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From the Docks to the Eurovision Stage: Liverpool's Distinctive Neighbourhoods and Post-industrial Landscapes

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Introduction

When, on 13th September 2023, for the first time, I walked out Liverpool Lime Street Station, my attention was immediately caught by an imposing wallpaper representing eleven football players embracing each other, inscribed with the words: “From far away or just down the road, Welcome Home”. In that exact moment, I came to the realisation that I had indeed found a new home.

This dissertation seeks to examine the concept of the post-industrial city through an analysis of the urban and cultural transformations that have occurred in Liverpool. The Liverpool case of study was selected for analysis because I had the opportunity of spending five months in the city as an Erasmus+ student. The present work aims to make people reading this dissertation aware of Liverpool’s uniqueness.

Liverpool is a metropolitan city situated in the county of Merseyside, in the north-western region of England. Internationally renowned as the birthplace of one of the most famous bands in history, The Beatles, and home to two of the most prominent football clubs in England and Europe, Liverpool F.C. and Everton F.C., the city of Liverpool is among the most iconic and culturally rich cities in the United Kingdom. Liverpool City Region, currently home to approximately 1.5 million inhabitants, was originally founded in 1207 and rapidly gained importance due to its strategic port, which played a crucial role in international markets, particularly during the era of the British Empire (Carter, 2016).

The objective of this dissertation is to gain insight into the processes through which Liverpool, a city with a long history as a port, has become a modern post-industrial city, with a distinctly reimagined urban landscape. The work is structured into three chapters, each of which addresses a specific topic.

The initial chapter will present an introduction to the concept of "post-industrial cities", contextualising it within a theoretical framework. The chapter will examine the urban crisis of the 1970s and the rise of Neoliberalism of the 1980s. The phenomenon of post-industrial cities will be elucidated through an examination of key themes such as urban regeneration, culture-led regeneration and waterfront renovation in post-industrial

landscapes. To illustrate these concepts, the chapter will present case of studies of notable projects, including Hamburg's HafenCity and Baltimore's Inner Harbor Place.

The second chapter will focus on Liverpool, analysing the city in its geographical, cultural and historical context. Particular attention will be paid to the impact of major cultural events held in Liverpool, including the 2008 designation as European Capital Of Culture and the 2023 hosting of Eurovision Song Contest. Additionally, the recent hosting of three concerts by Taylor Swift's "The Eras Tour" at Anfield stadium will be examined, as this event attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors to the city, which had prepared for this occasion with a series of installations and events. Furthermore, this dissertation will examine the controversy surrounding the revocation of the UNESCO World Heritage Site status of the Maritime Mercantile City in 2021 (UNESCO, 2021), analysing the reasons that led to this decision.

The third chapter will conclude with a photographic essay, which will accompany an analysis of some of Liverpool's most emblematic neighbourhoods, highlighting their distinctive cultural features. This chapter will consist of images taken by author and will visually complement the analysis. The following neighbourhoods will be analysed: the Docks and their transformation into a vibrant waterfront, Liverpool ONE retail-led development, the Cavern Quarter, widely known as the site of The Beatles' first performances, Anfield and the football stadium surroundings, and Chinatown and its majestic Chinese Arch. Each of these neighbourhoods represents a different aspect of Liverpool's urban regeneration and cultural dynamism.

The present study aims to provide an exhaustive overview of the dynamics that shaped Liverpool as an example of a post-industrial city. It will highlight how culture, events and urban regeneration have been crucial in redefining the city's identity and attractiveness on a global scale.

Chapter 1. Theoretical framework: Post-industrial cities

1. Brief introduction to post-industrial cities

In order to have a better insight into the case of study presented by this dissertation, a general introduction to the topic of post-industrial cities is needed.

To proceed, it is first necessary to provide a definition of the term ‘city’. According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, a city is

“a place where many people live, with many houses, stores, businesses, etc., and which is bigger than a town” (*Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*).

However, as Rossi and Vanolo (2012) acknowledge, defining the city as a spatial entity is a challenging endeavour, given the multiplicity of ways in which the urban process can be observed. Urbanisation, for instance, can be seen to relate to the organisation of the built environment, as well as to the distinctiveness of urban cultures, with political processes and with economic issues. Nevertheless, ‘broadly speaking, the city is a multi-faceted physical, relational and governmental space.’¹ Indeed, contemporary cities are characterised by a fragmented and spatially discontinuous urban fabric, encompassing edge cities, sprawling regions, suburbs, outer cities, new towns.² As a result, cities are becoming increasingly polycentric and irrepresentable in terms of their spatial characteristics.³ To illustrate, the majority of the urban European population currently resides in small-to-medium-sized cities, rather than in a few large cities, resulting in a polycentric urban form.⁴

Instead, the adjective ‘post-industrial’ is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as

“belonging or relating to an economy that is no longer based on heavy industry, such as the making of large machines” (*Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*).

It is notable that the term ‘post-industrial’ was initially employed to characterise urban economies and societies whose reputations were historically based on the industrial sector. These societies underwent a process of deindustrialisation, whereby symbols and

¹ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.18

² Soja (2000), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.18

³ Jones (2009), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.18

⁴ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, p.127

places previously associated with industrialisation became stigmatised as a form of decline and physical decay, rather than being perceived as positive aspects of progress.⁵ In an effort to reposition their old industrial image, cities sought to replace the outdated perception associated with their industrial past with more captivating and environmentally friendly images.⁶

Thus, the post-industrial city represents an emerging new typology of urban form. It is characterised by a globalised structure, with connections to other cities in global networks. It has a tertiary economy, dependent for its continued existence on advanced services. It also has a polycentric spatial organisation, with dispersed residences and decentralised employment across multiple centres or edge cities.⁷

In short terms, a post-industrial city can be defined as a city that has undergone a significant economic and social transformation, shifting from an industrial-based economy to an economy focused on services, technology, information and knowledge. This transition occurs subsequent to the decline of traditional industries, due to the effects of globalisation and the outsourcing of factories. These developments began with the urban crisis of the 1970s, which resulted in substantial alterations in the way economies and societies reinvented themselves, as will be further discussed in this chapter.

⁵ Short and Kim (1998), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.31

⁶ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, pp. 31-32

⁷ Hall P., 'Modelling the post-industrial city', *Futures*, 1997, Vol. 29, No. 4-5, p.311.

2. 1970s and 1980s: Urban Crisis and Rise of Neoliberalism

The 1970s and 1980s are depicted as decades of profound changes in Western economies and societies, driven by the rise of completely different technological and institutional forces.⁸ It is, as a matter of fact, during this period that the catchword ‘post-industrial’ gained widespread usage.⁹ The economic crisis of the 1970s, also defined as ‘the crisis of Fordism’¹⁰, prompted cities to pursue innovative strategies of post-industrial revitalisation, in order to reconnect their economies to the global value chains.¹¹

In this context Neoliberalism began to gain traction: its irresistible rise was driven by the conclusion of the previous era of seemingly limitless economic growth, which had spanned from the post-war period until the onset of economic and geopolitical turbulences in the 1970s. The surge of social tensions, alongside the shaping of a broader urban crisis (characterised by significant budget deficits at the local government level), underscored the inherent deficiencies of Fordism and the socio-spatial injustices and inequalities associated with the conventional pattern of economic development.¹² The crisis of the 1970s must be understood as a failure of the state to effectively manage a crisis of collective consumption. This was due to the mounting pressures received from the social movements, struggling to secure the provision of services, and from the business sector, which was demanding subsidies.¹³

In order to recover from the economic crisis of the 1970s, economic growth became the primary objective of the majority of regions and cities around the world in the 1980s. To illustrate, the United States witnessed in these years the implementation of the so-called ‘Reaganomics’, a supply-side economic policy pursued during the tenure of Ronald Reagan. This supply-side economic policy entailed a reduction in fiscal pressure on businesses with the objective of revitalising markets and stimulating private savings and investments. Similarly, the United Kingdom underwent substantial alterations in its

⁸ Amin (1994), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 30

⁹ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 30

¹⁰ “**Fordism** is a term widely used to describe (1) the system of mass production that was pioneered in the early 20th century by the Ford Motor Company or (2) the typical postwar mode of economic growth and its associated political and social order in advanced capitalism.” (Jessop B. (2013) ‘Fordism: economic history’ in *Britannica Money*)

¹¹ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 33

¹² *Ivi*, pp. 74-75

¹³ Castells (1972), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.76

economic and social governance during this period, as it was undergoing a neoliberal revolution spearheaded by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

The neoliberal revolution during the Reagan–Thatcher era had a significant impact on urban areas, leading to extensive deregulation of housing markets and a lasting transformation towards entrepreneurial local governance. This ideological shift didn't occur automatically because of the prevailing socio-economic context; rather, it was facilitated by various institutional intermediaries and local adopters of external ideas. Consequently, this neoliberal 'revolution' has thus reshaped both the economic foundations and the political-institutional conception and organisation of the structures of cities.¹⁴

Following the rise of ultra-liberal policies during the Reagan-Thatcher administrations, the 1990s and 2000s witnessed a reframing of neoliberalism as both a politico-economic discourse and a policy practice. As Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell (2002) affirm, a renewed neoliberal approach can be identified in these decades, which they defined as 'roll-out' stage of neoliberalism. This represents a more positive and constructive approach, with the objective of rebuilding the capitalist state on entrepreneurial bases and reshaping the relationships between business interests and the public sector in new ways.¹⁵ The new governments attempted to combine the enhancement of social cohesion with the stimulation of economic competitiveness, thereby transforming the public sector into a more entrepreneurial and accountable organisation: this approach is known as the 'new liberal formulation'.¹⁶

In conclusion, it can be stated that the latter stage of neoliberalism in the last decades has resulted in a significant redefinition of the methods employed in urban governance. These changes have manifested in the European context through the dynamics of multi-level governance, in which regions and cities assume crucial roles.¹⁷

¹⁴ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, pp. 79-81

¹⁵ Peck and Tickell (2002) quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, pp. 90-91

¹⁶ Harloe (2001) quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 91

¹⁷ Jessop (2004) quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 91

3. Urban Regeneration: Culture-led Regeneration

Urban regeneration is the process by which former industrial cities carry out a de-functionalisation of the industrial theme with a consequent reconversion of spaces. The sites formerly occupied by heavy industry had in fact become marginalised parts of the city, but thanks to urban regeneration they gradually gained importance and became the focus of interest of the newly emerging economic dynamic (see Rossi and Vanolo, 2012).

As discussed earlier, in recent decades, cities have undergone significant transformation as a result of shifts in capitalist accumulation, with an increased focus on knowledge, innovation, and competitiveness. This cultural and technological evolution has not only affected the economic aspects, but also had a significant impact on the broader understanding of urbanism and urbanisation. Consequently, urban elites worldwide have adopted innovative and creative strategies for urban development and regeneration.¹⁸ Cities have become central sites for the production of cultures, symbols and meanings, transcending the physical boundaries of the city itself and influencing cultural and economic practices in contemporary societies.¹⁹ In these post-modern cities, central roles in their evolution are played by urban phenomena, such as the gentrification dynamics (the social upgrading of previously working class or socially mixed neighbourhoods).²⁰ Moreover, crucial is the role of spectacle in the contemporary urban experience.²¹ As a matter of fact, urban development is now being pursued through the organization of events, including festivals, sports events and concerts. These initiatives lead to the mobilisation of financial resources and relational capabilities, particularly among local actors. Such events seem to foster a sense of belonging among city residents and stimulate enthusiasm among visitors to the city. This is the reason why urban spaces are increasingly being transformed into organised spaces of spectacle. Indeed, entire cities are becoming dedicated to leisure and entertainment, with the construction of new shopping centres, theme parks, museums, and so on.²²

¹⁸ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 33

¹⁹ Scott (2000) and Zukin (1995), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A. *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 34

²⁰ Wacquant (2007) quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A. *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 34

²¹ Harvey (1989) quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A. *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 34

²² Rossi U., Vanolo A. *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 34

The economic and cultural changes of postmodernity have their origins in strategies of urban regeneration and projects initiated in the wake of the crisis of Fordism. It can be argued that from the 1980s onwards, a deliberate post-modernisation of the city commenced. Administrators responsible for the governance of post-industrial cities have reshaped the urban way of life and turned consumption and culture into pivotal elements of the urban economy.²³ David Ley, a proponent of the new social geography, argues about the existence of a correlation between the culturalization of the urban realm and gentrification: since the 1960s-1970s, there has been an acceleration in the accumulation of ‘cultural capital’, which led to the rise of related strategies of urban regeneration. These strategies were embraced by policymakers across the globe, who used the cultural aspect as a means of economic accumulation.²⁴

The promotion and representation of culture have become central objectives within the domain of urban development politics in the context of globalisation. The process of culturalization of the urban realm is pursued through a variety of policies and strategies, including regeneration plans targeting the declining urban spaces, spectacular architectural projects and mega-events, as well as initiatives of creative urbanism.²⁵

In Europe, the prominent role of driver of the culture-led urban development has been efficiently played by the European Union, in collaboration with municipalities and local administrations. A pivotal point of departure for the culturalization of strategies for urban development can be identified in the ‘European Capital of Culture’ programme, launched in 1985, which will be further discussed in the subsequent chapter of this dissertation. As a result of this initiative, there has been growing emphasis on the implementation of policies that can facilitate the regeneration of the European identity along common lines of cultural belonging. Since the early 1990s onwards, the forces of globalisation have led to greater dependence on mega-events or nominations awarded (for example, hosting the Olympic Games or being named European Capital of Culture) as strategies for cultural regeneration.²⁶ This resulted in an increased focus on urban competitiveness, with cities seeking to reinvent and regenerate themselves, in order to be awarded the hosting of such events.

²³ Rossi U., Vanolo A. *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, pp. 34-35

²⁴ Ley (2003), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, pp. 56-57

²⁵ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 67

²⁶ Ivi, pp. 62-63

To conclude, it can be stated that culture has an important economic potential in the revitalisation of a city. From a symbolic perspective, culture plays an instrumental role in fostering consensus regarding the political leadership of cities; on the other hand, from an economic point of view, the exploitation of cultural capital in urban environments presents an opportunity to incorporate social diversities into government strategies of urban development.²⁷

3.1 Post-industrial Landscapes and Waterfront reclamation: Hamburg's HafenCity and Baltimore's Inner Harbor Place

The term "post-industrial landscape" is employed to describe urban areas that have undergone a significant transition in their dominant economic activities, shifting from manufacturing and industry to services and information-based activities.

As stated by the participants of the Remaking Cities Congress, held in 2013 by thought leaders and leading urbanists from North America and Europe on the theme of post-industrial cities²⁸, it is of the utmost importance to maintain and improve the physical infrastructure of the formerly industrial cities. As a matter of fact, their urban fabric offers significant advantages, including dense and walkable streets, valuable public spaces, authentic neighbourhoods and historic buildings, and, most importantly, the presence of attractive waterfronts. However, it is challenging to update the existing assets to incorporate modern needs, such as public transport, technical infrastructure, sustainability improvements and shared spaces in public and private realm, while maintaining their distinctive characteristics.²⁹

As previously mentioned, a primary objective of most urban regeneration initiatives is the reclamation of waterfront areas. Indeed, a great deal of instances of waterfront regeneration can be observed as a consequence of the pervasive notion of proximity to the water. A paradigmatic example of waterfront reconquest is the HafenCity project in Hamburg in Germany, which is Europe's largest inner-city urban development project and serves as a model for the new European city on the waterfront. Even if it is still in development, it is already evident that a lively urban environment is taking shape on Hamburg's

²⁷ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 68

²⁸ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, p.

²⁹ Katz B. (2016) 'Foreword', in Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, p. xiii

waterfront. This new district combines leisure, culture, tourism, workplaces and residential uses. The concept is to convert an area that was previously dominated by port and industrial activities into a contemporary and vibrant district, while preserving the distinctive port ambience and maintaining accessibility to the water.

For the city of Hamburg, HafenCity represents a means of achieving exemplary urban quality, thereby defining the city anew. Furthermore, among the key objectives, sustainability can be found, with green spaces and sustainable transport options (including shared mobility and e-mobility) being key features.



*Figure 1 Aerial view of Hamburg HafenCity
(Photo: T. Kraus; Source: Hafencity Hamburg GmbH)*

The city of Hamburg is thus strengthening its role in forward-thinking urban development and making significant contributions to climate-friendly and social progressive initiatives.³⁰ However, the reconquest of these waterfront areas is not solely driven by sustainability considerations, as these sites are most importantly positioned to become strong economic, commercial, tourist and residential hubs of attractiveness.

An additional illustrative example of a post-industrial city that underwent a process of deindustrialisation of the waterfront is Baltimore in the United States, considered to be ‘a pioneering pathway to postmodern urbanism’.³¹

³⁰ Hafencity Hamburg GmbH, *About Hafencity*. Available at: <https://www.hafencity.com/en/overview/about-hafencity>

³¹ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.35

The process of deindustrialisation and urban regeneration that Baltimore faced has resulted in a significant shift in the city's identity, evolving from a declining industrial and port city to a paradigm of consumption-led urbanism. In the 1970s a plan to renew and economically regenerate the city's waterfront area, the Inner Harbor Place, was initiated. The regeneration process was so extensive that shops, restaurants, museums, and an aquarium were constructed across the area, transforming Inner Harbor Place into a highly popular tourist attraction and establishing the city as an icon of urban postmodernism.³²



*Figure 2 Rendering of the proposed Baltimore's Harborplace
(Source: MCB Real Estate)*

The cities of Hamburg and Baltimore are illustrative of a broader phenomenon whereby many post-industrial cities have reinvented themselves through the regeneration of the formerly industrial sites and waterfront areas.

The processes that a post-industrial city must navigate during its renewal, introduced in this chapter, will be further examined in the next chapters of this dissertation. The following chapters will focus on the case of study of Liverpool, which is arguably one of the most successful post-industrial city renovations in the world, due in part to the aforementioned European Capital of Culture programme.

³² Harvey (1989), quoted by Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.35

Chapter 2. Liverpool case of study

1. Geographical, historical and cultural context

The Liverpool City Region is an urban area in the county of Merseyside, England, covering the approximate area of 700 square kilometres and home to approximately 1,5 million people.

The history of Liverpool has its origins in the first century AD, when a settlement of fishermen was established on the site of the present city. In 1207, Liverpool's destiny was changed, when King John designated the port city as a town with the intention of utilising it as a departure point for troops bound for Ireland. During the eighteenth century, Liverpool's port managed to rival Bristol's as the most important port on England's west coast. As a matter of fact, the inaugural dock was built in Liverpool in 1715. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the accumulation of wealth enabled rapid urban growth and the emergence of Liverpool as a global port, based on international trade in salt and slaves. By 1881, the population had reached over 500,000, resulting in Liverpool being designated city status. Liverpool, like many ports, served as a stepping-off point for numerous travellers across the world, contributing to a notable degree of multi-ethnicity within the city. Indeed, as will be further examined later in this dissertation, Liverpool is home to the oldest Chinatown in Europe.³³ The city's global connections, in addition to facilitating the construction of its docks and factories, were instrumental in shaping its identity as an early global city.³⁴

Civic engineering, infrastructure and architecture flourished over time, resulting Liverpool becoming the city with the highest number of buildings protected for their heritage value in the United Kingdom outside of London. Notable examples include St. George's Hall and the array of municipal buildings on the waterfront, collectively known as the "Three Graces": the Liver Building, the Cunard Building and the Port of Liverpool Building. The appearance of urban green spaces, including Sefton Park, Birkenhead and

³³ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, pp. 153-154

³⁴ Munck R., Introduction: The City, Globalisation and Social Transformation, in *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, 2003, p.3. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vjfks.6>.

Princess Park, enabled residents to move in the nearby and escape the pollution of the docks.³⁵

The nineteenth century also saw the foundation of several institutions, including the University, the Philharmonic Society, the Walker Art Gallery and the two football clubs at Liverpool and Everton. By the early 20th century, Liverpool was one of the most important cities in the world, with a population of 850,000 and a thriving economy. However, following the Second World War, the outlook for Liverpool changed: the city was devastated by heavy bombing, which caused extensive damage to infrastructures, buildings and trade lines. The upstream half of Liverpool's dock system ceased operations in 1971, resulting in the interruption of ocean liners services to dock in the city and causing a significant economic downturn. However, there were positive developments in the city: the music scene began to flourish, and Liverpool became a cultural centre, with the Beatles achieving international success. In 1985, the Merseyside Development Corporation carried out the majority of the physical regeneration of the city, including a significant portion of derelict docklands, namely Albert Dock, which had been abandoned since 1972.³⁶

Despite the large population reached in the early 20th century, the city lost half of it before 2001, as Liverpool was facing high unemployment, low economic investment, influenced by a national recession. Strikes and riots were common, resulting in economic damage, building destructions and people being injured, which in turn resulted in a lasting negative impact on people who saw the city as synonymous with crime and unemployment.³⁷

However, recent years have witnessed a significant transformation in Liverpool. During the 2000s, the city faced a remarkable process of urban regeneration, which is still ongoing. This has left an indelible mark on the city's landscape and profoundly altered its identity for visitors returning to Liverpool, making it almost unrecognisable. The transformation includes the revitalisation of large sections of the vast derelict dock system through the creation of leisure-based facilities, an increase in the number of people living in the city centre, thanks to the construction of new apartment buildings, the creation of

³⁵ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, pp. 154-156

³⁶ *Ivi*, pp. 156-159

³⁷ *Ivi*, pp. 159-160

new public spaces and environmental improvements, the development of a retail centre district, the construction of a new waterfront, the building of an arena and conference centre, and the creation of large areas of new and improved office space.³⁸

The vast majority of the city's transformation was significantly impacted by the nomination of Liverpool as European Capital of Culture 2008. This will be explored in more detail in the following subchapter.

2. Major cultural events in Liverpool and their effects on the city

It is becoming increasingly evident that major cultural events are always more perceived by local stakeholders as crucial opportunities to drive urban regeneration, city branding and economic development.³⁹ Prominent examples of such events may include the European Capital of Culture programme, the Olympic Games, and the Eurovision Song Contest.

Liverpool's urban regeneration and economic renaissance has undoubtedly been influenced, at least in part, by some of these events.

2.1 European Capital of Culture 2008

The 'European Capital of Culture' (ECoC) initiative was launched in 1985 by the European Union. From that moment onward, increasing emphasis began to be placed on policies and initiatives capable of shaping a European identity along common lines of belonging.⁴⁰ In essence, European Capitals of Culture is

An initiative putting culture at the heart of European cities with EU support for a yearlong celebration of art and culture. (European Commission, *European Capitals of Culture*. Available at: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/policies/culture-in-cities-and-regions/european-capitals-of-culture>)

³⁸ Sykes O. et al., 'A City Profile of Liverpool', *Cities*, 2013, 35, p. 300

³⁹ Boland P., "Capital of Culture—you must be having a laugh!" Challenging the official rhetoric of Liverpool as the 2008 European cultural capital', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2010, Vol.11, No. 7, p. 627

⁴⁰ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p.62

The objective of the initiative is to emphasise the richness of cultures in Europe, celebrate the distinctive characteristics of European culture, increase the sense of belonging among European citizens and promote the role of culture in urban development. Furthermore, the programme presents an invaluable opportunity to regenerate cities, raise their international profile, stimulate tourism, and elevate the perception of the designated cities among their own residents.⁴¹

Each year a different ECoC is selected from among the cities of the designated nation. According to the European Commission, in order to receive assistance for hosting a year-long festival of cultural events, the winning bid must demonstrate strategic planning and clear objectives for cultural tourism, as well as involvement of local people and culture, effective facilities management, and the development of partnerships.

In June 2003, Liverpool was officially selected as European Capital of Culture for 2008, with the expectation that this designation would contribute to urban regeneration.⁴² Nevertheless, the designation of Liverpool as ECOC gave rise to debate, given that Liverpool was known for the difficult situation of structural decline affecting the local economy, specifically the port sector.⁴³ Furthermore, the national media tended to present the city in a negative light, associating it with a range of problematic stereotypes, including those related to crime, drugs, violence, unemployment and urban decay.⁴⁴

In fact, Liverpool's bid was identified precisely as a means of improving the perception people had of the city, with the strategy being based on a culture-led regeneration model. Initiatives launched as a result of Liverpool's designation as ECOC encompassed numerous areas of the city, including the linking of canals on the completely renewed waterfront, the Lime Street rail station Gateway, a new cruise liner port, and the Liverpool One retail centre.⁴⁵ Indeed, it is evident that, since the designation in 2003, the city centre and the waterfront have undergone a noticeable transformation. Despite the regeneration of the Albert Docks and the presence of the iconic Three Graces, the waterfront remained

⁴¹ European Commission, *European Capitals of Culture*. Available at: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/policies/culture-in-cities-and-regions/european-capitals-of-culture>

⁴² Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, p. 163

⁴³ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 63

⁴⁴ Shaw, D. et al., 'Culture, Regeneration and Urban Renaissance in Liverpool. Reflections of Liverpool's experiences as 'European Capital of Culture' in 2008', *RaumPlanung*, 2009, p. 124

⁴⁵ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, pp. 163-164

isolated from the city centre. This was due to the presence of The Strand, a major road cutting the waterfront away from the city centre, and to the orientation of numerous buildings, which were constructed with their backs to the waterfront. The city is nowadays reconnected, thanks to the Liverpool One development, which comprises two large, curved blocks and a park space linking the city centre to the Albert Dock. This newly created open space facilitates the flow of people from the city centre to the waterfront, as evidenced by statistical data: following the inauguration of Liverpool One, the Albert Dock area recorded an influx of over 100,000 additional visitors per week.⁴⁶

The designation as ECoC also presented an opportunity to reinvent the image of the city, emphasising unique qualities and showcasing the presence of ethnic minority groups so as to cultivate a reputation as a multicultural city.⁴⁷ The objective was to reposition Liverpool on the global stage and to foster a new, more nuanced image of the city. This involved presenting a revised brand identity that went beyond the traditional associations with football and the Beatles, with the aim of encouraging a more diverse range of visitors to engage with Liverpool in a more holistic manner.⁴⁸

Liverpool08 was declared by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso as one of the most successful Capital of Culture programmes ever had.⁴⁹ Key achievement was the repositioning of Liverpool's image as a modern post-industrial city, as evidenced by the remarkable transformation that occurred as a result of the pivotal role that culture played in its revitalization.⁵⁰ The unprecedented collaboration with public and private sectors enabled the achievement of a common goal, resulting in a record-breaking 15 million cultural visits and an overall economic impact of £800million in 2008 alone. The most significant outcome was the reaction of people across the world, which demonstrated that the cultural designation had the effect of altering perceptions of the

⁴⁶ Shaw, D. et al., 'Culture, Regeneration and Urban Renaissance in Liverpool. Reflections of Liverpool's experiences as 'European Capital of Culture' in 2008', *RaumPlanung*, 2009, pp. 124.125

⁴⁷ Rossi U., Vanolo A., *Urban Political Geographies: a Global Perspective*, 2012, p. 64

⁴⁸ Boland P., 'Capital of Culture—you must be having a laugh!' Challenging the official rhetoric of Liverpool as the 2008 European cultural capital', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2010, Vol.11, No.7, p. 631-632

⁴⁹ Culture Liverpool, *A year like no other*. Available at: <https://www.cultureliverpool.co.uk/background-an-introduction-to-a-year-like-no-other/>

⁵⁰ Boland P., 'Capital of Culture—you must be having a laugh!' Challenging the official rhetoric of Liverpool as the 2008 European cultural capital', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2010, Vol.11, No.7, p. 631-632

city. Liverpool provided an unparalleled demonstration of the remarkable diversity of high art, important free outdoor events, and thought-provoking new theatre.⁵¹

As 2008 drew to a close, the city did not allow itself to become complacent. Liverpool continued to highlight its unique cultural offerings and will continue to do so, in order to celebrate, promote and build upon them. To this day, the city continues to host high-quality events featuring internationally renowned brands, which result in Liverpool being on the radar of a worldwide audience. Since its designation as the European Capital of Culture, the city has gained a reputation for organizing unmissable events⁵², including the most recent Eurovision Song Contest, hosted in 2023, which will also be examined in this dissertation.

⁵¹ Culture Liverpool, *A year like no other*. Available at: <https://www.cultureliverpool.co.uk/background-an-introduction-to-a-year-like-no-other/>

⁵² Culture Liverpool, *A year like no other*. Available at: <https://www.cultureliverpool.co.uk/background-an-introduction-to-a-year-like-no-other/>

2.2 Eurovision Song Contest 2023

In the relatively recent past, Liverpool was privileged to host another major cultural event, the Eurovision Song Contest 2023, which attracted thousands of spectators to the city.

‘The Eurovision Song Contest is an internationally televised songwriting competition, organised by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU)’. The participants engage in a competitive event, which is traditionally held in May. ‘The format of the event comprises three live shows: the First Semi-Final, the Second Semi-Final, and the Grand Final’. The Eurovision Song Contest is typically organised by the national public broadcaster of the country that won the preceding year. For the host broadcaster, organising the contest presents a significant challenge, including the necessity of working closely with the host city. The broadcasts of the three live shows represent merely the culmination of two weeks of activity in the host city. During this period, a Eurovision Village is typically established, which serves to entertain locals and visitors, while also providing an additional platform for participants to perform. ‘Traditionally, a Welcome Reception and Turquoise Carpet Ceremony are held on the Sunday preceding the live shows for the benefit of delegations and selected invitees.’ In addition to the official programme of events and engagements, the host city welcomes a considerable number of visitors, with a variety of events organised by the city authorities and fan groups.⁵³

The 67th Eurovision Song Contest was held in Liverpool, on behalf of Ukraine, the previous year’s winner, who were unable to host the contest due to the ongoing war. The city was selected following a rigorous city bid process, which entailed a detailed examination of the facilities at the designated venue, the capacity to accommodate a considerable number of visiting delegations, crew, fans and journalists, the quality of the infrastructure and the cultural offerings of the host city.⁵⁴

Liverpool’s selection as the host city for Eurovision 2023 represents a continuation of its longstanding tradition of hosting major international events. Indeed, the city has a proven track record of successfully managing and facilitating large-scale gatherings, further reinforcing its reputation as a capable and welcoming destination for tourism. This

⁵³ European Broadcasting Union, *How the Eurovision Song Contest works*, 2002-2024. Available at: <https://eurovision.tv/about/how-it-works>

⁵⁴ European Broadcasting Union, *Liverpool 2023*. Available at: <https://eurovision.tv/event/liverpool-2023>

capability was notably demonstrated during Liverpool's tenure as the European Capital of Culture in 2008, which highlighted the city's ability to curate diverse and engaging cultural experiences. Furthermore, Liverpool's strong association with music has been extensively documented and celebrated, since the city was officially designated a UNESCO City of Music in 2015. This designation was conferred in recognition of Liverpool's profound musical heritage and its ongoing contributions to the global music industry. Moreover, Liverpool's identity as a melting pot of cultures and ideas resonates strongly with the ideals of unity and diversity embraced by the Eurovision organisation. The city's rich musical heritage and its capacity to mix a multitude of genres and cultures make it an ideal host for an event that celebrates the harmonious blending of artistic expressions from diverse European contexts.⁵⁵

As previously stated, the Eurovision period encompasses a two-weeks period of activity in the host city. The events associated with the Eurovision hosting took place in Liverpool from 5 to 13 May, occurring in various locations throughout the city. The principal venue for the live shows was the M&S Bank Arena, which hosted nine ticketed events. The Eurovision Village was situated on the Pier Head, a vast space located outside the Three Graces on the Liverpool waterfront. It was accessible for a period of ten days and offered a diverse range of activities, including additional exhibitions of the participants in the contest. The Big Eurovision Welcome and the Turquoise Carpet were held at St George's Hall, in the city centre.⁵⁶ Furthermore, a diverse array of local events was also held all over the city, including exhibitions, nightclubs, parties and a multitude of other activities. These events were specifically aimed at engaging residents and visitors in the Eurovision celebrations, fostering a sense of camaraderie and cultural celebration.⁵⁷

It can be stated that Eurovision 2023 in Liverpool was a resounding success, with the city's substantial prior experience in hosting major international events serving as a crucial foundation for this achievement. A report from the University of Liverpool indicates that the hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest 2023 resulted in a £54 million economic boost for the Liverpool City Region. In total 473,000 people attended Eurovision events in the city, with an additional 306,000 visitors coming to Liverpool to participate in the celebrations. The official Eurovision Village, situated at the Pier Head attracted

⁵⁵ AMION Consulting, *Economic Impact of Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool*, 2023, pp. 10-11

⁵⁶ *Ivi*, p. 13

⁵⁷ *Ivi*, p. 42

250,000 visitors over the ten-day period it was open. Visitors to Liverpool reported a predominantly positive experience. In a survey, 89% of respondents indicated that they felt the event was safe and 88% commended its inclusivity. A substantial majority of respondents (96%) indicated the willingness to recommend Liverpool as a destination for future visits, while an additional 42% of overseas visitors reported that their positive experience in the city during the staging of the event influenced their perception of the United Kingdom in a favourable manner.⁵⁸

Tim Jones, the University of Liverpool's Vice-Chancellor asserted that the city of Liverpool presented a unique spectacle that will undoubtedly leave a lasting legacy for its residents, workers, students, and business owners. As Sue Jarvis, Co-Director at the Hestline Institute, observed, the positive impacts of Eurovision exceeded expectations. In addition to generating significant financial and cultural benefits for the city, the event also contributed to enhance Liverpool's reputation across the United Kingdom, Europe and the world.⁵⁹

The hosting Eurovision thus elevated Liverpool's international profile, rendering it an attractive destination for cultural events and tourism. This, in turn, influenced perceptions about the city. The event fostered a sense of community pride among residents and promoted inclusivity, attracting a diverse audience and providing a platform for artists from various backgrounds. Furthermore, it fostered the development of local talent and increased engagement with music across a range of communities. Eurovision enhanced Liverpool's institutional capacity to host future events, thereby increasing the city's capability and attractiveness for a wide range of cultural, entertainment, and sporting events.⁶⁰ The event demonstrated that Liverpool was not only a historic city but also a modern, forward-looking one with the capacity to host world-class events. The city's vibrancy, culture, and inclusivity were showcased, leaving a lasting impression on both visitors and observers worldwide.⁶¹

⁵⁸ University of Liverpool, *The results are in – Liverpool celebrates Eurovision success*, 2023. Available at: <https://news.liverpool.ac.uk/2023/10/26/university-joins-liverpool-in-eurovision-civic-pride/>

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*

⁶⁰ AMION Consulting, *Economic Impact of Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool: Executive Summary*, 2023, p. 7

⁶¹ AMION Consulting, *Economic Impact of Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool*, 2023, p. 49

2.3 Taylor Swift's "The Eras Tour" 2024

Earlier this year, Liverpool had the opportunity of hosting three performances by Taylor Swift as part of her The Eras Tour, which, thanks to its impact across the globe, can somehow be considered a major cultural event.

The Eras Tour is an ongoing concert tour by the American singer Taylor Swift, which commenced in March 2023 in Glendale, Arizona, USA,⁶² and is scheduled to conclude in December 2024 in Vancouver, Canada. The tour is already the biggest tour in the history of popular music and, with an unprecedented level of demand, ticket sales and attendances, has already established itself as the highest-grossing tour in history,⁶³. Additionally, the tour is attracting a considerable number of spectators outside the stadiums, dominating news cycles and social media. The Eras Tour has been the subject of considerable critical acclaim, with commentators emphasising the tour's conceptualisation: a journey through all of Swift's career musical eras.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the influence of The Eras Tour on the music industry, the broader entertainment sector and beyond has been substantial, as evidenced by the willingness of millions of fans to travel across national borders to see Taylor Swift perform.⁶⁵ As a result, the tour has also had a notable cultural and economic impact across the globe, with a discernible boost to local economies, businesses and tourism in the cities where it is scheduled to perform.⁶⁶ Cities that have hosted Swift's shows have reported sold-out hotel rooms and increased economic activity when the tour passes through.⁶⁷

⁶² Lipshutz J., 'Taylor Swift Announces U.S. Dates for 2023 Eras Tour', *Billboard*, 2022. Available at: <https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/taylor-swift-2023-eras-north-american-tour-dates-1235164042/>

⁶³ Willman C., 'How Taylor Swift's Eras Tour Took Over the Entire World', *Variety*, 2024. Available at: <https://variety.com/2024/music/news/taylor-swift-eras-tour-impact-1236089525/>

⁶⁴ Lipshutz J., 'Taylor Swift Announces U.S. Dates for 2023 Eras Tour', *Billboard*, 2022. Available at: <https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/taylor-swift-2023-eras-north-american-tour-dates-1235164042/>

⁶⁵ Gambles S., 'The ubiquitous power of Taylor Swift', *Deseret News*, 2023. Available at: <https://www.deseret.com/2023/7/22/23579559/taylor-swift-eras-tour-taking-over-america-summer/>

⁶⁶ Nemov A., 'The business of Taylor Swift', *Vogue Business*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.voguebusiness.com/story/fashion/the-business-of-taylor-swift>

⁶⁷ Gambles S., 'The ubiquitous power of Taylor Swift', *Deseret News*, 2023. Available at: <https://www.deseret.com/2023/7/22/23579559/taylor-swift-eras-tour-taking-over-america-summer/>

Indeed, it would appear that Taylor Swift is striving to enhance the cities on her Eras Tour route to a greater extent than she found them. As documented by the respective organisations, Taylor Swift made donations to food banks at each venue on the Eras Tour.⁶⁸

From 13 to 15 June 2024, Liverpool played host to Taylor Swift and her Eras Tour at Anfield stadium. The event attracted over 150,000 attendees, collectively known as ‘Swifties’. In order to welcome the thousands of fans in the city, Liverpool was transformed into ‘Taylor Town’ for a period of approximately one week⁶⁹ and eleven art installations were situated throughout Liverpool city centre, collectively forming a ‘Taylor Trail’ for fans to navigate.⁷⁰



Figure 3 The Taylor Town Trail map
(Source: Liverpool City Council)

The trail, which was delivered by Liverpool City Council’s Culture Liverpool team, was inspired by the singer’s extensive catalogue of hits and musical eras.⁷¹ The works represented each of Swift’s album and were interactive, for example, featuring a playable

⁶⁸ Dailey H., ‘Taylor Swift Covers a Year’s Worth of Meals With Donation to Local U.K. Food Bank on Eras Tour Route’, *Billboard*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/taylor-swift-uk-food-bank-donations-cover-year-of-meals-1235719076/>

⁶⁹ Sherlock G., ‘Swifties turn Liverpool into Taylor Town ahead of gig’, *BBC*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ce44vpngg85o>

⁷⁰ Visit Liverpool, *Welcome to Taylor Town*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.visitliverpool.com/taylor-town/>

⁷¹ Sherlock G., ‘Taylor Town trail map released ahead of Eras Tour’, *BBC*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c6pp9dypp2eo>

moss-covered piano and selfie-friendly murals. These locatable pieces resonated with a highly engaged fan base while providing unexpected artistic experiences to locals and tourists, even those without tickets for the performances. The objective was to guide visitors through some of Liverpool's most iconic locations, and to promote the local artists and studios who created the installations, thereby reinforcing Liverpool's reputation as a hub of creativity and innovation.⁷²

Additionally, a series of ticketed craft workshops themed around Swiftie culture were held alongside the trial, including friendship bracelet making and origami classes, which provided further opportunities for fans to engage with the city.⁷³ Moreover, the University of Liverpool also arranged themed events, including a free academic conference entitled 'Tay Day', which focused on the cultural phenomenon that is Taylor Swift.⁷⁴

In conclusion, it can be affirmed that Taylor Swift's impact on the city was significant. According to the travel site Expedia, search interest in Liverpool increased by 875% due to Swift announcing her tour dates in the city.⁷⁵

The city of Liverpool thus reaffirmed its ability to host large-scale cultural events, as evidenced by its successful hosting of the Eras Tour and its welcoming of fans.

⁷² Brown L., 'Liverpool becomes 'Taylor Town' with album-inspired installations throughout city', *BBC*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20240613-liverpool-becomes-taylor-town-for-taylor-swift>

⁷³ Visit Liverpool, *Welcome to Taylor Town*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.visitliverpool.com/taylor-town/>

⁷⁴ University of Liverpool, *Tay Day Liverpool's Version*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/music/events/tay-day/>

⁷⁵ Chan T., 'Taylor Tourism: New Data Reveals Singer's Eras Tour Is Driving Interest in Small Towns and 'Destination Dupes'', *RollingStone*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.rollingstone.com/product-recommendations/lifestyle/taylor-swift-tour-tourism-increase-trend-stats-1235040706/>

3. UNESCO Controversy

In 2004, Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City, an area comprising six distinct zones of Liverpool’s historic centre and docklands, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.⁷⁶ Liverpool was awarded the title of World Heritage Site status for its rich heritage of 19th and early 20th century buildings and its crucial role in world history. The nominated site was of international significance because Liverpool played a major role in the development of dock construction, port management and international trading systems. In addition, the buildings and fabric of the port and city provide an exceptional record of mercantile culture.⁷⁷

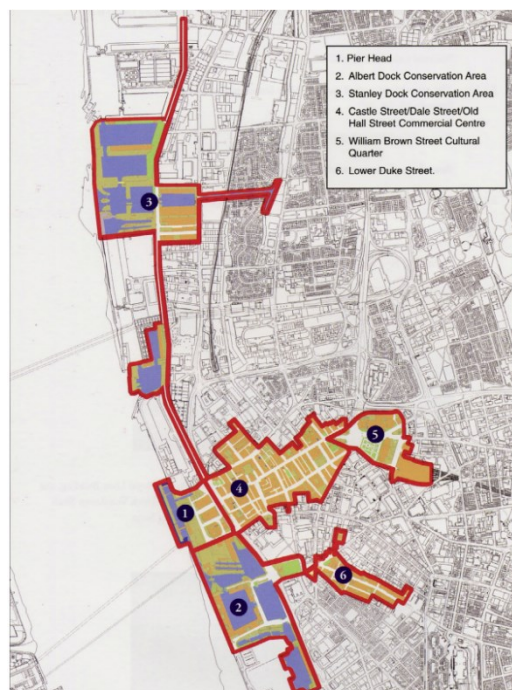


Figure 4 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City
UNESCO World Heritage Site
(Source: Liverpool City Council)

A number of significant commercial, civic and public buildings lie within these areas, including: the Pier Head (with its three main waterfront buildings: the Royal Liver Building, the Cunard Building, and Port of Liverpool Building), the Dock area (with its warehouses, dock walls, remnants of the canal system, docks and other facilities associated with port activity), the Mercantile Area (with its shipping offices, produce exchanges, marine insurance offices, banks, inland warehouses and merchants houses), together with

⁷⁶ UNESCO World Heritage Convention, *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1150/>

⁷⁷ Liverpool World Heritage City, *Why is Liverpool a World Heritage Site?*. Available at: <https://www.liverpoolworldheritage.com/why-is-liverpool-a-world-heritage-site/>

the William Brown Street Cultural Quarter, including St. George's Plateau, with its monumental cultural and civic buildings.⁷⁸

However, in 2012, UNESCO, decided that the proposed Liverpool Waters development constituted a potential threat to the World Heritage property and therefore decided to inscribe Liverpool on the List of World Heritage in Danger, with the possibility of the property being removed from the World Heritage List if the project had been approved and implemented. The Liverpool Waters scheme proposed the building of a series of skyscrapers along Liverpool's famous waterfront, which could have resulted in the city losing its World Heritage Status. However, Liverpool Council decided to grant planning permission for the scheme anyway.⁷⁹ Since then, the project has gone ahead, along with other developments both within the site and in its buffer zone, despite the Committee's view that these buildings were detrimental to the site's authenticity and integrity of the site. As a result, on 21 July 2021, the World Heritage Committee decided to delete the property "Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City" from the World Heritage List, on the basis of the irreversible loss of features conveying its outstanding universal value.⁸⁰ Indeed, the UN's heritage body concluded that the value of Liverpool's waterfront had been destroyed by new buildings, including Everton football club's new stadium. The decision a humiliation for the city and was met with discontent by the mayor and the residents, as it gave Liverpool the dubious distinction of being only the third place to lose World Heritage status.⁸¹

However, Chris Capes, Peel Group's director of development, insists that regeneration is vital for this part of the city and that it can be done without destroying Liverpool's heritage. And while UNESCO's decision to remove Liverpool from the World Heritage List is disappointing, Liverpool's rich history remains and the city's fantastic historic assets will continue to attract visitors.⁸²

⁷⁸ UNESCO World Heritage Convention, *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1150/>

⁷⁹ Carter H., 'UNESCO meets to discuss Liverpool's world heritage status', *The Guardian*, 2012. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/the-northerner/2012/jun/20/liverpool-unesco-heritage-risk>

⁸⁰ UNESCO World Heritage Convention, *World Heritage Committee deletes Liverpool - Maritime Mercantile City from UNESCO's World Heritage List*, 2021. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/2314>

⁸¹ Halliday J. 'UNESCO strips Liverpool of its world heritage status', *The Guardian*, 2021. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jul/21/unesco-strips-liverpool-waterfront-world-heritage-status>

⁸² De Ferrer M., 'Liverpool loses its UNESCO World Heritage status, but does anyone care?', *Euronews*, 2021. Available at: <https://www.euronews.com/travel/2021/07/26/liverpool-loses-its-unesco-world-heritage-status-but-does-anyone-care>

Chapter 3. Emblematic Neighbourhoods in Liverpool: Photo Essay

Liverpool's identity is also shaped by the diversity of its neighbourhoods across the city. This chapter aims to examine, with the help of images taken from the author's perspective, the most emblematic neighbourhoods of the city, with the intention of transmitting to the readers the same emotions that the author experienced as he had the opportunity to live in these areas.

1. The Docks and Waterfront

As has been previously stated, Liverpool was primarily a port city during the 18th and 19th centuries. As a consequence of the waning significance of the port industry in the 20th century, the city underwent a process of urban regeneration, whereby the zones that had previously been industrial were renewed.



Figure 5 Pier Head view from Canning Dock (from left to right: Museum of Liverpool, the Three Graces, RIBA North). The blend of modern, 20th-century and historic industrial architectural style create a unique atmosphere.

The advantageous location of Liverpool city at the Mersey estuary to the Irish Sea has historically facilitated a favourable and versatile connection between the city and the Americas. Nowadays, an illustrative example of the regeneration that has occurred in Liverpool can be found in the spatial changes within the Mersey river embankment, specifically in the functioning of Albert Docks. The Docks complex, comprising renovated historical dock facilities with service functions such as shops, bars, restaurants, galleries, and museums, represents a significant investment and a testament to the city's tradition and to the spatial metamorphosis that has shaped its social history.⁸³ The previously

⁸³ Kaczmarska M., Kaczmarska E., 'New Developments in the Liverpool Waterfront', Technical Transactions, 2018, Vol. 115, No. 3, pp. 22-23

derelict dock system was subject to a leisure-based revitalisation process.⁸⁴ The redeveloped space on the River Mersey waterfront between Prince's Dock and Queen's Dock has now been transformed into a vibrant walking boulevard, a place offering a diverse range of attractions, music events and social activities.⁸⁵

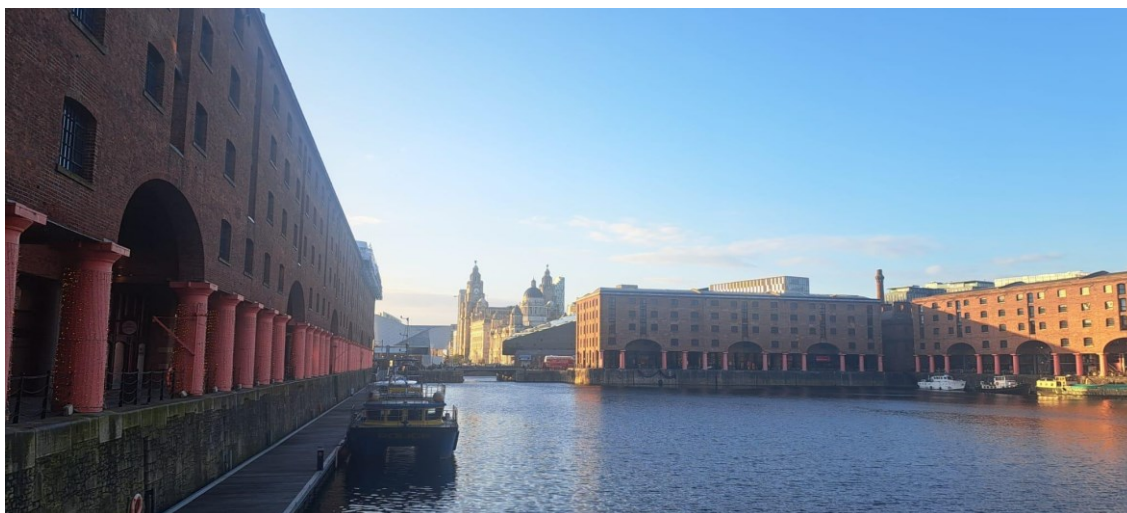


Figure 6 In the foreground of the shot is Albert Dock. Beneath the porches, shops, bars, and restaurants are concealed by the red columns, which highlight the once industrial use of the area. Water is the main element. In the background, the Three Graces and part of the Museum of Liverpool building are discernible. (Photograph taken by author)

Furthermore, Liverpool waterfront is now home to numerous cultural institutions, including the Tate Liverpool, the International Slavery Museum, the Maritime Museum, the British Music Experience, the Beatles Story, and others.⁸⁶ As a matter of fact, in more recent times, a number of new attractions have been added to the waterfront. These include a new international arena and conference venue, new exhibitions in the Tate Gallery, a new cruise liner terminal and the Mann Island residential and commercial development.⁸⁷ In the zone north of Canning Dock, where the Mann Island is located, numerous buildings with a remarkable modern architectural style can be found: the Museum of Liverpool, the RIBA, and the Open Eye Gallery, all of which are functionally connected with music, art and culture.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Sykes O., et al., 'A City Profile of Liverpool', *Cities*, 2013, 35, p. 300

⁸⁵ Kaczmarska M., Kaczmarska E., 'New Developments in the Liverpool Waterfront', *Technical Transactions*, 2018, Vol. 115, No. 3, pp. 22-23.

⁸⁶ Tripadvisor, *Museums in Liverpool*, 2024. Available at: https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g186337-Activities-c49-Liverpool_Merseyside_England.html

⁸⁷ Shaw, D. et al., 'Culture, Regeneration and Urban Renaissance in Liverpool. Reflections of Liverpool's experiences as 'European Capital of Culture' in 2008', *RaumPlanung*, 2009, p.125

⁸⁸ Kaczmarska M., Kaczmarska E., 'New Developments in the Liverpool Waterfront', *Technical Transactions*, 2018, Vol. 115, No. 3, p. 24



Figure 7 Tate Liverpool
(Photograph taken by author)

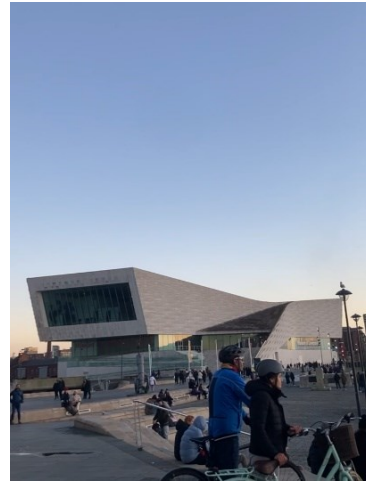


Figure 8 Museum of Liverpool
(Photograph taken by author)

The waterfront boulevard constitutes a linear element along the river. The existing facilities play a significant role in the organisation of the space, due to the functions and architectural style of the buildings from the early 20th century. The so-called Three Graces (Liver Building, Cunard Building, Port of Liverpool Building), located on the Pier Head, exemplify the city's monumental character, symbolising Liverpool's undeniable riches, traditions and distinctive character.



Figure 9 The Three Graces in a rainy day, seen from inside the Museum of Liverpool (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 10 The Boulevard in front of the Three Graces (Photograph taken by author)

The zone that primarily connects the city centre to the area of the boulevard is defined by the Albert Dock buildings, which were the site where the first revitalisation project took place.⁸⁹ As previously stated in this dissertation, the city centre was disconnected from the waterfront due to the existence of a major lane separating the waterfront from the city centre, and to the buildings which were oriented away from the waterfront.⁹⁰ However, the implementation of renovations has facilitated the connection of the city centre to the waterfront, with the introduction of a complex comprising two curved buildings that serve to highlight the entrance to the Docks.⁹¹ This newly created open space has the function of guiding people between the city centre and the waterfront, with a notable increase in the flow of people traversing the space.⁹²



Figure 11 The open space among buildings connecting Liverpool One to Albert Dock.
(Source: Lily Bichard-Collins)

⁸⁹ Kaczmarska M., Kaczmarska E., 'New Developments in the Liverpool Waterfront', *Technical Transactions*, 2018, Vol. 115, No. 3, p. 24

⁹⁰ Shaw, D. et al., 'Culture, Regeneration and Urban Renaissance in Liverpool. Reflections of Liverpool's experiences as 'European Capital of Culture' in 2008', *RaumPlanung*, 2009, p.125

⁹¹ Kaczmarska M., Kaczmarska E., 'New Developments in the Liverpool Waterfront', *Technical Transactions*, 2018, Vol. 115, No. 3, p. 24

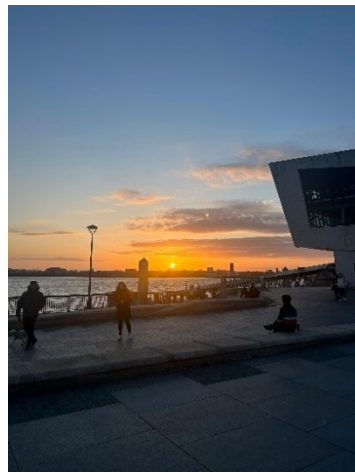
⁹² Shaw, D. et al., 'Culture, Regeneration and Urban Renaissance in Liverpool. Reflections of Liverpool's experiences as 'European Capital of Culture' in 2008', *RaumPlanung*, 2009, p.125

The revitalised space presents a great number of advantages, but the most significant among them is water. Its mere presence, the direct access to it, the gentle breeze, the abundant light and ever-changing reflections at different times of day and night, all elevate the atmosphere, imparting a unique ambience. The docks on the Mersey River have been fully utilised in the revitalised area, thereby enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the place. Furthermore, the aesthetic appeal of the location is enhanced by the presence of wooden seating areas along the promenades and the inclusion of sculptural accents, such as the Beatles statues in front of the Three Graces, which provide an ideal background for selfies.⁹³

*Figure 12
The Beatles Statue
in front of Liver
Building
(Photograph taken
by author)*



*Figure 13 The
wooden seatings
along the prome-
nade in front of
the Three
Graces, where
people enjoy
reading a book
or listening to
some music.
(Photograph
taken by author)*



*Figure 14 People enjoying a sunset
on the surface of the river Mersey
(Photograph taken by author)*



*Figure 15 The beautiful reflections of
lights and buildings that the water of
Albert Dock offers at dusk.
(Photograph taken by author)*

⁹³ Kaczmarska M., Kaczmarska E., 'New Developments in the Liverpool Waterfront', *Technical Transactions*, 2018, Vol. 115, No. 3, p. 25

In conclusion, the revitalisation process of Liverpool waterfront was clearly conducive to transforming the previously neglected and degraded areas of the industrial city into locations imbued with a contemporary lifestyle, tranquillity, respite and aesthetic appeal. It is evident that historical objects and their traditions play a significant role in this intriguing space. The image of the place has a significant impact on the transformation of the entire city centre and its neighbouring districts, as evidenced by the investment projects that have commenced in close downtown areas. The new buildings, with their modern forms of architecture, design ideas, and construction materials, despite their diversity, create attractive spaces. The applied spatial details serve to enrich individual spaces and define the symbols of the place. The attractiveness of the place is evidenced by the large number of its users, who benefit in different ways from the modern spaces available to them: walking, resting, listening to music, skating, looking at works of art, and learning to take advantage of numerous organised events, which is facilitated by the logical compositional principle of the whole planning scheme.⁹⁴



Figure 16 Young people skating in front of Liver Building (Photograph taken by author)

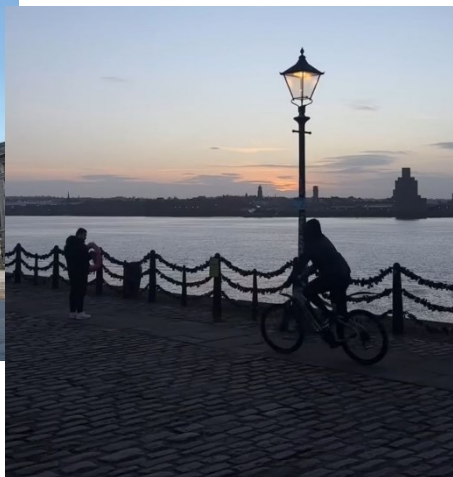


Figure 17 People walking and biking on the waterfront (Photograph taken by author)

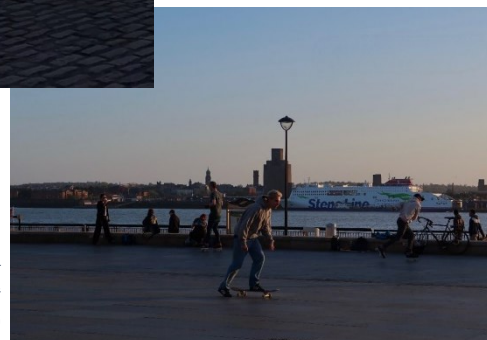


Figure 18 People skating, walking, resting and enjoying the waterfront (Photograph taken by author)

⁹⁴ Kaczmarska M., Kaczmarska E., 'New Developments in the Liverpool Waterfront', *Technical Transactions*, 2018, Vol. 115, No. 3, pp. 28-29

2. Liverpool One

The Liverpool One 'neighbourhood' is situated in the immediate vicinity of Albert Dock, to which serves as primary point of access.

The city was in urgent of a retail revitalisation strategy, as in 2004, Liverpool was ranked just thirteenth in the league of national retail destinations.⁹⁵ For this reason, over the past decade, the previously under-invested and declining retail core of Liverpool has undergone a significant transformation with the completion of Liverpool One (L1).⁹⁶ Liverpool One represents the city's flagship cultural regeneration project. It is a 1-billion-pound retail-led initiative by the Grosvenor Estate, the Duke of Westminster's company,⁹⁷ which aimed to regenerate 42 acres (17 ha) of the city centre. At the time, it constituted the largest city centre regeneration scheme in Europe and the most significant development within Liverpool's city centre for over 60 years.⁹⁸

Subsequently, the name Liverpool One was adopted. The name 'Liverpool' was selected for reasons that made the city already well-known internationally, while the addition of the word 'One' was intended to reflect the underlying philosophy of the project, which was to create the best or the number one development in the city. The logo, a single numeral '1', was designed with the intention of being straightforward, memorable and adaptable.⁹⁹

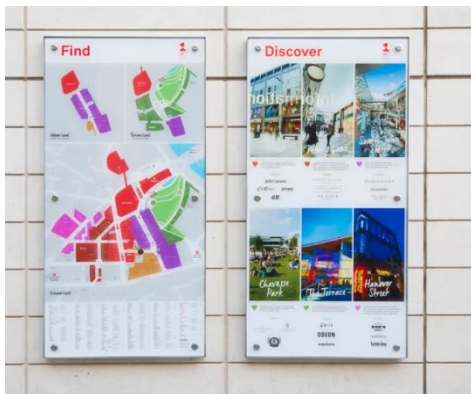


Figure 19
Maps and Information for visitors,
hanging on a wall
in Liverpool One
to encourage exploration of the retail centre
(Source: f.r.a. creative)



Figure 20 Liverpool One Logo
(Source: <https://www.liverpool-one.com/>)

⁹⁵ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, p.161

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*

⁹⁷ Boland P., '“Capital of Culture—you must be having a laugh!” Challenging the official rhetoric of Liverpool as the 2008 European cultural capital', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2010, Vol. 11, No.7, p. 634

⁹⁸ Daramola-Martin A., 'Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool.' *Place Brand and Public Diplomacy*, 2009, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 301-302

⁹⁹ *Ivi*, p. 306

Liverpool One was the most complex retail-focused, mixed-use regeneration project to be undertaken in the United Kingdom in recent times. The combination of these factors initiated a physical transformation of the city and an emotional change in attitudes and perceptions, suggesting that Liverpool had overcome a series of failed initiatives, underinvestment and economic decline. (“Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding ...”) The primary objectives were twofold: firstly, to complete the development of the retail centre before the ECoC year in 2008; and secondly, to persuade shoppers to visit Liverpool for shopping and leisure activities. In order to achieve this, it was necessary to convince retailers that Liverpool was an appropriate location for their businesses and consumers that Liverpool One would offer something distinctive.¹⁰⁰

Liverpool One’s competitive advantage was that it was not developed as a single, unified shopping centre or a covered arcade in the style of many other modern shopping developments. Liverpool One is an ‘open scheme’, following the existing street patterns.¹⁰¹ The ‘Liverpool One’ scheme was constructed within the historic street pattern on a 17-hectare site adjacent to the existing retail core, around the site of Liverpool’s lost Customs House, which was built on the infilled 1715 ‘Old Dock’.¹⁰² The retail centre is divided into five distinct zones, each with a unique character and retail offer, catering for a diverse range of consumer types, including those seeking specific items, those attending special occasions, and those engaging in social shopping.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Daramola-Martin A., ‘Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool.’ *Place Brand and Public Diplomacy*, 2009, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 301-303

¹⁰¹ *Ivi*, p. 307

¹⁰² Sykes O. et al., ‘A City Profile of Liverpool’, *Cities*, 2013, pp. 311-312

¹⁰³ Daramola-Martin A., ‘Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool.’ *Place Brand and Public Diplomacy*, 2009, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 307

The Council had rejected an enclosed mall design in favour of a “covered street” layout, which was intended to retain the intimate character of city centre lanes. However, Grosvenor insisted on the inclusion of a pseudo-public space, which permitted it to regulate and oversee access to the development. This can be described as a "malls without walls" approach.¹⁰⁴ It should be noted that the privately managed site is, in fact, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with no doors barring access.¹⁰⁵



Figure 2121 Liverpool One shops are connected by bridges and expand through different floors (Source: Culture Liverpool)

The city centre complex was completed in 2008 and now records a footfall of around 26 million people. The revitalised retail centre had the effect of retaining local spending by shoppers who had previously been inclined to travel outside the city for goods.¹⁰⁶

It has been demonstrated through research that cleanliness, security and access are significant factors that shape customer perceptions and judgments of Liverpool One. Consequently, all areas are cleaned and washed down on a daily and evening basis, with any residual litter and chewing gum removed. Litter picking, bin emptying and waste management are conducted during the core shift hours up to the point of retail closing. Cleaning or polishing of brassware, stainless steel and other decorative finishes is conducted throughout the day.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, p. 162

¹⁰⁵ Daramola-Martin A., ‘Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool.’ *Place Brand and Public Diplomacy*, 2009, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 310

¹⁰⁶ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, pp. 161-162

¹⁰⁷ Daramola-Martin A., ‘Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool.’ *Place Brand and Public Diplomacy*, 2009, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 310

Liverpool One has been instrumental in transforming the retail environment of the city, with a largely positive reception. The project was defined by design experts as a benchmark for a city centre mixed-use development, largely retail-led, which is open and accessible throughout the day and reconnects the waterfront with the rest of the city.¹⁰⁸ There was a concern that the former shopping centre, which encompassed the pedestrianised Church Street and Bold Street, would become a neglected area. However, this did not occur, as the Liverpool One project effectively integrated with those parts of the city centre.¹⁰⁹ Liverpool One, as a result of its master plan design, has not only extended the existing retail offer in the city centre, but has also created vital links to the Albert Dock, thereby reconnecting this important part of the city.¹¹⁰

The project did, however, elicit criticism, particularly with regard to the privatisation of public space. This was due to the fact that the control of entire streets was transferred to private companies. The privatisation of this public space has the effect of restricting the movement of some social groups, as evidenced by the presence of security personnel in Liverpool One, which has the consequence of impacting on certain people wanting to visit the city centre. It can be defined as a 'consumer-focused re-engineering of the landscape', whereby the city centre prioritises the presence of respectable citizens over that of those engaged in anti-social behaviour, including gangs, sex workers, alcoholics, and drug addicts. This is because such individuals would give the wrong impression to tourists and shoppers.¹¹¹

Nevertheless, it can be asserted that the image of Liverpool has undoubtedly undergone a transformation since the inauguration of Liverpool One. The relationship between the public and private sectors, the arts and culture, when combined efficiently, has the potential to effect significant change in the way a place is shaped. This combination of factors is a potent one, as evidenced by the transformation of Liverpool.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Sykes O. et al., 'A City Profile of Liverpool', *Cities*, 2013, p. 312

¹⁰⁹ Carter D.K., *Remaking Post-Industrial Cities: Lessons from North America and Europe*, 2016, p. 162

¹¹⁰ Daramola-Martin A., 'Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool.' *Place Brand and Public Diplomacy*, 2009, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 308

¹¹¹ Boland P., "Capital of Culture—you must be having a laugh!" Challenging the official rhetoric of Liverpool as the 2008 European cultural capital', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2010, Vol. 11, No. 7, pp.634-635

¹¹² Daramola-Martin A., 'Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool.' *Place Brand and Public Diplomacy*, 2009, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 311

3. The Cavern Quarter

One of the principal reasons for Liverpool's international renown is that it was the birthplace of one of the most celebrated bands in history, The Beatles. All members of the group were born and raised in the south of Liverpool¹¹³ and became famous as a band also thanks to their performances in local venues. The members of the band always demonstrated a profound sense of attachment to the city and, after leaving Liverpool, they composed different nostalgic songs rooted in memories and experiences from their childhood in the city. These include 'Penny Lane', 'Strawberry Fields' and 'In My Life', which evoke the idyllic suburb of south Liverpool where John Lennon and Paul McCartney met and grew up.¹¹⁴ The city of Liverpool continues to commemorate the renowned band in a variety of ways to this day. One notable example is the Cavern Quarter, a designated area within the city centre that serves to commemorate the legacy of the band and celebrates Liverpool's cultural heritage and pivotal role in the history of rock and roll.

The Cavern Quarter is a vibrant neighbourhood in Liverpool city centre, particularly renowned for its rich musical history. The area is nowadays filled with music venues, bars, and shops, making it a popular destination for both tourists and locals. It is named after the famous Cavern Club, the place where The Beatles used to perform in their early years and from which they became internationally famous.



Figure 22 Mathew street, the core part of the Cavern Quarter (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 23 The entrance to Cavern Club (Photograph taken by author)

¹¹³ Cohen S., 'Cavern journeys: music, migration and urban space', in *Migrating Music*, 2011, p.237

¹¹⁴ Ivi, p.243

The Cavern first opened in 1957 as a jazz club situated in the cellar of a Liverpool city centre warehouse. It soon became a popular venue for young people interested in bohemian culture. Subsequently, it became a pivotal venue for rock'n'roll and beat groups, most notably the Beatles, who performed live at the club on 292 occasions between 1961 and 1963. The Cavern Club is often referred to as 'the place where it all began' for the Beatles, as it was the site of the group's first encounter with manager Brian Epstein. This meeting is cited as the moment that changed the course of the band's career, marking the transition from their beginnings in Liverpool to a global phenomenon.¹¹⁵

In 1973, the Cavern Club had been demolished, but, following the murder of John Lennon in 1980, the site where the club had once stood became a shrine of mourning. Consequently, the Beatles' connection with the club began to be exploited by urban developers and tourist entrepreneurs. Public and private agencies in Liverpool discovered the Cavern Club as a basis for the promotion of Liverpool's exceptionalism and economic restructuring. Amongst other developments, this involved the construction of a replica club in close proximity to the original site. Additionally, the Cavern Quarter was established in the area, comprising the Cavern Walks shopping centre and two Cavern 'Walls of Fame'. The newly constructed Cavern Club became prominent feature on tourist maps of Beatles Liverpool, while continuing to operate as a live music venue. It was eventually franchised and exported to other global locations, including Tokyo and Buenos Aires.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Cohen S., 'Cavern journeys: music, migration and urban space', in *Migrating Music*, 2011, pp. 235-237

¹¹⁶ *Ivi*, p.245

The Cavern Quarter is currently constituted by the iconic Mathew Street and the surrounding streets. The area is home to a number of notable music venues, a museum dedicated to The Beatles and, of course, the Cavern Club and Cavern Pub. Furthermore, statues of Cilla Black and John Lennon can be observed in the area.¹¹⁷ Additionally, the Liverpool Wall of Fame is situated on Mathew Street, featuring 54 Liverpool-based musician who have achieved the number one position on the UK music chart since 1952.¹¹⁸



Figure 24 A Beatles' statue on the top of a souvenir shop sign in Mathew Street (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 26 Liverpool Beatles Museum (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 25 The statue of John Lennon in Mathew Street, leaning on the Wall of Fame (Photograph taken by author)

¹¹⁷ Visit Liverpool, 'Liverpool's Cavern Quarter'. Available at: <https://www.visitliverpool.com/explore/liverpool-city-centre/cavern-quarter/?bounds=false&view=list&sort=qualityScore>

¹¹⁸ Visit Liverpool, 'Liverpool Wall of Fame'. Available at: <https://www.visitliverpool.com/listing/liverpool-wall-of-fame/739701/>

The Cavern thus became the focus of organised efforts to brand and regenerate urban space. The transformation of the venue and of the area into a Beatles heritage site has arguably obscured its position as a point of reference for the musical journeys and trajectories of other musicians and musical styles. The trajectory and transformation of the Cavern Club is reflective of, and thus illustrative of, the broader transformation of Liverpool. As previously discussed in this dissertation, since the global economic crisis of the 1970s, culture has been employed as a tool for urban redevelopment and as part of a broader process of social and economic restructuring shaped by the politics and economics of neoliberalism. Consequently, urban policymakers have reconsidered and repositioned the city as a hub for cultural tourism, heritage and consumption.¹¹⁹

In conclusion, the Cavern Quarter not only serves to commemorate the legacy of The Beatles, but also the broader efforts to rebrand Liverpool as a centre of cultural tourism. The evolution of the area demonstrates how music and memory can be instrumental in driving urban regeneration and reshape a city's identity on the global stage.

¹¹⁹ Cohen S., 'Cavern journeys: music, migration and urban space', in *Migrating Music*, 2011, pp. 245-246

4. Anfield

While the Beatles have contributed significantly to Liverpool's international renown, the city is also celebrated for its association with one of the most prominent football clubs in England and globally, Liverpool Football Club, whose home stadium is situated within the city limits, in Anfield.

Anfield is a residential district situated to the north-east of Liverpool's city centre. It is, as previously mentioned, most notable for being the location of the Anfield Stadium, which was built in 1884 and has been the home of Liverpool FC since its foundation in 1892.¹²⁰ The neighbourhood has strong ties to the local football culture, with match days resulting in a notable transformation of the neighbourhood as thousands of fans converge upon Anfield Stadium.

Beyond the domain of football, the surrounding area of Anfield comprises a combination of traditional Victorian terraced housing, more contemporary residential developments, and community spaces. The neighbourhood has undergone a substantial process of regeneration in recent years, with investments directed towards the enhancement of housing, infrastructure, and community facilities. This encompasses the construction of new residential properties, the development of green spaces, and improvements to local amenities, with the objective of creating a more vibrant and liveable community.¹²¹



Figure 27 Aerial view of Anfield Stadium and its surroundings
(Source: Christopher Furlong)



Figure 28 Anfield Stadium seen from below
(Photograph taken by author)

¹²⁰ This is Anfield, *Anfield Stadium*, 2024. Available at: <https://www.thisisanfield.com/clubinfo/anfield/>

¹²¹ See: Menuge A., *Ordinary Landscapes, Special Places: Anfield, Breckfield and the growth of Liverpool's suburbs*, 2008

With regard to football and the stadium itself, it constitutes a significant landmark, known for its passionate atmosphere, particularly in the Kop stand, which is celebrated for its enthusiastic and devoted supporters. Anfield football ground is distinguished by the fact that it is known around the world to football's millions of followers. This is the reason why it is an all-year-round place of pilgrimage. Indeed, football has generated its own mythology, with the ground becoming a hallowed site, revered by fans for its association with distinguished players and managers. Regardless of whether a match is in progress, the stadium and its museum attract hundreds of daily visitors, who view it as a kind of sacred space, reliving the victories and trophies of Liverpool FC.¹²²



Figure 29 Champions League trophies that can be seen by fans in Anfield Stadium's museum (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 30 FA Cup trophy and some legendary player's jerseys (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 31 View of the Kop, from the inside of Anfield Stadium (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 32 A tourist guide while showing 'This is Anfield' sign that Liverpool FC players are used to touch before entering the pitch for a match (Photograph taken by author)

¹²² Menuge A., *Ordinary Landscapes, Special Places: Anfield, Breckfield and the growth of Liverpool's suburbs*, 2008, p. 71-72

The supporters at Anfield celebrate their sense of being Liverpudlian, attending matches on a weekly basis in what has become their sacred place, Anfield stadium, and proudly singing their anthem “You’ll Never Walk Alone”.¹²³

Moreover, the surrounding area of Anfield features an impressive array of murals commemorating the history of Liverpool FC, its achievements, legendary players, and managerial staff. These murals are often a highlight for football enthusiasts during their visits to the stadium.

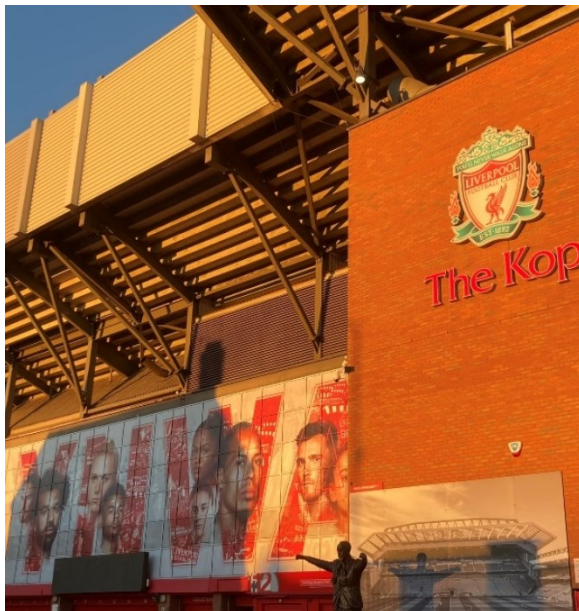


Figure 33 The exterior of Anfield Stadium. The mural features "YNWA", the abbreviation of the anthem of Liverpool FC: "You'll Never Walk Alone" (Photograph taken by author)



Figure 34 Some of the many street art murals portraying distinguished figures of Liverpool FC (Photographs taken by author)

¹²³ Davie G., ‘Believe without Belonging. A Liverpool Case Study’, *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, 1993, Vol. 38, No. 81, pp. 84-85

It is not difficult to become emotionally attached to the football culture in Liverpool, as it provides a sense of identity and purpose for many individuals and communities and continues to attract a disproportionately high number of residents and visitors.¹²⁴ One may observe a plethora of signage, street art, retail outlets, and merchandise that evince Liverpool Football Club's indelible imprint on the city's identity.



Figure 35 An advertisement placed in front of Liverpool Lime Street Station shows how deeply embedded is football culture for Liverpoolians and visitors (Photograph taken by author)

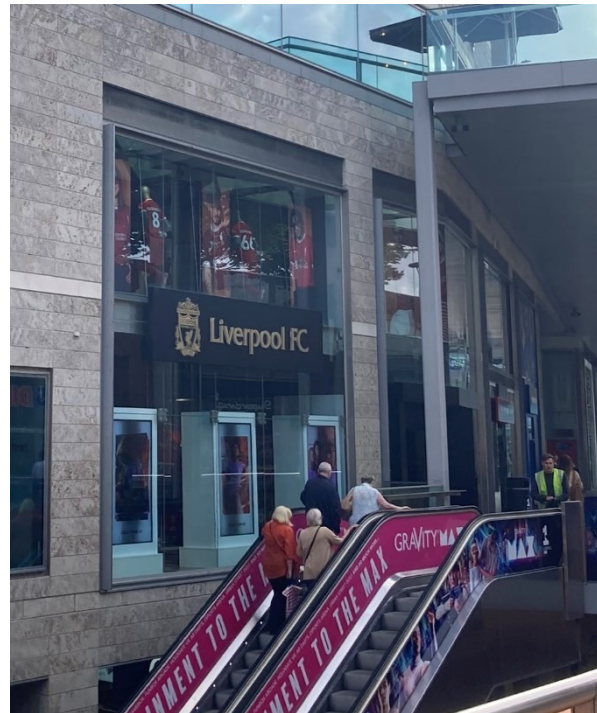


Figure 36 An official Liverpool FC store, situated in Liverpool One (Photograph taken by author)

To conclude, Anfield represents not merely a neighbourhood in Liverpool, but rather the city's epicentre of football culture. This culture intertwines with the community, thereby influencing the identity of the area and its residents. The district's football heritage serves to illustrate its significance as both a local landmark and as a global symbol of Liverpool's passion and pride.

¹²⁴ Davie G., 'Believe without Belonging. A Liverpool Case Study', *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, 1993, Vol. 38, No. 81, pp. 84-85

5. Chinatown

The most illustrative neighbourhood of Liverpool's multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism is undoubtedly Chinatown.

The Chinese community in Liverpool is reputed to be the oldest in Europe. Historically, it has been concentrated in the Chinatown area, which is one of the most historic neighbourhoods in the city and which has undergone significant evolution over the course of the 20th century.¹²⁵

The earliest documented evidence of the Chinese presence in Liverpool dates back to the 1860s, when the first Chinese seamen arrived in the city, drawn by the Liverpool's status as a major port. This connection was further reinforced during the Second World War, when approximately 20,000 Chinese seafarers were recruited into the British Merchant Navy, with many of them being stationed in Liverpool. Some of these men settled in the city, marrying local women and establishing businesses that catered to the needs of the seafaring community.¹²⁶

Historically, the Chinatown was situated in proximity of the south docks area, as part of the seamen's lodging districts. This neighbourhood, which was populated mainly by sailors from China, Southeast Asia, and Africa, was situated in close proximity to the docks, where cargo from these regions was unloaded during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, the area was extensively damaged during the bombing campaign of World War II, resulting in a significant clearance and redevelopment programme.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Uduku O., 'Ethnic Minority Perspectives', in Munck R., *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, 2003, p. 132

¹²⁶ Png B., 'What is Liverpool's affiliation to the Chinese community?', *Liverpool's history with the Chinese community*, John Moores University, 2023. Available at: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/news/articles/2023/1/19/liverpools-history-with-the-chinese-community>

¹²⁷ Uduku O., 'Ethnic Minority Perspectives', in Munck R., *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, 2003, pp. 132-133

Today's Chinatown, instead, is situated around Cornwallis Street and Great George Square, in proximity to the historic epicentre. In recent decades, the new Chinatown has experienced a resurgence, driven by both commercial investment and community efforts. The revitalisation of the area has resulted in an increase in the residential population, with a diverse demographic comprising Chinese and non-Chinese residents. This renewal has also seen the establishment of various social facilities, including the Pagoda Chinese Community Centre, which hosts numerous community activities, and a range of local businesses that serve the community's needs, such as restaurants, shops, and social support services.¹²⁸



Figure 37 Street signs in Chinatown have both English and Chinese wording (Author: Man Vyi)



Figure 38 Signs and decorations on buildings and shops close to the Chinese arch (Source: @LiverpoolVista on x.com)

¹²⁸ Uduku O., 'Ethnic Minority Perspectives', in Munck R., *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, 2003, pp. 132-133

The most visible symbol of this resurgence is the completion of a Chinese arch, which is reputed to be the tallest arch outside of China. The arch stands at the entrance to the new Chinatown and not only serves as a gateway to the neighbourhood, but also symbolizes the renewal and growing pride in Chinese identity within Liverpool, due to its size and bold, colourful design. Furthermore, the Chinese community has the opportunity to celebrate the annual Chinese New Year festival, which has become a significant attraction for all residents of Liverpool and beyond.¹²⁹



*Figure 39 Liverpool Chinese Arch, the biggest outside of China
(Photograph taken by author)*

¹²⁹ Uduku O., 'Ethnic Minority Perspectives', in Munck R., *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, 2003, pp. 133-135

Nevertheless, the redevelopment of Chinatown has not been without difficulties. The focus on commercial development has, on occasion, resulted in a lack of attention to the necessity for social infrastructure, with the consequence that the area still requires significant investment in this regard.¹³⁰ While the neighbourhood's regeneration has brought demographic growth and economic opportunities, it has also revealed the persistence of issues pertaining to segregation and "ghettoization" that the community continues to confront.¹³¹ Given that Liverpool is a port city with a diverse population, it might be assumed that all residents are, in effect, minorities. However, the city's history and the experiences of its inhabitants demonstrate that the melting pot theory unfortunately does not apply in the same way as in other urban centres. In general, the majority of white migrants have become integrated into the mainstream residential and cultural fabric of Liverpool. It is noteworthy that a considerable number of ethnic minority groups, exemplified by the Chinese case-study communities, have persisted in maintaining their presence in discrete urban neighbourhoods, distinct from the broader residential community in Liverpool.¹³²

In conclusion, while Liverpool's Chinatown serves as a vibrant testament to the city's multiculturalism and the enduring presence of its Chinese community, the challenges of segregation and the necessity for further social infrastructure underscore the complexities inherent in achieving true integration. The neighbourhood's rich history and recent resurgence reflect both the successes and ongoing struggles of maintaining a distinct cultural identity within the broader urban landscape.

¹³⁰ Uduku O., 'Ethnic Minority Perspectives', in Munck R., *Reinventing the City: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective*, 2003, p. 134

¹³¹ *Ivi*, p. 138

¹³² *Ivi*, pp. 135-136

Conclusions

This dissertation has sought to examine the evolution of Liverpool as a post-industrial city, with a particular focus on the urban and cultural transformations that have redefined its landscape and identity. By examining the transformation of Liverpool from a historically significant port city to a modern metropolis, the study has illuminated the key dynamics that have shaped its post-industrial trajectory.

The theoretical framework established in the initial chapter facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the concept of post-industrial cities, with a particular focus on the urban crises of the 1970s and 1980s and the rise of neoliberalism. These periods were pivotal in establishing the context for subsequent waves of urban regeneration, particularly those driven by cultural initiatives. The examination of case studies, including Hamburg's HafenCity and Baltimore's Inner Harbor Place, provided valuable insights into the processes of waterfront reclamation and urban revitalisation, setting a contextual backdrop for Liverpool's own transformation.

The second chapter undertook a detailed examination of the case of Liverpool, emphasising its geographical, cultural and historical significance. The analysis demonstrated that significant cultural events, such as the designation as European Capital of Culture in 2008, the hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest in 2023, and Taylor Swift's "The Eras Tour" in 2024, have attracted global attention to the city and have played a pivotal role in its ongoing urban regeneration. These events have contributed to the reimagining of Liverpool as a cultural hub, enhancing its global image and boosting its economic vitality.

A key element of the Liverpool case study was an investigation into the UNESCO controversy concerning the revocation of the city's World Heritage Site status. This controversy brought to light the intricate challenges confronted by urban centres undergoing rapid metamorphosis, where the drive for modernisation and economic advancement can occasionally prove to be at odds with the safeguarding of historical and cultural heritage. The analysis of this issue highlighted the necessity for cities like Liverpool to navigate a delicate balance as they evolve in the post-industrial era.

Finally, the photographic essay in the third chapter provided a visual exploration of Liverpool's emblematic neighbourhoods, each of which represented a different aspect of the city's regeneration and cultural dynamism. From the transformation of the Docks and Waterfront into a vibrant public space to the retail-led development of Liverpool ONE,

the historical significance of the Cavern Quarter, the football-centric identity of Anfield, and the cultural richness of Chinatown, these neighbourhoods collectively illustrate the multifaceted nature of Liverpool's post-industrial identity.

In conclusion, this dissertation has demonstrated that Liverpool's transition from a traditional port city to a modern post-industrial metropolis has been significantly shaped by a combination of urban regeneration initiatives, cultural events, and the reimagining of its urban spaces. The city's capacity to leverage its rich cultural heritage while embracing new opportunities for growth has rendered it a compelling exemplar of a post-industrial city in the 21st century. The experience of Liverpool serves as a valuable case study for understanding the broader processes of urban transformation in the context of post-industrialisation and offers insights that may be applicable to other cities undergoing similar transitions. The study ultimately serves to affirm Liverpool's distinctiveness and underscores its significant role in shaping the contemporary urban and cultural landscapes.

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Riassunto

La presente tesi analizza il concetto di città post-industriale attraverso lo studio delle trasformazioni urbane e culturali che hanno interessato la città di Liverpool, in Inghilterra. La scelta del caso di studio di Liverpool è motivata dall'esperienza personale dell'autore, che ha trascorso cinque mesi nella città come studente Erasmus+. L'obiettivo principale dell'elaborato è mettere in luce l'unicità delle caratteristiche di Liverpool e comprendere come questa città, con un lungo passato di città portuale e industriale, si sia evoluta in una moderna città post-industriale con un paesaggio urbano profondamente rinnovato.

La tesi è strutturata in tre capitoli. Il primo capitolo introduce il concetto di "città post-industriale" all'interno di un quadro teorico, analizzando la crisi urbana degli anni '70 e '80 e l'ascesa del neoliberalismo. Viene esaminato il fenomeno della rigenerazione urbana, con particolare attenzione alla rigenerazione culturale e al recupero dei "waterfront" in paesaggi post-industriali, attraverso esempi come la HafenCity di Amburgo e l'Inner Harbor Place di Baltimora.

Il secondo capitolo si concentra specificamente su Liverpool, analizzandone il contesto geografico, storico e culturale. Viene data particolare attenzione agli effetti dei principali eventi culturali che si sono tenuti nel corso degli ultimi decenni nella città, come la nomina a Capitale Europea della Cultura del 2008, l'Eurovision Song Contest ospitato nel 2023 e i concerti del tour mondiale della cantante americana Taylor Swift nel 2024. Inoltre, viene esaminata la controversia relativa alla revoca dello status di Patrimonio dell'Umanità UNESCO della città nel 2021, indagando le motivazioni alla base di questa decisione.

Il terzo capitolo si conclude con un saggio fotografico, che intende accompagnare visualmente ad un'analisi di alcuni dei quartieri più emblematici di Liverpool, evidenziandone le caratteristiche culturali distintive. Tra i quartieri analizzati figurano i Docks e il Waterfront, che hanno cambiato completamente volto grazie alla significativa rigenerazione che hanno subito, il Liverpool ONE, un 'centro commerciale senza mura', il Cavern Quarter, cuore pulsante della storia musicale della città, Anfield, epicentro della cultura calcistica di Liverpool, e Chinatown, emblema della multietnicità e del multiculturalismo della città. Ogni quartiere mette in luce, a proprio modo, un diverso aspetto della rigenerazione urbana e del dinamismo culturale di Liverpool.

In sintesi, l'esperienza di Liverpool funge da prezioso caso di studio per comprendere i più ampi processi di trasformazione urbana nel contesto della post-industrializzazione. Questa tesi intende offrire una panoramica approfondita delle dinamiche che hanno plasmato Liverpool come esempio di città post-industriale, mettendo in evidenza come la cultura, i grandi eventi e le iniziative di rigenerazione urbana siano stati cruciali nel ridefinire l'identità della città, rendendola, al giorno d'oggi meta ambita da milioni di turisti da ogni parte del mondo.