different trends, negotiations and ambivalences are always present in the same moment in the same space (Deener, 2007). Nowadays, different discourses shape the popular view of the neighbourhood, differently stressing on diverse characters considered central. It is not surprising, since different discourses and contradictory realities are always present in shaping the popular thinking over an urban space (Novy, 2012). The nightlife seems currently the central character of the predominant narrative about the area. This narrative is the frame in which public discourse, actions and reactions currently take place and have to deal with. San Salvario is branded and presented as a place that "has everything you need for a perfect night out"[3]. The neighbourhood has gained its own spot on the travel guide of the city and on the travel sections of major national newspapers. The area attracts a great number of university students and younger members of the so-called new urban middle class, arriving from outside the neighbourhood and going to its cafés, restaurants and clubs. The dividing line between city users, temporary residents and tourists is blurry: there are university students who are in the city for a few years only, young people living in other parts of the city or in the surroundings, Erasmus students and young people from abroad visiting Turin just for a couple of days. The young age, the consumption practices and the temporary presence in the area, a place to consume and to leave right after, seem to associate all these groups together. The practice of aperitivo[4], a kind of very cheap and rich dinner "a buffet" with

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[3] From the "use-it map" of Turin, a "free map for young travellers made by locals" available for cities all around Europe. The one of Turin can be found at www.use-it.it

[4] "Once upon a time, a pre-dinner drink in Italy meant a swiftly served aperitif with a bowl of nuts or potato chips and some fat green olives. It's often still done this way, but in the fashionable neighbourhoods of Turin, Milan and Rome, the tradition has morphed into a nightly phenomenon of complimentary buffet spreads so lavish that the three courses that are supposed to follow are almost a thing of the past." Lonely Planet: http://www.lonelyplanet.com/italy/travel-tips-and-articles/76383#ixzz2WIJOlgpb. "Pay for the drink, help yourself to some food and eat and socialize while listening to good music: you've got the Aperitivo. Wow! And is it expensive? Not at all, prices of an Aperitivo go from €6 to €9. You'll find appetizers, first courses (pasta and rice or cous cous) tartlets, cheeses, salads, vegetables and some fruit. When? the Aperitivo time is mostly from

finger foods and warm dishes that is particularly popular between university students and young people, contributes to crowd the area since the first hours of the evening, while clubs and cafés attracts other flows of people, who stays in the venues and in their terraces till late at night. The neighbourhood is rapidly becoming known as the new entertainment district of the city.

5. Sources of tension and forms of protest

As we have already pointed out, tensions and protests mainly take place over clashes in uses and images of specific urban spaces. The relevance of commercial and recreational landscape in shaping a neighbourhood identity has been largely acknowledged, as well as its impact on everyday life routines and sense of belonging (Chapple and Jacobus, 2009; Deener, 2007; Jacobs, 1961; Mele and Cooper, 2002; Zukin *et al.*, 2009). Hence, transformations in this sense may cause a change in the sense of place and belonging on one side and practical issues relative to everyday routines on the other. Not necessarily these two dimensions come up together. This means that even who is not practically affected by the transformation of the neighbourhood may experience a diminution in the sense of belonging. On the other way, even who enjoys the new character of the neighbourhood may experience practical problems in the everyday life. From the research it emerges a centrality of everyday life, tangible, ordinary issues: even when the sense of place and the character of the neighbourhood is questioned and discussed, usually tensions and protests take form around specific, concrete matters. These practical matters may be then differently framed and contextualized, accordingly to the relevance of the sense of place dimension and to the other narratives considered significant to frame the neighbourhood reality.

In the case of San Salvario the central source of tensions lies in the legitimate use of public space. It is interesting to note that this was already the case for the tensions that emerged back in the Nineties (Allasino *et al.*, 2000). Back then, in fact, the source of the protests was the presence of foreigner people in the streets of the neighbourhood who were accused to cause, together with drug dealers and prostitutes, problems of public safety. This is still the case right now, even if the main narrative is now different: the focus has been shifted from

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19.00 to 21.30. Where? Most trendy places and historical cafés run it." – From the "use-it map" of Turin, a "free map for young travellers made by locals" available for cities all around Europe: www.use-it.it.

migrants' use of space to the effects of the presence of new restaurants, clubs and cafés. Their owners, and the people they attract, are blamed to treat the street itself as if it were private property (see also Zukin *et al.*, 2009). Specifically, the question of the legitimate use of public space is declined in two practical issues: the lack of available parking lots and the nighttime public nuisance.

We have already seen that the built environment of the neighbourhood dates back to the Ninetieth century. This implies an absence of garages and the necessity for the residents to park their cars along the streets. However, under the payment of specific taxes, the municipality allows cafés, restaurants and clubs to occupy the parking lots in front of their venues with tables and chairs. These terraces are very common and they often turn out to be real structures that are employed all year long, having in some cases even a roof top and a heating system. The rising number of cafés, restaurants and clubs has generated a growing amount of terraces and a decrease in available parking lots. Moreover, lots of the people who come in the area because of these venues arrive by car, increasing the number of automobiles looking for parking. The second problem is once again related to the new venues and to the growing number of people that are present in the area because of them. In fact, it concerns the issue of nighttime noise, due to the music inside the clubs, but, above all, to the presence of a large number of people in the streets and in the terraces till late at night. A number of reasons concurs in increasing the number of people staying outside in the streets. Between them: the ban of smoking inside public venues and the fact that the number of customers is actually bigger than the ones that each single venue might be capable to host inside. A lot of these clubs sell mainly drinks, or food in the form of aperitivo: this kind of consume does not need any table service or the need of using a table. The result is a large number of people in the terraces, along the sidewalks and in the streets, from late afternoon till around 4 am.

In framing the description of the current problems, the reference to the past of the neighbourhood and to other dimensions and characters of the area frequently emerges in resident's interviews.

The fact that there are more clubs and cafés and so on is something positive, right, it has to be considered something positive. On one side, because, you know, the presence of more people in the streets, the fact that there are people around till late at night, well, it is less probable that there are drug-dealings, thefts, petty crimes. [...]. But then... you know, my husband comes back home from

work in the evening, he needs to use the car because he works far away, and then he spends at least 20 minutes to find a parking lot… well, it's not very nice.[5]

In this case, for example, the reference to the past history of the neighbourhood, described as dangerous and characterized by drug-dealing, prostitution and unsafety, is employed to minimize the practical problems that are related to the transformation. Because of that, any change is considered an improvement, even if it entails practical problems: some practical outcomes of the transformation may be contested, but not the transformation itself. In some cases however, the operation is opposite and the past seems to be reframed in light of the current problems.

Well, yes, back then there were drug-dealers around, but, you know, things weren't so bad at the end. I mean… at least I was able to sleep at night you know, because they were quite, their work requires to be quite, not to draw the attention, so, you see, it wasn't so bad then. Now I cannot properly sleep at night anymore.[6]

A certain variety, that we have already seen in the ways practical problems are framed, is also present in the forms of protest. Not everyone who experiences practical inconveniences or dislikes the ongoing changes transforms the displeasure into protest. In fact, the effort that a person might dedicate to protest is proportional to the value of the stake and to the chance of success (Hirschman, 1970). In the case of San Salvario it is possible to identify a number of strategies going from individual to collective actions, assuming more informal or formal shape (*table 1*). The passage from individual to collective and from informal to formal often implies an increase in the strategic value of the actions and a different level of trust in

	Informal	**Formal**
Individual	Eggs/water from the windows	Reports/complaints to the institutions
Collective	Coordinate form of individual complaints	Creation of associations and group actions

Table 1: forms of protest

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[5] May 10, 2011. M.'s interview, resident.

[6] July 19, 2012. E.'s interview, resident.

laws and institutions as well.

Eggs and bucketful of water thrown down the windows on people chatting and drinking in the street late at night are probably the best examples of informal and individual forms of protest. Even if these episodes did not happen very often, they had a wide resonance. Rather than a strategic action that aims at obtaining lasting improvements, these kinds of reaction seem emotional outbursts, impulsive actions driven by anger and impatience. A more formal manifestation of protest is represented by calls and letters of protests addressed to local authorities, police forces or newspapers. They can be expressions of an individual but also of a collective form of protest whereas, as it happened sometimes in this case, a group of people decides together to call every night the police to report public nuisance. In this case we have an action that actually aims at changing the current situation. To do so they often recall existing laws and ordinances that might be enforced. However, local authorities see the new trend of the neighbourhood with favor and interest: on one side it is well integrated in the new image of the city, and on the other side new openings and successful commercial activities are signs of economic growth that are very much welcomed, especially in this time of crisis. The local governance appears therefore reluctant in setting up policies to stop or slow down the pace of this transformation. On the other side the growing number of reports to the police forces by private citizens cannot be ignored by the police forces, that are compelled to send controls to check the situation. These controls often end in fines and suspensions of the activity for the recreational venues. The outcome is a situation in which none is completely happy and everyone is partially or strongly disappointed. Moreover the climate of tension seems on its way to rise and become more polarized, with strong contrapositions that would make any kind of composition more difficult.

In this setting, some collective and more organized forms of protest have started to take shape. As we have seen, the neighbourhood of San Salvario has been always characterized by a rich fabric of social and cultural civic associations. The role of associations in facilitating a process of conflicts' composition back in the Nineties is widely acknowledged. Therefore, it is not surprising that two new associations have risen specifically in response to the new trend of the neighbourhood, namely "San Salvario Sostenibile" and "Rispettando San Salvario".

San Salvario Sostenibile has been launched in fall 2011, with the goal of promoting the sustainability in the neighbourhood and rising public awareness through concrete actions. The concept of sustainability is intended in its broadest sense, referring to its environmental, social and economic aspects. In this meaning, issues of recycling, pedestrian zones and biological food go along with quality of life and noise management[7]. The birth of San Salvario Sostenibile reflects values, preferences and alternative consumption practices of some of the new residents, a young urban middle class with a great appreciation of authentic urban experience and a certain attention to the issue of environmental sustainability. The association seemed to be interested in improving the quality of life in the neighbourhood addressing some practical issue connected to its transformation rather than in contesting the transformation itself. The adopted actions have been characterized by an approach of mediation and negotiation, without action of protest per se. Specifically two projects may be here mentioned. The first is a web site where customers and residents have the chance to virtually interact through the review of commercial and recreational activities, highlighting good practices and problematic issue. In the proponents' view, that might push commercial entrepreneurs to adopt more sustainable behaviours in order to get a better visibility and positive exposure. The second one is the attempt of launching a series of public discussion between residents, entrepreneurs and local authorities to find a common vision on the future of the neighbourhood. Apparently, however, they did not have any concrete outcomes. After a while the association concentrated its efforts mainly on the first project that has been extended to the all city.

The other association is Rispettando San Salvario[8], launched in 2010 both to contest the ongoing transformation of the neighbourhood and to denounce its practical impacts. The central issues are the ones of nighttime public nuisance and noise pollution. The position of the association sums a critic against the growing number of clubs and pubs with a critic against the municipal governance, found guilty of being distant and not caring enough to intervene. In their description, the new venues are considered the causes of other problems

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[7] "Sustainability means the commitment to avoid messy parking, nighttime public nuisance and the presence of garbage in public spaces. The sustainable person should prefer commercial activities that adopte sustainable behaviours rather than the ones showing no care about it. He or she may take part to our project reporting positive and negative behaviours and suggesting ideas and problems. The goal is to promote a community that helps the whole neighbourhood to reach a better quality of life". http://sansalvariosostenibile.it/diventa-sostenibile, May 26th, 2013.
[8] http://www.rispettandosansalvario.it

as well, such as the lack of available parking lots, a rise in drug-dealing and a general decay of the area. The core of the association is formed by long term residents, who usually live in close proximity or just above these new venues. Along with reports and complaints to the public administration, they collected researches and evidences of the health hazard and social impact of nighttime activities on order to support their statements. In their search for good policies and practices they also have come in contact with other Italian and foreign associations dealing similar issues, without anyway developing specific partnerships yet. Their approach appears more centred on expressing claims and demands rather than suggesting forms of composition, with the risk of adding tension rather than helping to find a solution. One of their most visible initiatives has been the production of orange banners that have been displayed at the windows (*image 1*). These banners read statements such as "Sleeping is a need", "Sleeping to work", "Sleeping to dream". They have the goal of both denouncing the situation and of rising awareness in the night-time users of the street. This initiative, started in May 2012 and still ongoing, has had a certain media exposure, with articles on the local editions of national newspapers. It also presents a certain similarity with other protests previously appeared in other areas of the city: the display of posters and banners from windows and balconies is in fact a quite common expression of both support and protest and not surprisingly it has been used also in such context.

Image 1: orange banners claiming the right to sleep

6. Ambivalences, attempts of mediation and challenges for the future

A number of researches has underlined the existence of multiple attitudes, perceptions and narratives in shaping the popular thinking and residents' reaction in areas devoted to leisure and tourist consumption (Andriotis and Vaughan, 2003; Novy, 2012). However, the conflict is often commonly described as polarized and clearly defined, especially if we consider the media and the public discourse. It seems still common to identify three distinct sets of actors, namely residents, entrepreneurs and local authorities: the residents are against or at least critical to the affirmation of this development patterns, the entrepreneurs are favorable, while the public authorities try to find a balance between these two positions, basically allowing and/or actively promoting this trend trying not to loose too much consensus at the same time. In this equation tourists and city users are of course relevant, since their consumption practices shape the public space and structure the problems from which the conflict rises. Yet, they are not active actors of the conflicts itself, and usually they do not take part in its definition or in its attempts of composition.

The analysis however shows that this common distinction is far from being so sharp and clear. In the previous paragraph, a certain variety has already emerged. We have seen that two different associations have tried in the last few years to deal with the transformation of the neighbourhood and its social impacts, adopting different approaches and highlighting different claims and goals. However higher levels of variety emerge if we consider the different positions about the ongoing transformation in the first place within different sets of actors.

We have concluded the previous paragraph illustrating the initiative of the orange banners claiming the right to sleep. In the following months, contrasting actions have been undertaken by other residents. Different banners, this time blue ones, with the statement "I love San Salvario, its youths, its voices, its music" have been displayed (*image 2*). At the same time, on local newspapers letters of support have appeared along with the ones of protest. Apparently, a part of the residents approves the transformation of the neighbourhood and does not feel represented by who is protesting against it. In this sense, different discourses have emerged in support of the new trend of the area. Some of them adopt an economic perspective, stressing the relevance of new openings in a period of economic crisis. They usually underline the positive contribution to the employment level between young people rather than the very economic impact on the neighbourhood.

Image 2: blue banners supporting the new venues

Effectively, these venues mainly employ young people, who are not necessarily under skilled but who are often having hard time in finding a job in line with their education during this specific economic juncture. Other discourses underline that, thanks to the presence of the new entertainment venues, the neighbourhood is now more alive and therefore safe at night.

Someone says that it was better before... it is unbelievable! I don't know, maybe they weren't here or they didn't go out at night. I was here fifteen years ago, I used to go out at night and it wasn't nice. But they don't care, they just want to sleep. And the thing that really pisses me off is that they do not represent everyone, but they are so high and mighty anyway, they have only complaints and claims![9]

Therefore, these evidences suggest that the residents are not homogeneous in their perceptions and narratives on the neighbourhood's transformation. Especially when the situation is not an extreme one, different interpretations of what is considerable a legitimate use of public space may be present.

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[9] July 21, 2012, fieldnotes. Chatting with M.T., resident and owner of a bookstore in the neighbourhood.

It is interesting to notice that even within the set of commercial and recreational entrepreneurs the approach towards the transformation is not homogeneous. In this case the distinction seems following a complex combination between the type of activity and the reasons each one opened such activity in the neighbourhood in the first place. It is easily recognizable in owners of day-time activities a certain concern about the shift of the neighbourhood towards night-time economy. A decrease in people who are present in the neighbourhood during the day implies also a decrease in terms of business, and this is true both for traditional and new activities. However, a certain resistance against the transformation of the neighbourhood may be found also in entrepreneurs that have actually registerd an improvement in terms of gain. In this sense, contemplating a time dimension may add an element of interest: it is in fact possible to consider early commercial gentrifiers on one side and late comers on the other. The second ones are mainly professionals of the entertainment economy, who have seen in a changing neighborhood the occasion for a good deal. The first ones, instead, have often been part of the social and cultural redevelopment of the neighbourhood. Individual values and a personal appreciation of the neighbourhood's character have been often between the reasons they opened an activity in the area in the first place. The members of this group often express a more complex position over the

Image 3: attempts of an owner of a night-time venue to rise customers' awareness

ongoing transformation. Moreover, the ones between them owning nighttime venues seem more aware of the social impact of their activities and willing to find a way to mediate and compose the conflict. For example, some owners have tried to improve customers' awareness about the impact of public nuisance through signs, posters and temporary art works (*image 3*). The experiments of employing a sort of bouncers outside some venues to monitor the situation go in the same direction. At the opposite, the late comers seem to be far less attentive and careful to the social impact of their activities.

I didn't think the residents would have been so bloody… I mean, that they would have disturbed our work so much. Because, you know, right now there is, really, a little war, yes, I would say exactly a war. There are residents' associations that are doing their best to, not just to control the situation and to impose limitation about the opening hours, no, no, really, they're doing their best to damage the businesses. They say that we create only problems while clubs and restaurants have contributed so much in developing and improving the neighbourhood![10]

In some occasion their discourses acquires an angry and claiming tone against the protesters, described as a small, irrelevant group of residents. As long as the characterization of the neighbourhood as an area of leisure and consumption becomes more central in shaping the discourse, also the tone and the positions seems to become more hostile and polarized. In a way, the affirmation of this feature as central seems to necessarily involve a dimension of conflict.

The situation is probably made more difficult by the unclear position of the municipal governance, that seems to have chosen not to intervene in regulating the situation. In this sense, a certain minimization of the social impact seems to emerge.

We are more inclined to consider the positive rather than the negative aspects of this situation. It is true that there is a problem in managing the relation with the citizenry, but… well, if only all the problems were like that! Come on, it is a great step forward! And it is a problem that it is going to be solved by itself […]. Firstly, the habit, they will get used to it, and secondly there will be a certain turnover in the people living there, so…[11]

At the city level, in fact, the support towards the promotion of leisure, entertainment and consumption as redevelopment tools seems quite strong and un-problematized. Even if not in this neighbourhood, specific policies in support of commercial and recreational renewal

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[10] August 3, 2012. G.'s interview, owner of a restaurant opened in 2011.
[11] July 24, 2012. F's interview, City Department on Commerce advisor.

were employed to promote further upgrading in other parts of the city. Somehow, the local authorities seem still unaware that stressing the dimensions of leisure and consumption in some areas of the city involves social costs that are unlikely to be composed without some kind of political intervention.

Conclusions

The transformation of urban settings in places of leisure and entertainment embodies a powerful discourse of change and development that frames the interpretation of the reality and the subsequent actions of the social actors. It has got both a symbolic and a material impact that affect not only the residents, but also the people who work and use that specific space. Costs and benefits of this transformation are not homogeneously distributed and in such situations tensions and conflicts may emerge, especially whenever these new trends challenge existing place values and established practices. The analysis of this case study has highlighted the relevance of the everyday-life dimension of this transformation. Indeed, considering tangible, material issues and practices are central to understand both the sources of tensions and their expression. Protests and conflicts may take different forms, developing in individual or collective, formal or informal actions. Tension and resistance may express themselves in a subtle and undirected way or addressing wider audience. According to the case study's analysis, the positions about the transformation itself may not be uniform and different discourses may be present, differently shaping the thinking about the situation. The issue is therefore complex and multidimensional, continuously shaped and re-shaped by the interactions between different actors and levels of action. Finally, it has to be noted that, especially in a period of economic crisis a discourse of development and economic growth is always particular attractive, and it sometimes tends to overcome issues of social equity and cohesion. The nighttime and visitors' economy can bring benefits to the city development. However, since it takes place in the city itself, where other functions, uses and needs are already present, it requires a regulatory system in order to avoid social hardships. For the benefits to be shared with the neighbourhood itself, not only in economic but also in social terms, the role of institutions and local authorities is therefore crucial.

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