

Global Spaces, Local Reactions: understanding resident perceptions towards gentrified flagship regeneration projects



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What is flagship regeneration?

- Gentrification (often state-led)
- Site-specific
- Self-contained
- Iconic
- Catalytic
- Consumption-oriented
- Mix of public and private
- Risky, speculative ventures
- High-end
- Situated in abandoned harbours, old industrial sites
- Near to city centre

Case Studies:

- Kop van Zuid, Rotterdam
- Merchant City, Waterfront, Glasgow

Goal and Research Questions

Goal:

The main aim is to understand how residents perceive and use large flagship regeneration projects located in their city and how these projects were intended to be used and viewed by local residents by their promoters and boosters.

Research Questions:

1. How do residents use large flagship regeneration projects located in their city?
2. What are the main perceptions that residents have towards these flagships?
3. What were the intentions of the key actors with regards to local residents?

Output

Articles Submitted:

1. *Living Through Gentrification: subjective experiences of indigenous residents in Leith, Edinburgh*
 - submitted to *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* (2007)
2. *Global Flagship Spaces, Local Resident Perceptions*
 - Submitted to *Urban Design and Planning* (2008)

Papers Presented:

Flagship Regeneration: panacea or urban problem?
EURA conference Glasgow (2007)

Survey of Resident Perceptions

Four Neighbourhoods

- The flagship itself
- An adjacent area
- A peripheral housing estate
- A stable middle-class area

Details

- 100 responses per neighbourhood
- Questions concerning use, perception, feelings towards flagship spaces, plus personal characteristics
- To what extent socioeconomic background and neighbourhood of origin play a role in shaping use and perceptions



The Kop van Zuid: A Beachhead of State-led Gentrification on Rotterdam's South Side

Goals of the Kop van Zuid

- Physical-social link between north and south
- Creation of new housing and offices (aimed at international audience)
- Upgrading of housing
- City as a place to visit and as a centre of recreation

The Regeneration of the Kop van Zuid

- State-led regeneration/gentrification
- Government had to send a message of confidence in project (offices, extravagant Erasmus Bridge)
- Failure to create an exotic festival marketplace in Entrepôt – 'shelf-life' as destination not very long
- Hotel New York: one of the first private investments, a major city landmark
- With bridge connection, private capital began to arrive
- Kop van Zuid is open to all, but expensive to live
- No social housing on Wilhelmina Pier (luxury space)
- Slow in transforming adjacent areas (some evidence of 'pioneering' in Katendrecht)
- Key stakeholders believe it is used and appreciated by all Rotterdammers
- Remains somewhat an 'island' of gentrified space – links between Kop van Zuid and other neighbourhoods not yet very strong
- Erasmus Bridge: has become the new icon of Rotterdam

Theory

We already know a considerable amount about:

- Economic reasons for pursuing flagships
- Role in marketing of a city
- Their role in furthering inequalities

We do not know much about:

- Perceptions local residents have towards these 'global spaces' (i.e. impact on civic pride)
- The way in which local residents use flagships
- The intentions of different stakeholders with regards to these elements

