

THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES CLUSTER IN PORTUGAL: TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES

Pedro Costa

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to evaluate briefly the importance of cultural activities in Portuguese economy, identifying the main trends and opportunities for this cluster in nowadays realities. It's discussed the concept of "cultural industries" and it's analysed the role of the cluster in the Portuguese economy and society, departing from empirical information, both statistical and qualitative.

It's strongly emphasised the territorial dimension of the cluster organization, being used a comparative regional perspective to study the provision and consumption of these goods.

It's also explored the relation between the economic, cultural and institutional processes that are beyond the provision of these activities, which are central for its comprehension.

1. INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, TERRITORIAL COMPETITIVENESS AND DEVELOPMENT

The main goal of this text is to balance the importance of cultural activities in Portuguese economy, identifying the main trends and opportunities for this cluster in nowadays realities. This reflection is made with a broader perspective, concerning with the role of cultural activities on the promotion of development and competitiveness of the different territories².

As a working basis, and attending on the increasing crossovers between different forms of cultural activities, we depart from a broader conception of cultural activities, including all forms associated with what is traditionally understood as art and popular culture, trying to avoid dichotomous and simplistic distinctions, such as the ones that traditionally distinguish between “high culture” and “mass culture”, between art and industry, between live and unique performances and reproducible goods, between commercial or non-commercial consumption and production of cultural provision and products, between public or market provision,... (see Costa, 1998, Wynne, 1992). From the conventional “cultural industries” (books, records,...) to the media; the cinema, the visual arts, the performing arts, the heritage preservation, or the handcraft, for example, these activities, in all their diversity, are, essentially, activities that use some artistic and creative inputs, with the prime objective of express information and create meanings (Montgomery, 1994), be it inside relatively autonomous and internally coherent sectors or sub-clusters (like record or book industry, or the audiovisual, for example), or feeding a vast range of another economic sectors (like advertising, design, fashion or architecture, for example).

Being so, and independently of the multiplicity of goods and services that result from all these activities (which are characterized, as it is noted by Lash and Urry, 1994 and Scott, 1996, by the higher level of aesthetic and semiotic attributes), and the fact that these cultural products (as they are named by Scott), consequently, assume the most heterogeneous forms, our analysis is centred on the central part of these activities (and not so broader as anthropology or cultural studies concepts), including all the things that are usually associated to the artistic creation and several forms of popular culture. Our cultural activities cluster, hence, aggregates the multiplicity of practices and activities included in this concept (and should be analysed thinking of an economic *filière* logic,...), which we divide, as later seen in this article, in four main sub-groups of activities, for analytical purposes (see also Costa 1999).

The cultural activities, like any other economic and social activities, can be dynamized in a way to promote territorial competitiveness and development. This is not the place to debate the notion of territorial competitiveness, complex and controversial concept, which was and still will be discussed on other occasions (for example, Costa, 1999a). We only want now, concerning this question, to hold two supporting ideas that appear between the lines of all our latest thought.

In first place, the notion that the concept of competitiveness we use goes beyond (but not excluding nor dispensing) simple economic competitiveness (and, obviously, exceed simple logic of profitability...).

It relates to the possibility that each territory accedes to sustainable development, in its many dimensions, from the promotion of economical efficiency to the preservation of environmental quality and natural resources, from the preoccupation with social equity to the guaranty to the right of participation and complete assumption of citizenship (see, for example, Costa, 1999a, Costa e Rato, 1999).

In this context, cultural activities, should be seen not only as a mean for the promotion of development, in these several dimensions (because they create jobs and economic value, allow the re-qualification of the urban spaces, the participation and expression of the populations, the integration of the excluded social segments), but equally as one final dimension of the developing processes (because they give the chance to promote the quality of life and well-being, for allowing the affirmation of territorial specificities and identities, for preserving the collective memory, for being a vehicle to creative expression,...).

A second previous idea that we would like to focus, apart from this first notion, is that on the context of globalisation we live in, it is currently recognized that the paradigm of territorial competitiveness, pass by the capacity that each space has to offer some specificity, to give value to their own assets, on an economic and social reality that works globally. This does not means, obviously, a tendency for autarchy, but, on the contrary, strongly stimulates the search for the external valorisation of endogenous factors that can support a positive insertion in this wider reality.

In this situation, cultural activities can have a determinant role on territorial competitiveness, and this for a double set of circumstances.

² This text, come in the line of an wider investigation in course, conducting to the realization of a PhD in Regional and Urban Planning, in which the relation between cultural activities and territorial

On one hand, because the growth of the importance of these activities in contemporary economies. Despite all its diversity³, the growth of these activities in the societies and economies of the most developed countries is clear and secure, esteeming (with extremely variable criteria), that it has already values between 2 to 5% of the added value and of the employments created in these economies (check on this subject, for example, CE; 1998, Benhamou, 1996; Montgomery, 1994; Costa, 1999). Its importance in the promotion of competitiveness will then be crucial, when these are activities that, cumulatively, as said above, allow to put together several of the essential dimensions for the sustainability of development⁴.

On the other hand, due to the fact that these activities have a “cultural” content (using the wider concept of the term...) that can make a huge difference in spacial terms, and so, are activities that can be extremely valuable as a competitive advantage of each specific territory. To add, the cultural (symbolic, aesthetic, etc.) content of goods (even the most traditional material goods – cloths, construction, furniture,...) has been strongly emphasized by some authors (example, Scott, 1996; Lash e Urry, 1994), as a way to affirm the territorial competitiveness.

However, cultural activities are extremely heterogeneous, at the most different levels (organization of production, generalization of consumptions, employment links, market structures, commodification level,...), and cannot be all analysed in the same way. Regarding what is our main interest – its relation with space – we can mark them into four big categories (Costa, 1999a)⁵:

a) **The “core” of cultural industries** (audiovisual and cinema; book and record edition; but also and more and more, everything that is on the borders of the communication fields, the media, the information technologies, and the entertainment and leisure industries in general,...). The provision of these goods is centred in market logics, and it is based, on specific sub-files and process stages, in logics of functioning brought to world scale (for example, on the cinematographic or record distribution, on the videogames or informatic software,...).

competitiveness, centred in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area case, is studied.

³ And they are effectively the most diverse, since the most struttred cultural industries (cinema, records, books) to performing shows, since the visual arts to fashion; since the cultural heritage to the new night sociabilities,... (see for example, Costa,1998,1999a)

⁴ And besides, are activities that assume a growing part in the life of persons, due to the structural changes on values, mentalities and life stiles.

⁵ The construction of this four categories result not only from the relation to territory, but also from wider objectives and criteria of the current investigation (regulation forms, institutional organization, structure and functioning of markets, sources of financing, provision types, consumption modes,...).

Concerning the relation with territory, three stages clearly take shape on the chains of value associated to the provision of those goods:

- A first stage, related to the artistic creation and the production of the good or cultural service, which, in spatial terms, demands frequently the agglomeration of the agents, due to the external economies generated by their concentration and the formal and non-formal inter-relations between themselves established (what could provoke the outcome of dynamic nucleus, territorially very marked, for certain activities);
- A second stage, attached to the diffusion and distribution of those goods, which seems to appear progressively de-territorialized (even totally globalized, for some products), due to the technological progress and the advance of the globalisation process.
- And a third stage, based on the reception of goods, that is to say, on the cultural practices (endo- or exo-domiciliary), which territorial distribution clearly changes with the very different segmentation of the practices and with the demand critical thresholds for the supplying of those goods.

According to this logic, certain activities (particularly the more massive practices) will be progressively expanded to wider spaces, while others, mainly in the fields of creation and production (where the agglomeration economies and the *milieu* effect have a significant weight) and of the more specialized consumptions (with demand thresholds that are restrict and spatially concentrated), will continue to be concentrated in specific points. That will take us to a straight relation with the urban hierarchy⁶, as equally for the importance of territoriality, allowing the dynamism of activities (more or less specialized) where there will be competitive advantages on its provision or consumption (Costa, 1998, 1999a). The logic of international / national / regional work division, is clearly visible on these activities, as the several spaces search for a position that will allow them to be efficiently competitively inserted on the value chain of each good (from the conception till the last element of distribution...)

b) The “cultivated”, “institutional”, “legitimated” culture: These activities, generally associated to the “erudite” or “high” culture (big part of the performing shows – mainly on the fields of opera, dance, classical music and theatre – and plastic arts – big museums and galleries – etc.), they are related to the central nucleon of traditional and conventional cultural politics, having different sources of provision, but that due to its economic characteristics, is generally subventionized (by the public powers, but not only – think the Sponsorship Act, for example). Due to the great demand of resources, to the fact that they have origin (as for private or public institutions) in centralized levels of decision, and to the concentrations of the publics, these

⁶ Not necessarily linear, with the possibility of small dimension spaces to achieve a competitive specialization in hierarchically elevated central functions...

activities tend to, generally, concentrate on the urban centres of bigger dimension, in spite of the several politics of cultural decentralization led, in the last years, in several countries (including Portugal), with some positive effects. The strong “institutional” weight and the elevated costs of its provision are factors that, in general, have reinforced the asymmetries on its territorial distribution.

c) **The popular culture, based on the urban sociabilities:** These activities are having a growing role in actual societies and assuming themselves as determinant on the restructuring of lots of spaces in the most several urban centres of the most developed countries. These are several activities, related, mainly, to some expressions of the popular culture, but also to minorities and independent edges of the culture industries and to some more marginal and creative movements inside the legitimated “high culture”. In these cases we can find multiple activities in the field of popular music, dance, theatre, cinema, video and multimedia, plastic arts, design, fashion, information technologies, among others... In common, besides the strong concentration in socio-economic, and mainly, specific aged strata (at least some of them can be placed in what O'Connor and Wynne, 1996, call youth cultural industries) and of attaching to cultural and social models of their own⁷, they have the fact that in general its development is related to a strong territoriality⁸.

d) **The preservation of the heritage and the historical-cultural identity of each territory** (all “saved” memory– written, images, sounds,..., the monuments, buildings, ruins, ancestor traditions, handicraft, gastronomy,...). It is natural that these activities have a direct relation with the land, so that the trade mark of specificity (some times translated into a trade mark of territorial marketing) can be valorized, specifically and differentially, by each space, so that it can promote its identity and preserve / secure internal and externally its own culture, what is also, to develop...

These four big groups of activities represent sufficient distinct realities (in economic, social, institutional, terms...) that justify one thinks, for each of them, the relation with the territory in a different form. Nevertheless, in all of them the question of territoriality is, as seen, crucial. Be it in the possibility of each space to adapt into a globalized value chain of the production of a generalist product of one of the most well structured cultural industries, or in the

⁷ Ways of life extremely centred in the urban space, in culture and leisure, where often are put down the boundaries between work and leisure, between production and consume, between creativity and appropriation, and where the mutual inter-relations and the mingling and conviviality take a central place.

⁸ We had other opportunities (Costa 1999, 1999a) to associate this logic of functioning to the ones of the *innovative milieux*, and mainly of focusing the observation of this realities not only to strong globally competitive clusters (the cinema in Hollywood, the fashion in Paris,...) as to the cultural quarters in several cities for example, the Bairro Alto in Lisbon).

combination of the interrelations that make come up the creativity or the entrepreneurship and are in the basis of the coming up of an innovative or extremely specialized product, be it also in the possibility of each space preserve and valorise its collective cultural memory; among many other examples, the space assumes a main role in the outcome and development of all these activities, when they can be, simultaneously, one unquestionable source of competitive advantage for those territories.

However these four categories are not exclusive and have multiple interpenetrations (for example, we can see several activities in the sub-file of cinema or music in several of these categories: the massive or independent production in structured files, the small niche markets of production or exhibition associated to specific territorial realities, the preservation of the memory of that art,...), they allow not only a way to categorize distinct ways of identification with territories, as mainly, give the chance to reflect more clearly about the definition of strategically politics, based on transversal actuation areas.

This reflection can be extremely important at the level of political action over reality, since the dynamism of theses cultural activities, independently of its nature, is, in its essential, related to the involvement of the several agents (with its motivations, expectations and specific conditioning) in concrete projects and practices, which must be supported on the available assets on that territory.

2. THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN PORTUGAL: SOME RECENT TRENDS

Having in our minds this framework, we'll centre now on the analysis of the recent evolution of these activities in Portuguese reality.

The results we briefly present next, are part of the ones we are achieving on our wider investigation about cultural activities in Portugal, and their relation with space. In spite of the vast empirical information we are using (both statistical and qualitative, from many sources, since the institutional agents to public authorities and creators...), our option in this paper is to present only some topics, which allow us outline the main trends.

So, we'll try in the following items to schematise for each of our four cultural activities categories, the main trends we identify, concerning the cultural provision and consumption of cultural goods, the cultural policies implemented, and the perspectives for each one of them, having always particular attention to the territorial dynamics that are beneath and interrelated with them.

Let's look closely to each of these parts of the cultural activities cluster, trying to identify the mechanisms beyond their existence, so that then we can reflect more consistently on the perspectives for its evolution in our country.

a) The core of cultural industries

- Like global worldwide trends, cultural industries in Portugal are passing through profound structural transformations. The tendencies to technological convergence, revolutionizing the conventional sub sectors (cinema, audiovisual, editing, music, video, information technologies, equipment production,...) are particularly notorious, and we are in front of a value chain in accelerated mutation and imbrication. The cultural contents mostly appear gradually in a big variety of windows (books, magazines, internet, compact disk, magnetic support, TV clip, public exhibition spaces,...), progressively integrated (cinema, music, advertising, information, videogames, and even clothing, can sell – and be sold – with the same characters, for example)
- The previsible digitalisation, covering most of production, copy, transaction and broadcasting of all cultural contents, will co-exist with fringes to traditional formats (cinema, books, newspapers... – most of them very dynamic nowadays), may be supported in different competitive factors than nowadays, and will revolutionize and interact with the

equipment, support, and hardware infrastructure industries (with small importance in our country).

- In parallel with this, are visible several movements of (vertical e horizontal) economic concentration , inserted or reacting to the same movements at global level (at audiovisual sector, at the multimedia groups, linking with telecommunication and information technology firms, or even another sectors – entertainment, travel, finance...). The main markets (cinema, music, video,...) are mostly fully integrated in global processes (in spite of some growing reaction, at supply and demand levels...), and another ones in less extent (book editing, media,...). Nevertheless, the trend to economic concentration inter those markets in Portugal is evident, with the consolidation of big multimedia groups (most private, but some with public participation), integrating increasingly audiovisual, media, information, telecommunications and information technologies; This capital concentration is territorially concentrated in main decision and power places, namely in Lisbon Metropolitan Area.

- The tendency to globalisation and standardization (particularly notorious, comparing with another European countries, in the fields of audiovisual and music) leads, apparently paradoxically, to the growth of several market niches, exploring the diversification of publics, which can be differentially explored by the several territories (mainly in the big cities, but gradually in several other towns, as the public, and the supply critic thresholds rise...).

- The public intervention on this area has a dual evolution (also marked by the changes of political orientation from PSD more liberal governments (from 1985 to 95) to the PS more interventionist ones (from then until now)...). It has been more interventionist in some areas (public supports to cinema, fixed book price,...); but less in another (with a gradual process of privatisation of cultural provision seen, for example is Sponsorship Act, but mainly on the establishment of private radio and television stations (and later, on the convergence between economic groups of media, telecommunications and information technologies)

- In terms of market, there is an increase of public (tendencies to the growth of schoolarization, purchasing capacity, mainly by younger classes, that are the principal consumers...), with strong usual segmentations (cf., Pais, 1994). The most popular are endomocilyars, but with a significant increasing, on the last years, of cinema, the main exomocilyar cultural practice.

- There are clear market segmentations, with increasing independent markets, particularly in bigger cities. As natural, the more massive products and services are territorially diffused, while more specific ones are concentrated in bigger areas (and, in smaller scale, some of them in medium cities, particularly with young universitarian population).

- There are several transformations on distribution circuits (with the generalization of selling of books, videos, records in hypermarkets, the decrease of small commerce, the shopping centres boom, the entry of international mega stores and cultural sellers, the increase of specialized stores and second hand specific stores, the e-commerce,...), reflecting wider transformations on Portuguese commerce. These transformations had strong territorial impacts (with the concentration of specialized offer in the centres of metropolitan areas or big cities, and the progressive diffusion of the sale of more massive goods to the periphery of that and smaller towns.)
- In some activities (particularly in the fields of music, books or cinema), the growth of the markets led to changes on the suppliers, with the entry of independent editors and producers on those markets, with more creative, artistic or specific products (or processes), valuing creativity and differentiation. In some markets (like music or cinema), the turn of attention of traditional editors and producers to a more “commercial”, standardized and globalized pattern (for instance, trying to produce in Portugal some kinds of goods that were traditionally imported – e.g. American mainstream cinema, certain Anglo-Saxon musical phenomena,...), has created difficulties to the support of more independent talents (which, gradually, have more facilities in their own auto-production, and have seen some public supports to arts rising...)
- In spite of the central place of market and private initiative in these cultural industries (even at more independent aesthetic options, mainly at cinema and book and record editing), there is a strong support from state to some of these activities, as we have seen (book price, support to creation, exhibition, edition...), directed mainly to independent production (besides, of course, the public position in media), and there is a tendency for the rising of partnerships among diverse actors (e.g., multimedia; cinema and audiovisual production, edition of musical heritage,...)
- Although the localization of these activities (mainly in production phase) is strongly concentrated (in Lisbon, and, in less extent, in Oporto), there are some occasional initiatives in many towns, (photo and image encounters, cinema festivals, pop-rock, jazz classical music festivals,...) which have a considerable importance for their territorial affirmation. The equipment and support industry is one of the few exceptions to this territorial centralization, with some weight in northern industrial region.
- Finally, only one note to the fact that some of the questions in discussion in international forums (WTO agreements or copyright laws, for instance), has an enormous relevance to the organization of this sector (and territorial implantation).

b) The “cultivated”, legitimated” “institutional” culture

- These activities have, even nowadays, the greatest symbolic mark as cultural activities, particularly in some specific social strata, public deciders (at national level) and big firms (from where great part of the maecenic support comes, which goes to these activities, regarded like most secure investments).
- The market evolution has in general been positive, and has grown mostly supported in some diversification from the supply side, not only from public providers but also by foundations or even supported groups or associations.
- There was some small re-allocation of public responsibilities (mainly until 1995), with the Sponsorship Act and the act of creating state-sponsored foundations (*S. Carlos e Descobertas* – later in discussion), but the cultural production on this field continues very dependent on public (central) subventions.
- Besides big national (public and others) structures, there are some significant support (direct and indirect) from central authorities to those arts, by sectorial institutes (IPAE, for performing arts, IAC for visual arts,...), not only to creativity, but also to the artists and projects.
- Nevertheless, the Sponsorship Act (*Lei do Mecenato*), many times discussed and reformulated, plays a significant role on some of this production, involving some big firms on the financing of these activities.
- These activities, more than any others, are traditionally characterized by their great territorial concentration and central dependency, due to their high costs of provision and their institutional characteristics (opera, national theatres, dance, classical music,...). Portugal is no exception, with centralized and concentrated structures. (National companies of dance, theatre, opera,...), and sectorial national institutes (for performing arts, for visual arts,...)
- We can notice some deconcentration, mainly from public national authorities to some foundations (with several formats, private, public,...) which have a fundamental role in cultural provision in the biggest cities (*Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian* (since 1960's, in Lisbon), *Fundação de Serralves* (in Oporto); *Fundação das Descobertas e Fundação S. Carlos* (with public national structures), *Culturgest* (associated to a finance group), *Fundação Arpad – Vieira da Silva*, *Fundação Berardo*,...).
- There is also a tendency for territorial decentralization, with some interesting results, led mainly by central authorities (itinerancy programs (*Programa Rotas*), recovering of auditoriums on small and medium cities (*Cine-Teatros*), localization of public institutes (e.g. *Centro Português de Fotografia* in Oporto),...)
- But mainly, these activities are very concentrated in big cities, particularly in Lisbon (at least, the events with international impact), as in most of European countries.

- There is also, in what refers to these activities, the importance of the equipment recovering and maintenance, conflicting, in some institution, for financial reasons, with the support to events and artistic creativity
- Occasional initiatives from private agents or local authorities, with some support at national level, are sometimes noted, mainly in visual arts (art galleries) and some performing arts (mainly theatre, music and dance in some cities). The growth of competences and financial funds to the local authorities has been crucial at this point.

c) The popular culture, based on urban sociabilities

- As in other European countries, and also as part of the globalisation processes, there is an accentuated growth of these activities, mainly in metropolitan areas (but, generally, in all towns), namely activities associated to the fields of popular music, dance, theatre, cinema, video and multimedia, visual arts, design, fashion, information technologies, among others...
- These are activities provided and consumed essentially by young, and (at least some of them), more schoolarized, segments of the population. Their growth is related to values, mentalities and expectations changes (valorisation of hedonism, conviviality,...), associated to schoolarization, access to media, income modifications, which had de-sacralized the conventional notions of “culture”. The association to other activities (the night, the fashion,...) often appears.
- These activities are related, mainly, to some expressions of the popular culture, but also to minorities and independent creators and promoters from the massive culture industries (music, cinema, video, literature, multimedia,...) and to some more marginal and creative movements inside the legitimated “high culture” (alternative theatre, dance, music,...). Are, essentially activities related to urban convivialities.
- They appear sometimes very integrated in marked territorial realities (in territorial clusters of activities, like Bairro Alto, in Lisbon, and, at minor grade, some quarters in other cities), supported on strong endogenous mechanisms (formal and informal networks, personal relationships, conviviality, etc...), in rich agglomeration economies and in a internal and external commonly perceived image
- Many of these activities are strongly linked to urban re-qualification operations (for instance, recovery of Tejo waterfront or Parque das Nações in Lisbon; Ribeira, in Porto,...) but many of them are embedded on territorial specific dynamics (Bairro Alto, for instance) or simply associated to the growth of leisure and conviviality and different forms of street animation (with private or public origin...)

- The social progressive institutionalisation of this forms of popular culture, facilitated by changes in scholar socialization and by media, results on a multiplicity of cultural forms of expression (since discos and pubs to experimental video, since *graffiti* to *fado* and other traditional expressions of culture, since fashion to second hand record or book stores...) performed by a multiplicity of agents (mainly associations or SME's) and institutional solutions
- Most of these activities, departing for creative ambitions, are born from the entrepreneurship of volunteer cultural associations (then, evolving to SME's firms), independent promoters or artists, some of them without external financing. Many of them tend to be supported (at least, partially), by public local and central funds, sometimes evolving for any kinds of networks or different institutional solutions.
- The support from public authorities (local, and mainly, central, to artistic creation) is many times crucial for the realization of these projects, with their experimental, artistic and creative characteristics (and so, risky, for example, to sponsors...).
- In spite of the concentration of these activities in some quarters of the biggest towns (mainly Lisbon and Oporto), it is visible the growth of this kind of cultural activities in all medium and small-sized towns, particularly the centres with an universitarian life;
- There is also an important role of cultural amateur associations, this one generalized in the whole country. Local authorities play a key and increasing role in supporting cultural associations and local culture activities. Volunteer associations make a significant contribution to local cultural life and, among a number of other promoters of initiatives, play a major role in arranging theatrical performances, book fairs, film shows and folklore.
- The generalization of partnerships and crossover collaborations, mainly between local authorities and associations, is usual in the whole country, but mainly in the most populated areas of metropolitan regions.

d) The preservation and valorisation of cultural heritage and identity

- A number of successive measures have been introduced since the creation of The Portuguese Cultural Heritage Institute, in 1980 – organizational restructuring, establishment of a national network of archives, and an inventory of the national heritage. Despite all of this reorganization, heritage remains a field of overlapping and competing responsibilities.
- There was a rise in the number of listed buildings and museums open to the public, which attracted increased numbers of visitors (particularly in Lisbon area), but mainly, there was a significant growth of the social (and political...) awareness of the value of cultural heritage

- This social awareness (combined with a stronger bias to economic valorisation of these activities), is intimately associated with the rise on touristic activity (historical, patrimonial, environmental, sport,...), the increase on leisure time, and the rise of environmental values and natural resources preservation
- There was a strong growth on expenditure on national heritage (144% between 85-95, Council of Europe, 2000), which reflects the strong role of public authorities (mainly at central level) in this area. But there are also many other institutions and projects in this field, by private foundations or partnerships (e.g. *Sintra Modern Art Museum* by *Berardo Foundation*,...)
- Simultaneously, there is a crescent role from local authorities (gradually with more attributions, sources of financing and human capital), in diverse fields, since public libraries and other municipal archives (image, sound,...), to small museums, since the preservation and recuperation of built or natural heritage to the preservation of ancestral traditions, folklore or gastronomy.
- Many cities and places (Évora, Sintra, Porto, Angra do Heroísmo, among others...) used the classification as World Heritage (and other initiatives) to preserve, promote, differentiate and valorise their specific assets, particularly in the urban re-qualification and touristic fields.
- Another important dimension is related to internationalisation of Portuguese (and sub-national) culture and languages; in this field, besides some occasional operations in some foreign countries (*Europália-91*, presence in book or media international fairs, in World Exhibitions,...), and international forums (UNESCO, Council of Europe,...), there are some institutions, national (*Instituto Camões*) or international (CPLP – Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries)), concerned with Portuguese language and relations with communities and countries, and some more actuations, in diverse programmes, spreading Portuguese language and culture (establishment of cultural centres abroad, and a network of assistants, radio and TV broadcasts, multimedia,...).
- The integration of cultural minorities is done gradually, without strong incidents, given that the social and cultural contrasts between the minorities and the majority of the population are not very significant, although rising (mainly in the periphery of metropolitan areas, namely Lisbon or in more conservative North). Only recently the political authorities have turned their attention to questions associated with ethnic minorities in Portugal, adopting a more interventionist position.

These are the main trends that, at present point of our investigation, are identified for each one of our four cultural activities sub-clusters. Nevertheless, there are some transversal questions, crossing over all these activities, which we cannot underestimate.

One of them is all that is related to education and formation system. The preparation of the human resources that create, produce and consume cultural goods and services is one of the fundamental aspects we (and any specific territory) should take in account. The development of the activities of each one of this four categories (and even their relative weights), are strongly determined by factors like the formation of publics and tastes, the artistic education (essential to the creative expression possibilities) and technical formation (using supports and hardware, mediators,...), or the dotation on entrepreneurial and management skills in this areas. That means that this is a crucial area for public intervention in any one of the four types of cultural activities.

A second question we would like to highlight refers to the importance of the big events and projects, with great mobilizing capacity. Events like the Universal Exhibition in Lisbon, in 1998, The Cultural Capital Cities of Europe (*Lisboa-94* and *Porto 2001*), or many different projects, lead by central or local authorities, in urban re-qualification (historical and degraded quarters, harbour areas,...⁹) have been initiatives with some impact in cultural terms (in general, with impacts in the different four categories of activities), such as in the (most ephemeral) support to creation and production, such as in the complementary dimension of construction and modernization of equipments and infrastructures.

A third and last transversal question we would like to mention is related to this. It's the importance of the institutional tissue and of the interrelations among different actors, generating the most variable institutional solutions, for specific purposes. The role of the motivations and expectations of the different agents (private entrepreneurs, artistic creators, public, central government authorities, local authorities, advertisers, educational and training centres,...) has a crucial importance, and (mainly for some of the activities of the cluster) is the key for the generation of activities and projects (and publics, and values,...). Thus, the density of the institutional and relational tissue is a fundamental aspect that should be thought by all territories in the promotion of their development and competitiveness.

And, besides these three important questions, but transversal and related to all of them, there is another one we would like to remember again, because it's the one which is central to our work: the permanent importance of spatial inscription to the development of these activities. The space is not neutral and territories (with their specific combination of agents, factors, institutional relations, with their own culture and history) assume an essential role on the

⁹ And the next *POLIS* programme will be an excellent opportunity for this.

outgoing and consolidation of these economic activities and social practices (in different ways, but in all four categories).

3. CONCLUSIVE NOTE

We tried in this paper to synthesize briefly some preliminary conclusions from the empirical data we are working on about the importance of cultural activities in Portuguese economy.

In spite of their character of preliminary results, they can be useful to think about and understand the relation of cultural activities with territorial development, and to provide an analytical schema that can be useful to act in the territory to promote its competitiveness.

In that way it will be important to proceed to a deeply study of these activities and the specific forms of interrelation among the agents in concrete realities. That cannot take place without a concern with some policy issues and debates: the question of the de-sacralization of culture (with the assumption of the cultural and mediated forms as central even in policies orientation...), the question of the participation of private agents and the role of different kinds of agents in the cultural field (relations private-public; modes of financing; strategic projects,...); the issue of the decentralization of cultural policies, with a greater weight of local authorities, and mainly, from the participation of any other kind of agents in the most diverse kinds of partnership; the question of the tension between the ephemeral supports (to creation, to performances, happenings,...) vs. construction of infrastructures (durable, and mainly politically attractable...); and so on, and so on...

These preliminary conclusions also allow emphasizing the evident importance of the cultural and institutional dimension (not only the economic) in the provision of these activities. That is the key for the policy actions above mentioned. In the globalized world we live in, any specific territorial reality must (and has to) valorise its best assets to promote its competitiveness. If this is true to the generality of economic goods, it will even more be for cultural goods, with high aesthetic and symbolic specific contents. Thus, the promotion, in any concrete space, of competitiveness and development, depends on the economic, institutional, cultural, historical combination of factors that are behind the provision and consumption of the goods, in this case, of the cultural products. The politics and planners just have to find and promote, for each specific case, the best solution with the capacities and resources available... a strategic planning approach., involving all the agents and sensibilities, at the different decision levels is then essential, to promote the great opportunities of this cluster in Portuguese reality.

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