



**CREATIVE TOURISM IN SMALLER COMMUNITIES:  
PLACE, CULTURE, AND LOCAL REPRESENTATION**  
Edited and with an introduction by Kathleen Scherf

ISBN 978-1-77385-189-1

**THIS BOOK IS AN OPEN ACCESS E-BOOK.** It is an electronic version of a book that can be purchased in physical form through any bookseller or on-line retailer, or from our distributors. Please support this open access publication by requesting that your university purchase a print copy of this book, or by purchasing a copy yourself. If you have any questions, please contact us at [ucpress@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ucpress@ucalgary.ca)

**Cover Art:** The artwork on the cover of this book is not open access and falls under traditional copyright provisions; it cannot be reproduced in any way without written permission of the artists and their agents. The cover can be displayed as a complete cover image for the purposes of publicizing this work, but the artwork cannot be extracted from the context of the cover of this specific work without breaching the artist's copyright.

**COPYRIGHT NOTICE:** This open-access work is published under a Creative Commons licence. This means that you are free to copy, distribute, display or perform the work as long as you clearly attribute the work to its authors and publisher, that you do not use this work for any commercial gain in any form, and that you in no way alter, transform, or build on the work outside of its use in normal academic scholarship without our express permission. If you want to reuse or distribute the work, you must inform its new audience of the licence terms of this work. For more information, see details of the Creative Commons licence at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

**UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY:**

- read and store this document free of charge;
- distribute it for personal use free of charge;
- print sections of the work for personal use;
- read or perform parts of the work in a context where no financial transactions take place.

**UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY NOT:**

- gain financially from the work in any way;
- sell the work or seek monies in relation to the distribution of the work;
- use the work in any commercial activity of any kind;
- profit a third party indirectly via use or distribution of the work;
- distribute in or through a commercial body (with the exception of academic usage within educational institutions such as schools and universities);
- reproduce, distribute, or store the cover image outside of its function as a cover of this work;
- alter or build on the work outside of normal academic scholarship.



**Acknowledgement:** *We acknowledge the wording around open access used by Australian publisher, re.press, and thank them for giving us permission to adapt their wording to our policy <http://www.re-press.org>*

# Art Worlds in the Periphery: Creativity and Networking in Rural Scandinavia

*Solène Prince, Evangelia Petridou, Dimitri Ioannides*

## Introduction

Creativity has become a popular strategy for promoting the innovations and ideas behind economic growth (Richards 2011; Ray 1998). The urban-centric rhetoric behind creativity is, however, problematic when theoretically and practically applied to peripheral spaces despite instances of emerging creativity in the countryside and small cities in peripheral regions (Cloke 2006; Gibson 2010). Overall, rural cultural and creative clusters face many developmental challenges because they are peripheral with respect to global markets, happenings, and publics (Andersen 2010; Gibson, Luckman, and Willoughby-Smith 2010). Thus, various scholars have called for policies and theories that take into account the nature of creativity and networking in rural areas, while concurrently avoiding urban-centric rhetoric as a means of studying, planning, and assessing the success of rural clusters (Cole 2008; Fløysand and Jakobsen 2007).

In this chapter, we offer insights into the development of such arrangements and theories that demonstrate enhanced sensitivity to the nature of creativity and networking in rural areas, especially in light of these regions' peripherality, as a result of which reliance on public funding and tourism development are commonly used to counter limited economic and social opportunities. Unlike in cities, the development of creative industries in rural areas often stems from cultural and artistic clustering

embedded in traditional products, narratives, practices, and livelihoods (Bell and Jayne 2010). With the decline of primary industries, many rural areas have reinvented themselves as sites of appealing localized consumption (Everett 2012; Mitchell 2013). There is, thus, often a heavy reliance on tourism to maintain emerging rural creative industries and the appealing atmosphere they foster (Cloke 2007). Moreover, there is consensus that the development of creative clusters in the periphery should aim at creating better living spaces by improving territorial cohesion (Petridou and Ioannides 2012).

Our interest in this chapter is the various types of networks that emerge in the rural space as artists pursue their own professional ideas, but also promote community development, which has the potential to counter the effects of limited economic and social opportunities in the periphery. Our study object within the broad field of creativity, as defined by Richards (2011), is the creative space. He conceptualizes this space as clusters of creativity or culture, which are “perhaps the most obvious physical manifestation of the relationship between tourism and creativity” (1240). Our cases reflect the importance of acknowledging that, while not all actors involved in rural development are tourist entrepreneurs per se, they nonetheless play a significant role in positioning the periphery as an interesting place to live in and visit. In the first case, we present a permanent network. We identify this network as a significant factor behind the reconciliation of tourism and professional development in the periphery. In the second case, we investigate an ephemeral network, which we identify as fundamental to strengthening the concept of territorial cohesion among various residents, and to turning the periphery into a site of creativity of potential interest for visitors and tourists.

The cases we present are from Scandinavia and highlight two of the themes Scherf identified as central to this volume in the introduction. Our first case, the craft artists of the Arts and Crafts Association Bornholm (ACAB) in Denmark, relates to the theme of creative networks offering touristic experiences. Through EU funding, these artists have formed an association to take advantage of the tourist season by exchanging skills and pooling resources, but also by creating a local identity based in idyllic rurality. Additionally, these artists go abroad individually but also organize biannual meetings in Bornholm to foster inspiration and learning. We

also examine the project of Konstgödning (Art Fertilization) in Jämtland, Sweden, which relates to the (re)generation of sustainable cultural development in host communities. The diverse artists involved in this project received money from the EU in 2015 to co-produce art that would highlight locals' relationship to their peripheral location in subarctic Sweden. The project outlines the development of creative output based in territorial cohesion stemming from ephemeral regional networking. It created space to foster a series of events based in the creativity of local artists and the identity of residents. Both cases underline the highly embedded nature of rural creative networks, leading us to encourage the careful study of these networks to promote sustainable tourism development in the periphery.

## Creativity and Spatial Development

Cities and regions around the world increasingly emphasize creativity as a popular strategy for encouraging innovations and ideas for fostering economic growth (Richards 2011; Ray 1998). The application of creativity to planning and development strategies results from broader global processes leading to widespread commodification and standardization, the rapid development of the knowledge and network economies, and rising competition between cities and regions to attract both visitors and residents (Pratt 2008; Scott 2010a). Although creativity is hard to define (Richards 2011), it is generally perceived to imply inventiveness, displays of imagination, and stepping beyond traditional ways of making, knowing, and doing (Richard and Wilson 2007). These elements manifest themselves differently within creative spaces through the presence of creative persons, such as artists and designers; the development of creative production processes; the appearance of creative products, such as consumer experiences; and the flourishing of creative environments (Florida 2005, 2002; Richards 2011; Scott 2010a).

The appearance of creative production processes relates to the development of creative industries, which are seen as “activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skills and talent, and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property” (Richards and Wilson 2007, 5). The pioneering research of Richard Florida (2005, 2002) and Charles Landry (2000) has inspired policies aimed at reinforcing the appearance of urban

neo-bohemias, where deindustrialized facilities house small firms working in, for instance, design, film, music, or publishing. This research stresses the influence of members of the so-called “creative class,” who Florida (2005, 2002) believes are primarily drawn to particular spots in an urban environment precisely because they offers an ideal combination of attributes, which inspire further creativity (see also Currid 2007; Zukin 2010).

Market competitiveness within the creative economy stems from the formation of those attractive neighbourhoods that inspire the development of clusters of creative entrepreneurship (Scott 1999; Watson 2008). Subsequently, creative clusters promote the development of the kind of atmosphere that entices not only tourists but also new residents. As Mommaas (2004) explains, creative clusters strengthen their host communities’ identity, attraction power, and market position. They are, in this sense, hubs of prosperity, cosmopolitanism, novelty, and leisure. Within these trendy environments, specific products of the creative industries provide tourists with experiences through the development of events, cultural routes, and themed spaces (Richard and Wilson 2007). In recent years, although increasing academic criticism has been levied against the work of Florida and Landry (see, for instance, Pratt 2008; Scott 2010a; Sorensen 2009), the importance of creativity and its related cultural industries for urban and regional growth remains largely uncontested at the policy level. As Scott (2010a) contends, what planner or politician would not want their city or town to be vibrant, attracting visitors and residents alike?

Research on creativity has traditionally been heavily biased toward cities (Gibson 2010). Nonetheless, researchers increasingly describe various creative industries and initiatives flourishing in smaller cities and rural areas (see, for instance, Fitjar and Jøsendal 2016; Gibson 2010; Petridou and Ioannides 2012; McGranahan and Wojan 2007; Waitt and Gibson 2009). The development of rural creative industries generally stems from cultural clustering embedded in spatial symbols, practices, and attributes, such as traditional products and livelihoods (Bell and Jayne 2010). Scott (2010b) contends that the creative development of rural areas often derives from the landscape’s physical and cultural features. He presents the English Lake District as an example of such diverse place-based practices, ranging from gastronomy and handicrafts to outdoor activities. Diversity also features in the study from Harvey, Hawkins, and Thomas (2012) in

Cornwall, England, where a broad range of creative individuals such as designers, visual artists, and performing artists have clustered. When actual subsectors of creative clusters emerge in rural areas, they often stem from the development of arts-and-crafts hubs in amenity-rich areas (Wojan et al. 2007).

To sustain creative industries in rural milieus, policy-makers frequently rely heavily on tourism (Clope 2007). With the decline of primary industries, many rural areas have reinvented themselves into sites of consumption (Everett 2012; Mitchell 2013; Sims 2009; Zasada 2011). Governmental attempts at fostering development in rural spaces have long targeted the promotion of place-based products to preserve cultural integrity and deliver unique competitive products (Kneafsey 2001; Ray 1998). Objects and symbols of peripherality and rurality infuse rural spaces and products with their own authenticity (Connell and Gibson 2003; Stratton 2008). Subsequently, tourists in rural places consume these mostly to satisfy a need for authentic experiences; in such environments, close encounters with local people and new sensations matter (Sims 2009). This search for authenticity is especially relevant for city dwellers who feel increasingly alienated from the production processes behind their consumption patterns (Mitchell 2013).

In light of these challenges and opportunities, we explore in the rest of our theoretical section two key components behind the creative development that makes the periphery attractive for both tourists and artists. First, we take up the spatial character of networking as it is a fundamental aspect of creativity and occurs significantly differently in the periphery compared to the urban centre. Secondly, we look into the social significance of networking for creative clusters in the periphery by bringing up territorial cohesion.

## Networks and Creative Development

Bell and Jayne (2010) argue that the urban-centric rhetoric of creativity means that policies concerning creative industries and initiatives are generally not suited to the realities of rural areas. Creativity is easy to find in cities, leading many researchers to assume that developmental paths focusing on the creative industries can flourish elsewhere by following a similar plan (Gibson 2010). Fløysand and Jakobsen (2007) claim that this

urban-centric rhetoric usually tends to favour chic trends better suited for cities, thereby undermining the more traditional nature of the creative practices of rural areas. Mostly, familiarity and social roles foster different environments of creative development (Atterton 2007; Scott 2010a). Informal networks, often highly embedded in the local context, are commonly found in peripheral locations. Harvey, Hawkins, and Thomas (2012) hold that the informal environment represents a work-based support system serving, for instance, to oversee emotional needs and provide professional advice while enabling the pooling and sharing of resources.

Most importantly, perhaps, networks in rural areas are characterized by high density; that is, tight structures with actors connected through strong ties (Tregear and Cooper, 2016). Dense networks are cohesive and can be visualized, according to Borgatti, Everett, and Johnson (2013), as a big clump of tangled electrical wires. Network cohesiveness corresponds closely to social cohesiveness, though this is not necessarily always the case. Density is a term best used comparatively, and the density of small networks, which one might expect to find in rural spaces, tends to be higher than the density of larger networks, which may, more likely though not exclusively, be found in urban areas (Borgatti, Everett, and Johnson 2013). A disadvantage of dense networks is that they do not benefit through the advantages of weak ties. Granovetter (1973) notes that “weak ties . . . are here seen as indispensable to individuals’ opportunities and to their integration into communities; strong ties, breeding local cohesion, lead to overall fragmentation” (1378). In places characterized by limited social mobility and lifelong friendships, actors tend to stay locked in a certain mindset and harbour feuds because they have always done so (Atterton 2007).

The nature of creativity implies the formation of networks to inform and inspire its key instigators. It also requires the presence of an audience to make these creations meaningful (Scott 2010a). This is why clusters in urban areas are often seen as the epitome of the creative space. However, density is not a defining element behind the success of a creative cluster, as it can be overcome through temporary co-location (Cole 2008; Comunian 2017; Harvey, Hawkins, and Thomas 2012; Norcliffe and Rendace 2003; White 2010). Harvey, Hawkins, and Thomas (2012) show that rural artists and creative practitioners build ephemeral networks with other actors through programs such as residencies, workshops, and conferences,

keeping them in touch with extra-local colleagues' work and the latest developments in their field. These practitioners pursue extra-local connectivity with relevant creative practitioners, but also intermediaries, producers, and consumers. Comunian (2017) explores temporary networking at a street-art festival in Medway, UK, where artists attend the event to learn practical and artistic skills, expand their social and professional networks, and find a forum to create innovative work. Similarly, Duxbury, in chapter 1 of this volume, shows that networking is essential among creative tourism entities in smaller places for purposes of visibility, knowledge sharing, and capacity development.

### Territorial Cohesion and Creative Development

Rural creative clustering often occurs in amenity-rich areas, such as mountain or seaside resorts. These places are especially attractive to creative individuals seeking an ideal rural lifestyle of tranquility, inspiration, and, perhaps, outdoor activity (McGranahan and Wojan 2007; Wojan et al. 2007). For the individuals who form these clusters, economic success is often not the main driver affecting their choices of location and lifestyle (Comunian 2009; Petridou and Ioannides 2012; Prince 2017). Rather, there is a desire to combine the artistic lifestyle with participation in outdoor recreational activities, flexible working hours, off-season tranquility, and inspiration from the physical environment (Prince 2017). Artists often foster strong objectives of artistic and personal integrity that can clash with the needs of profit-driven business (Comunian 2009; Deener 2009; Prince 2017; Sheehan 2014). It is not unusual for artistic development and lifestyle values to take precedence over strategic business development, like marketing and finance. In this regard, informal social networking and personalized encounters with customers and the public become key elements behind the identity formation of peripheral creative clusters.

The urban rhetoric of creative development overlooks that rural areas face specific challenges when developing their cultural industries into assets of the creative economy. Researchers have identified many of the developmental challenges creative and cultural clusters face due to their peripherality vis-à-vis global markets. For instance, Bennet (2010) and Davies (2008) highlight that urban centres mostly attract and retain creative agents to the detriment of peripheral areas, robbing the latter of

its creative capital. The social perception and reality of peripheral rural areas is thus often one of desolation and of limited career opportunities. In chapter 6, Aquino and Burns identify this issue in the Icelandic context, adding that this social perception stems from a power imbalance that diminishes the legitimacy of local knowledge in the face of the scientific knowledge usually associated with urban areas. Such perceptions and local conditions emerge as serious obstacles to encouraging in-migration and economic development, which are crucial to creative clustering. The high cost of reaching urban centres for business exchange, professional communication, and social networking strains the socio-economic development of peripheral clusters and industries (Andersen 2010; Gibson, Luckman, and Willoughby-Smith 2010).

Significant to the socio-economic development of the periphery, the social objectives of artistic integrity often transcend to the integrity artists demonstrate toward place and society. For instance, Petridou and Ioannides (2012) explain that artists can promote the development of community meeting spaces through their artistic practices, as a means of strengthening social bonds and feelings of belonging in peripheral areas. Such a practice is an example of territorial cohesion, one of the European Union's three cohesion policies (the others being economic and social cohesion). Essentially, territorial cohesion promotes the concept that no one should be disadvantaged because of where one lives in the union. Small-scale, artistic arrangements, like those examined in this chapter in the Swedish periphery, help disadvantaged places realize their developmental potential through an inward-looking exercise fostering local heritage preservation, social entrepreneurship, collective action, and inclusivity. All these are constituent elements of territorial efficiency, territorial quality, and territorial identity, which are in turn dimensions of territorial cohesion (Camagni 2007).

## Case Studies

Rural creative clusters emerge and survive through various forms of institutional support, public and private partnerships, and training organizations (Harvey, Hawkins, and Thomas 2012). In Scandinavia in general and in Sweden in particular, national cultural policy has been tied to sustainable regional development, whereby “an attractive region with

developed natural, cultural, and cultural heritage resources contributes added value to the business environment and furthers the regional competitive power” (Lundström quoted in Petridou and Ioannides 2012, 128). While these agendas usually prioritize the growth of creative industries for regional economic development, the aim of territorial cohesion also encompasses development schemes. Financing schemes differ in nature and scale, though in Scandinavia currently such financing is packaged as limited-time project funding. The two cases we explore represent networks of artists in Scandinavia born out of such policies, objectives, and projects.

For both cases, we employed qualitative fieldwork to collect data. A qualitative approach is useful when seeking to understand different facets of social life (Creswell 2013). It is important for the qualitative researcher to look into stories, encounters, daily practices, and visual and material assemblages at the heart of local experiences. In the case of Bornholm, the main author conducted two sets of fieldwork consisting of interviews with nineteen of the sixty-four members composing the ACAB at the time of the study in the fall of 2014 and 2015. She also employed participant observation at different venues and events relating to arts and crafts. This diverse sample includes ceramists, textile and glass designers, a potter, and a woodworker, each from various locations around Bornholm. In the case study relating to Jämtland, the two co-authors followed the project Konstgödning (Art Fertilization) from inception to completion. They kicked off the data collection with a workshop with the two project managers, who were also artists, in the fall of 2015. They collected further qualitative data through observations, in-depth interviews, and email correspondence with the nine artists involved in the project over the period of one year. They attended the meetings between the project managers and the artists, as well as the public closing event in September 2016.

The Danish network emerged in the context of a more general branding of Bornholm as a creative place, whereas the Swedish network was ephemeral, the result of project financing in a region that prides itself on its winter sports profile. Despite the differences between the networks themselves, the cases share similarities. Both are situated in the Scandinavian periphery, in sparsely populated regions that had to reinvent themselves in the 1990s due to widespread economic restructuring. In the case of Bornholm, this had much to do with the gradual disappearance of a once

flourishing fishing sector, while in Jämtland it was due to the closing of military bases and the downsizing of various traditional industries.

## The Craft Artists of Bornholm: Reconciling Tourism and Professional Development

The case of the ACAB in Denmark is an example of the type of networking fostered through an agenda of creative and cultural development for economic purposes. Bornholm is a 588-square kilometre island in the Baltic Sea with a population of 39,584 (Danmarks Statistik 2020). It underwent major economic restructuring in which, starting in the 1990s, several European and national programs were implemented in an attempt to counter the collapsed of the island's economy. Many of these incentives aimed at boosting the tourism industry. The restructuring stimulated the development of various micro-businesses involved mostly with specialized foods, hospitality, and handcrafts, which now characterize Bornholm's economy and destination brand (Ioannides and Petersen 2003; Manniche and Larsen 2013).

With annual visitor numbers at around 750,000, tourism is a major source of earning for the island. The vast majority of these tourists arrive within a short summer season beginning in June and ending in September. The rural idyll is significant in the construction of Bornholm as a summer destination. With its quaint fishing villages, sandy beaches, and family-friendly cycle paths, the island represents for many of its visitors simple living in the countryside (Larsen 2006). The island's cultural appeal also stems from its arts-and-craft cluster. The ceramics tradition on Bornholm has its origins in the clay pits of the Middle Ages and clay factories of the nineteenth century, but it is in the 1930s that potters started opening private studios, redefining their aspirations to work with clay as artists. The glass-making tradition stems from the entrepreneurship of a Danish businessman who in the 1970s used old smokehouses to fit furnaces to work with glassware. Since then, other types of art studios have flourished on Bornholm, where craft artists work with textile and wood, among other materials.

In the early 2000s, the arts-and-craft cluster garnered attention from local politicians who were seeking to boost tourism on Bornholm through EU funds for regional development. The strategy was to brand

each of the island's regions and, thus, a decision was made that the Hasle municipality would focus on arts and crafts. This sparked the grassroots formation in 2002 of the ACAB by a small group of local craft artists. Their goal was to come together in order to facilitate and increase their individual and collective ability to profit from the tourist season. ACAB membership rests on a strict selection process to preserve high-quality standards within the group. Only professional artists residing permanently on Bornholm can become part of this network. The ACAB eventually became a significant body representing the interests of the craft artists in local politics. For instance, it has a member representing their interest in the Local Action Group dedicated to distributing EU funds on Bornholm. The ACAB exists to help its members increase their earnings by committing to preserve artistic quality among the group, promote its visibility around and beyond Bornholm, and help it foster the artistic, administrative, and commercial skills its members need to succeed. As an association, the craft artists are able to apply for all sorts of funding from national and transnational bodies.

### Forming a Permanent Network

The ACAB members see their association as a platform for internal co-operation with which they can support each other in different ways without feeling threatened by competition. One of the founding members acknowledged that their association encouraged co-operation within the cluster in a way that did not exist before:

We had the organization and we were seeing each other. . . . I did not know them all, but suddenly little groups started working together. In that way, suddenly you were getting so much more out of everything because we worked together in an association.

The cohesion of the group also comes from its ability to pool resources that individuals often find difficult to access. It was thus crucial for these craft artists to find ways to maximize their creative time. For instance, the ACAB exhibits its members' crafts every summer during the tourist season at a place called Grønbechsgård in Hasle. These artists recognize

that this touristic venue brings them customers who develop an interest in their art after seeing their work on display there. Moreover, the ACAB membership fees and other funds pay for a secretary who is dedicated to servicing the aims and ambitions of the members by finding and applying for funds, booking exhibitions, and more. By assuming these administrative tasks, the secretary can allow the artists more time to indulge in their creative endeavours.

Despite the fact that many craft artists seek profits during the tourist season, they remain skeptical as to whether the destination-management organization for the island—Destination Bornholm—responds to their individual needs as professional artists. As many of them pointed out, it is expensive to be a member of Destination Bornholm, an organization that fosters strategies geared more at promoting the natural landscape and family holidays. The ACAB is, of course, more apt at servicing the interests of the craft artists because it recognizes that their strategies for taking advantage of the tourist season unfold in the wake of their professional and artistic ambitions. The ACAB is a mechanism aimed at preserving quality in the arts-and-craft brand on Bornholm in light of amateur competition. Many craft artists explained that they find bargaining power in the discourse of quality and locality the ACAB imposes with its entrance criteria. One ceramist mentioned the distinction the ACAB membership brings to her art:

It's what you want. It's not a hobby, it's serious. It's quality. It's professional. It's a stamp for this is the good art and there is a difference. But if the ACAB wasn't there they [the tourists] wouldn't know.

I have many people who actually say: "We went to many places and it was all [bad]. We were so tired we didn't want to go in any more places because we were getting so disappointed." Then, I say, "I have to tell you that we have the ACAB. We have different levels [of competence] here for people who make these kinds of things."

These entrance criteria for the ACAB work to define the crafts of its members as special compared to the work of amateurs or of serial reproduction.

The ACAB diffuses a brand of creativity that reinforces internal cohesion since the craft artists commit to uphold Bornholm's identity as a special place in their crafts due to their professionalism. The networking reinforces the appeal of the creative space, where many craft artists were found to believe that these creative and spatial characteristics are precisely what attracts tourists to their crafts.

## Temporary Networks Beyond the Island

Working collectively has also facilitated networking beyond the insular cluster, enabling the members of the ACAB to remain connected to the wider world of arts and crafts. It was clear that those extra-local networks primarily fulfill a need to find inspiration for individual artistic purposes. Many of the members of the ACAB travel a lot as individuals, supported by different sources of funding, attending residencies and exhibitions worldwide. The island hosts biennial glass and ceramics conferences to which are invited craft artists from Europe who share their skills and inspiration through exhibits, workshops, and lectures. Also, Bornholm is home to the Danish School of Design, which teaches glass and ceramic art and receives artists in residence.

Importantly, extra-local networking reinforces the internal cohesion of the ACAB as its members present themselves as a group with collective aims who face particular challenges in relation to their peripheral location. It became apparent that creative individuals from the periphery connect with other creative individuals from the periphery to share experiences as much as creativity. For instance, the ACAB has specifically worked to form networks with art groups from Nordic islands facing similar challenges to those seen in other peripheries, like Gotland and Öland in Sweden, and the Faroe Islands. ACAB members have also visited Greenland and Iceland to widen their networks in northern Europe. One of the founding members explained that, as the co-chairperson, she once visited with her fellow chairperson a place in the far north of Iceland to speak about the success of the ACAB, as artists there wanted to form their own association based on Bornholm's success. Thus, creative individuals in the periphery also network to support each other and address strategies related to the social and spatial challenges they face.

## Konstgödning in Jämtland: Fostering Territorial Cohesion

The second case, the project of Konstgödning in Jämtland, Sweden, outlines the development of creativity and networking through the agenda of territorial cohesion. The artists involved in this project received money from a national organization in 2015 to carry out an art project highlighting the local people's relation to their peripheral location in subarctic Sweden. Konstgödning was the umbrella project for nine subprojects in the county—one for each municipality, with one having two subprojects. The project demonstrates the development of creative output based in territorial identity stemming from regional networking. It aimed to develop the linkages between art and place and, specifically, the in situ co-production of art by the inhabitants of each municipality with selected artists. Two project managers received the funding and then advertised a call for nine artists, each willing to work with one municipality. All but one had a connection with the municipality they chose; either they came from their chosen municipality or had lived there in the past. In this way, project offered the artists a way to reconnect with Jämtland.

Jämtland is a large, sparsely populated county covering about 12 per cent of the national territory, though it is home to just 1.3 per cent of the Swedish population (amounting to approximately 130,810 people) (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2019). Östersund is, by far, the largest municipality, with approximately 58,000 residents. Traditionally, the region has been heavily dependent on primary extractive activities, while the area in and around Östersund has had a heavy military presence. The shutdown of the military bases in the early 1990s led to a series of policies aimed at encouraging economic diversification, including the establishment of one of the campuses of the country's newest university (Mid-Sweden University) and the opening of several central government facilities in and around Östersund. Meanwhile, tourism has been promoted as a major activity, generating about SEK2.5 billion per year and employing 3,000 year-round workers. The number of bed-nights in the county is just 9 million per year. The principal destination is Åre, one of Sweden's leading winter sport resorts, which is increasingly diversifying into a year-round destination. Meanwhile, other destinations, including several rural settlements,

struggle to attract visitors. Even though Konstgödnin was never meant to entice visitors, creative projects such as this can serve to give new life to some rural places, making them destinations in their own right.

The objective of the co-production of art in situ was that rural inhabitants would be able to feel that positive energy was being produced; that their rural realities were seen as important and deserving attention; and, finally, that the act of producing art would make a positive difference to these realities. In other words, the main purpose of the project was to engender dialogue about place, about what it means to occupy space in the outskirts of Europe, and to bring increased attention to the realities of uneven development rather than explicitly be a means for economic development or produce art for art's sake. The production of art is used as a vehicle to highlight the positive elements of each place instead of pinpointing the usual complaints about living in a peripheral place, such as bad connectivity to the capital and lack of services of general interest. Given the space restrictions and the scope of this chapter, three of the nine subprojects are presented below as examples of the forms of networks created for territorial cohesion that turn the periphery into an attractive creative space.

## Networks to Connect Residents

The subproject of the Municipality of Bräcke, in Sundsjö, sought to help residents come together to discuss issues important to them as inhabitants of a peripheral area. The project was managed by Vanja Steinholtz and involved local residents forming a choir as well as writing and performing music during a summer festival event in 2015. Steinholtz, a young musician in her twenties, was the only artist without any direct personal connection to the municipality in which she worked. Therefore, she had to contend with locals' perceptions of her as young Stockholmite expert-artist imposing her know-how on the non-expert country folk—a core-periphery power imbalance that is common in the area. She was aware that she had to maintain a balance between guiding and imposing while allowing people to express themselves without confining them to the “one right way” of writing and performing a music piece.

The choir was formed through *conversation workshops*, in which residents formed groups and talked about things important to them. The topics of discussion revolved around place: what people would miss if

they moved away, what they miss where they live now. The same issues kept coming up; sometimes the discussion became quite political, with participants starting to talk about how rural areas are an afterthought in Swedish politics, how meaningful and traditional jobs disappear only to be replaced by jobs at facilities that serve primarily national interests and impact the local landscape negatively, such as nuclear power plants and wind turbines. Even so, there was more to the conversation than expressing dissatisfaction about rural economic decline and exploitation. For instance, in one workshops in late May 2015, Steinholtz described how participants talked about the beauty of the surroundings—“connecting to place in a lyrical and emotional fashion.” These meetings thus created a space for residents to connect positively over the attributes of their landscape and what they cherished about it in light of, rather than despite, its peripherality.

Though the choir performance and its creativity was the focal point of the festival, which took place in Tavnäs on 15 August 2015, a host of local artisans also participated, including artists and local food producers. The event was featured as a summer happening and it attracted not only locals, but also tourists from the surrounding area. Having said this, even though Steinholtz had hoped that the temporary network of inhabitants writing music and singing together would continue meeting, this has not materialized.

## Networks to Connect with Asylum-Seekers

The subproject of the Municipality of Härjedalen, in Hede, sought to create meeting spaces where newly arrived asylum-seekers could gather with established Hede inhabitants. Whereas the asylum-seekers came from Eritrea and Syria, the long-term residents were ethnic Swedes. In 2015 and 2016, Sweden received an influx of asylum-seekers in the wake of the terror engendered by the Syrian Civil War and political unrest in East Africa. The Swedish government has a policy of locating a number of asylum-seekers in sparsely populated areas of the country, which raises issues related to the asylum-seekers' integration into Swedish society. The project manager, Bodil Halvarson, turned to a group of local Swedish language instructors for help in recruiting individuals from the immigrant community. She contacted the church and the local village association for help

in recruiting residents. Because Halvarson's family comes from the area, she also enlisted friends and relatives in this effort. The result was fourteen participants in a series of meetings between recent immigrants and long-time Hede residents, each lasting approximately two or three hours. As Halvarson reported, "I wanted to explore how art as a tool might interest people to share their stories with each other and [how] by taking an active, physical, and creative part in each other's stories, [they] could become part of each other's life and memory."

Each of the participants produced a piece of art with the larger aim being to get people talking. Halvarson provided a set of questions as general guidance; some participants followed while others did not. Notably, she did not actively participate in the meetings, but instead sat in the back and took notes as none of the participants transcribed the meetings. It was the voice of the recent arrivals and the long-time residents that she wanted people to hear; as such, she functioned as a facilitator, an amplifier.

One would perhaps expect that the resulting narratives would mostly come from the asylum-seekers, and yet the co-production of art becomes the grammar of mutual storytelling. Hede residents, both relatively recent arrivals and those born and raised in the town, came together to share their stories and experiences. One long-time resident spoke of how he worked in the industry when he was young, how he hurt his back and had to find the strength to retrain for a second career. These stories, along with the art produced during the meetings and the photographs of the participants, comprise an exhibition that is being displayed in local libraries. This exhibition has thus become an element of the attractive creative rural space, offering residents and visitors alike something interesting to experience in the periphery. Halvarson has presented her project to different audiences outside events organized by Konstgödning. What is more, she forged friendships with the project participants. Halvarson herself is haunted by the tiny green clay boat Hussein made to tell his story. She has exhibited the artifact in prominent places, along with the rest of the art that was produced during the meetings, on several occasions.

## Networks to Connect Women

Martin Johansson drew from his experience as an artist and a director for his project on women's stories in Kluk in the Municipality of Krokomb.

The project consisted of a series of meetings in Kluk, where local women told their stories to each other. Johansson wanted to amplify Kluk's female voices and to distinguish them from the masculine hunting-and-fishing image with which the area is largely associated. It is important here to note that the storytelling was intended mainly for the consumption of the participants. There was a sold-out event in Kluk on 23 May 2015, but otherwise these women would not come to Östersund, the county capital, to perform. If one wanted to listen to them, then one had to also visit the space they inhabited. This creativity came from the rural periphery and was only to exist there. This pride of place, evident in the women's narratives, lent a certain urban ephemerality to the event since no official video exists—like, say, a Springsteen concert in Gothenburg or a Madonna event in Melbourne. Rather, one had to be there. What does exist, however, is a book with the women's stories.

At these project meetings, the women of Kluk sat around the table and talked; some spoke in the local dialect. They discussed their families, where they come from, trips they took. One woman speaks of how her mother died in the late 1940s, when she was four weeks old, and how her father had to raise her and the half-brother from her mother's previous relationship while also taking care of the farm all by himself. Another cites her journal entry from a trip to Kenya in which, in a way that is all too familiar to those who journal, she apologizes for not having written recently—it had been too hot. A third says she grew up in Springfield, Missouri, which incidentally is the city in which two of the authors of this chapter lived for a large portion their adult lives. These narrative snapshots provided a sense of the distinct voices and connections that can come out of the act of talking about oneself, which is not exactly self-evident in the Swedish periphery, where the closest neighbour can be miles away. The women forged bonds that have outlived the May 2015 event, in line with the goals of the project in general and Martin Johansson's constituent project in particular.

## Conclusion

In the introduction to this volume, Scherf suggests that, through creative tourism, all places have the ability to use their unique characteristics to attract visitors. We have presented different types of rural networks that

emerge through the collaborative work of artists. These artists are able to draw on cultural, creative, and artistic capital to offer experiences, products, and events to visitors and residents alike. While the cases examined in this chapter highlight different purposes and dynamics of artist networks, both feature networks that are highly embedded in places where creative individuals cluster. On the one hand, rural artists can create networks to profit from their art, develop competences, and find inspiration in light of their remoteness from buyers and happenings. The ACAB, as a permanent network, has enabled the craft artists of Bornholm to not only overcome their distance from urban centres, but to preserve an identity based in what they value about their rural island as artists: the handmade mode of production, close encounters with buyers, and the local character of their art. Temporary networks are important for finding other craft artists from the periphery with whom to share best practices and inspiration. These networks enable the craft artists of Bornholm to take advantage of the tourist season as they pool resources to strengthen and diffuse a viable brand based in culture and creativity that appeals to visitors.

On the other hand, we have shown artists to be significant actors when it comes to enhancing territorial cohesion in the wake of the spatial disadvantage that imprints negative perceptions on space. The Konstgödning's subprojects functioned as the impetus for ephemeral networks, bringing people together to tell stories about their lives and the space they inhabited. This socially inclusive activity aimed at looking inward and bringing forth positive aspects about life in the periphery, giving a voice to anyone wanting to speak. Concurrently, the impact of projects like this are untraceable and cannot easily be quantified. Art, or rather the creation of art, opened up a space for residents in general, but also more specific groups of residents such as women, asylum-seekers, and artists of all sorts, who joined in this project in order to share images of rurality and snapshots of their lives within it. The output of the subprojects was formally a series of creative events, potentially attracting tourists and visitors from the outside to the extent that it was part of the summer program of cultural happenings in the county. Despite its ephemerality as a series of one-and-done events, the project fulfilled a more fundamental need among the county's inhabitants for cultural sustainability.

Artist networks have the potential to turn peripheral spaces into creative domains, making them attractive places in which to live, and thus to visit. These networks are themselves the result of collaboration between the public and private sectors, and institutional support and various partnerships and training organizations are crucial to the sustained existence of rural creative clustering (see also Harvey, Hawkins, and Thomas 2012). We contend that the rural creative space that attracts visitors will be the one where there is support for the development of creative networks that enables its members to take advantage of their own embeddedness in the rural milieu. Scholars recognize that rural creative industries are embedded in spatial symbols, practices, and attributes, such as traditional products and livelihoods (Bell and Jayne 2010; Scott 2010b). By studying rural artist networks, we were able to map out some of the dynamics behind the development of creative spaces in the periphery.

We argue that rural creative tourism development is closely linked to the networks, both permanent and temporary, that facilitate the commercialization of art, foster artistic inspiration and best practices, and pursue social objectives to establish the periphery as a lively space. It is thus important to carefully study these processes before outlining any type of recommendation for the sustainable development of rural areas through creative tourism. Networks consisting of actors from the public and private sectors are increasingly important when it comes to tourism-related policy-making (Dredge 2006). Given the industry's fragmented nature as a societal phenomenon and an economic activity, relational structures that bring people together formally and/or informally are even more salient. Networks can be conceptualized as structures that embed local values and meanings and that "over time become regimes of power and knowledge that operate to filter, prioritize and promote particular local tourism policy actions and initiatives" (Beaumont and Dredge 2010, 8). These tourism policies and initiatives will have to consider the issue of scale so that small and sparsely populated areas are not pushed into fostering large-scale events and projects that do not consider the embeddedness of the products and stories diffused to tourists interested in the rural periphery.

## References

- Andersen, Lisa. 2010. "Magic Light, Silver City: The Business of Culture in Broken Hill." *Australian Geographer* 41, no.1: 71–85.
- Atterton, Jane. 2007. "The 'Strength of Weak Ties': Social Networking by Business Owners in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland." *Sociologia Ruralis* 47, no. 3: 228–45.
- Beaumont, Narelle, and Dianne Dredge. 2010. "Local Tourism Governance: A Comparison of Three Network Approaches." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 18, no. 1: 7–28.
- Bell, David, and Mark Jayne. 2010. "The Creative Countryside: Policy and Practice in the UK Rural Cultural Economy." *Journal of Rural Studies* 26, no. 3: 209–18.
- Bennett, Dawn. 2010. "Creative Migration: A Western Australian Case Study of Creative Artists." *Australian Geographer* 41, no. 1: 117–28.
- Borgatti, Stephen P., Martin G. Everett, and Jeffrey C. Johnson. 2013. *Analyzing Social Networks*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Camagni, Roberto. 2007. "Territorial Development Policies in the European Model of Society." In *Territorial Cohesion and the European Model of Society*, edited by Andreas Faludi, 129–44. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.
- Cloke, Paul. 2007. "Creativity and Tourism in Rural Environments." In *Tourism, Creativity and Development*, edited by Gregory Richards and Julie Wilson, 37–47. New York: Routledge.
- Cole, Alexander. 2008. "Distant Neighbours: The New Geography of Animated Film Production in Europe." *Regional Studies* 42, no. 6: 891–904.
- Comunian, Roberta. 2009. "Questioning Creative Work as Driver of Economic Development: The Case of Newcastle-Gateshead." *Creative Industries Journal* 2, no. 1: 57–71.
- . 2017. "Temporary Clusters and Communities of Practice in the Creative Economy: Festivals as Temporary Knowledge Networks." *Space and Culture* 20, no. 3: 329–43.
- Connell, John, and Chris Gibson. 2003. *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity and Place*. Routledge: New York.
- Creswell, John W. 2013, 3rd. edition. *Qualitative inquiry: Choosing Amon Five Approaches*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Currid, Elizabeth. 2007. *The Warhol Economy. How Fashion, Art and Music Drive New York City*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Davies, Amanda. 2008. "Declining Youth In-migration in Rural Western Australia: The Role of Perceptions of Rural Employment and Lifestyle Opportunities." *Geographical Research* 46, no. 2: 162–71.
- Deener, Andrew. 2009. "Forging Distinct Paths towards Authentic Identity: Outsider Art, Public Interaction, and Identity Transition in an Informal Market Context." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 38, no. 2: 169–200.

- Dredge, Dianne. 2006. "Policy Networks and the Local Organisation of Tourism." *Tourism Management* 27 no. 2: 269–80.
- Everett, Sally. 2012. "Production Places or Consumption Spaces? The Place-Making Agency of Food Tourism in Ireland and Scotland." *Tourism Geographies* 14, no. 4: 535–54.
- Fitjar, Rune Dahl, and Kari Jøsendal. 2016. "Hooked Up to the International Artistic Community: External Linkages, Absorptive Capacity and Exporting by Small Creative Firms." *Creative Industries Journal* 9, no. 1: 29–46.
- Florida, Richard. 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York: Basic Books.
- . 2005. *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York: Routledge.
- Fløysand, Arnt, and Stig-Erik Jakobsen. 2007. "Commodification of Rural Places: A Narrative of Social Fields, Rural Development, and Football." *Journal of Rural Studies* 23, no. 2: 206–21.
- Gibson, Chris. 2010. "Guest editorial—Creative Geographies: Tales from the 'Margins.'" *Australian Geographer* 41, no. 1: 1–10.
- Gibson, Chris, Susan Luckman, and Julie Willoughby-Smith. 2010. "Creativity without Borders? Rethinking Remoteness and Proximity." *Australian Geographer* 41, no. 1: 25–38.
- Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6: 1360–80.
- Harvey, David C., Harriet Hawkins, and Nicola J. Thomas. 2012. "Thinking Creative Clusters Beyond the City: People, Places and Networks." *Geoforum* 43, no. 3: 529–39.
- Ioannides, Dimitri, and Tage Petersen. 2003. "Tourism 'Non-entrepreneurship' in Peripheral Destinations: A Case Study of Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises on Bornholm, Denmark." *Tourism Geographies* 5, no. 4: 408–35.
- Kneafsey, Moya. 2001. "Rural Cultural Economy: Tourism and Social Relations." *Annals of Tourism Research* 28, no. 3: 762–83.
- Landry, Charles. 2000. *The Creative City: A Handbook for Urban Innovators*. London: Earthscan.
- Region Jämtland Härjedalen. 2019. "Befolkning i Jämtlands län." Accessed 13 October 2020. <https://www.regionjh.se/regionalutveckling/regionstatistik/statistikefteramne/befolkning.4.67aeab2b16e16577f4fed.html>.
- Larsen, Jonas. 2006. "Picturing Bornholm: Producing and Consuming a Tourist Place through Picturing Practices." *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 6, no. 2: 75–94.
- Manniche, Jesper, and Karin T. Larsen. 2013. "Experience Staging and Symbolic Knowledge: The Case of Bornholm Culinary Products." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 20, no. 4: 401–16.

- McGranahan, David, and Timothy Wojan. 2007. "Recasting the Creative Class to Examine Growth Processes in Rural and Urban Counties." *Regional Studies* 41, no. 2: 197–216.
- Mitchell, Clare J. 2013. "Creative Destruction or Creative Enhancement? Understanding the Transformation of Rural Spaces." *Journal of Rural Studies* 32: 375–87.
- Mommaas, Hans. 2004. "Cultural Clusters and the Post-industrial City: Towards the Remapping of Urban Cultural Policy." *Urban Studies* 41, no. 3: 507–32.
- Norcliffe, Glen, and Olivero Rendace. 2003. "New Geographies of Comic Book Production in North America: The New Artisan, Distancing, and the Periodic Social Economy." *Economic Geography* 79, no. 3: 241–63.
- Petridou, Evangelia, and Dimitri Ioannides. 2012. "Conducting Creativity in the Periphery of Sweden: A Bottom-Up Path towards Territorial Cohesion." *Creative Industries Journal* 5, nos. 1–2: 119–37.
- Pratt, Andy C. 2008. "Creative Cities: The Cultural Industries and the Creative Class." *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 90, no. 2: 107–17.
- Prince, Solène. 2017. "Craft-Art in the Danish Countryside: Reconciling a Lifestyle, Livelihood and Artistic Career through Rural Tourism." *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 15, no. 4: 339–58.
- Ray, Christopher. 1998. "Culture, Intellectual Property and Territorial Rural Development." *Sociologia Ruralis* 38, no. 1: 3–20.
- Richards, Greg. 2011. "Creativity and Tourism: The State of the Art." *Annals of Tourism Research* 38, no. 4: 1225–53.
- Richards, Greg, and Julie Wilson. 2007. "Tourism Development Trajectories: From Cultural to Creativity?" In *Tourism, Creativity and Development*, edited by Gregory Richards and Julie Wilson, 89–106. New York: Routledge.
- Scott, Allen J. 1999. "The Cultural Economy: Geography and the Creative Field." *Media, Culture and Society* 21: 807–17.
- . 2010a. "Cultural Economy and the Creative Field of the City." *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 92, no. 2: 115–30.
- . 2010b. "The Cultural Economy of Landscape and Prospects for Peripheral Development in the Twenty-First Century: The Case of the English Lake District." *European Planning Studies* 18, no. 10: 1567–89.
- Sheehan, Rebecca. 2014. "Artists' Positioning in and Creating Authentic Identities through Place and Tourism in New Orleans's Jackson Square." *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 12, no. 1: 50–67.
- Sims, Rebecca. 2009. "Food, Place and Authenticity: Local Food and the Sustainable Tourism Experience." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 17, no. 3: 321–36.
- Sorensen, Tony. 2009. "Creativity in Rural Development: An Australian Response to Florida (or a View from the Fringe)." *International Journal of Foresight and Innovation Policy* 5, nos. 1–3: 24–43.

- Statistik Denmark. 2020. "Folketal." Accessed 13 October 2020. <https://www.dst.dk/da/Statistik/emner/befolkning-og-valg/befolkning-og-befolkningsfremskrivning/folketal>.
- Stratton, Jon. 2008. "The Difference of Perth Music: A Scene in Cultural and Historical Context." *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 22: 613–22.
- Tregear, Angela, and Sarah Cooper. 2016. "Embeddedness, Social Capital and Learning in Rural Areas: The Case of Producer Cooperatives." *Journal of Rural Studies* 44: 101–10.
- Waite, Gordon, and Chris Gibson. 2009. "Creative Small Cities: Rethinking the Creative Economy in Place." *Urban Studies* 46, nos. 5–6: 1223–46.
- Watson, Allan. 2008. "Global Music City: Knowledge and Geographical Proximity in London's Recorded Music Industry." *Area* 40: 12–23.
- White, Pauline. 2010. "Creative Industries in a Rural Region: Creative West: The Creative Sector in the Western Region of Ireland." *Creative Industries Journal* 3, no. 1: 79–88.
- Wojan, Timothy R., Dayton M. Lambert, and David A. McGranahan. 2007. "The Emergence of Rural Artistic Havens: A First Look." *Agricultural and Resource Economics Review* 36, no. 1: 53–70.
- Zasada, Ingo. 2011. "Multifunctional Peri-urban Agriculture: A Review of Societal Demands and the Provision of Goods and Services by Farming." *Land Use Policy* 28, no. 4: 639–48.
- Zukin, Sharon. 2010. *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.