POLITECNICO DI MLANO
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING
DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN SPATIAL PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

CULTURE-LED STRATEGIES FOR THE VENETO REGION.
INNOVATIVE PRACTICES FOR GOVERNING A POLYCENTRIC REGION

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2012 – XXIV cycle

Abstract

In this long study the focus on culture has been adopted in order to reflect on existing policies for the governance of large territories, such as regions. In this context culture has a twofold meaning. Whilst culture keeps its core value as "art for the art's sake", it has at the same time lost its intrinsic value to become a means of action for alternative public policies for economic, social and urban development.

The scope of the present research is to investigate the place of cultural projects and culture-led strategies within the framework of urban and regional development policies and strategies in Europe. From the investigation of three European examples – the Ruhr metropolitan region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métropole- and in light of the conceptual framework, culture-led strategies are found to be as instrumental to urban and regional development especially in territories undergoing a moment of inertia due to the change of internal and external conditions. The three European examples show how the industrial decline and the global crisis of the last decades have led to the identification of a historical "momentum" in which traditional practices of regional development are not effective anymore.

The case of the Veneto region, which has been analysed as part of the present research, shows that the "momentum" has now evidently also arrived in Italy. In a time in which the whole country is experiencing a moment of economic crisis, the Veneto region seems to be trapped in a transition stage between the successful past that saw its regional development based on industrial proliferation and the uncertainty of these days characterised by a profound change of its economic and social systems. Among all the issues the Veneto region is facing today, some, also called "wounds", have been identified as the most urgent to be tackled: the economic crisis, a dispersed polycentric system, a spoiled landscape and issues related to a changed social fabric.

Confronted by such a complex scenario of changes, the regional administration -Regione del Veneto- has started to review the policy framework of regional planning and to include more innovative practices to face current challenges. Concepts such as culture and creativity are becoming more prominent in discourses about regional development, even though they are still struggling for dedicated space in official documents ruling regional planning and are left under the exclusive control of the regional department for cultural affairs. While the Regione del Veneto is only somewhat trying to include culture and creativity in official regional planning documents, some bottom-up initiatives have indicated culture as a strategic factor for governing large polycentric territories and for their all-embracing development. These initiatives taking place around the Veneto region, such as Opera Estate Festival, Festival Città Impresa, Provincia Italiana, InnoVetion Valley, and the bid for the European Capital of Culture 2019, are already or are about to, overcome their status of traditional cultural events to assume a position of informal strategic planning projects.

The mismatch between the content of policies and strategies proposed by the institution Regione del Veneto and the objectives of bottom up practices already implemented, or in course of implementation in the Veneto region, shows that the institutional policy framework for culture, and also for regional development, does not facilitate bottom-up practices already happening in the territory. In this context culture becomes a tool for governing territories that do not follow the policy orientation given by Regione del Veneto but rather a new understanding of regional governance taken forward by the private sector working together with local administrations.

If the Regione del Veneto would like to follow the trend already taken on board by other comparable European regions, regain its leadership and direct this innovative process of regional development and provide internal efforts with an adequate policy framework, it should take up a series of resolutions. Resolutions like the redefinition of the concept of culture, the adoption of a strategic attitude towards culture within the urban and regional policy framework, and the review of the sectorial governance system of the region could help to deal with the new challenge of combining culture with regional development, which seems to be very relevant today as shown in other European cases, the literature available on the topic and in the already existing series of bottom-up practices in the Veneto region.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1   The cultural factor in the development of European regions

The process of globalisation marks a change in the dynamics of political, economic and social correlations at all territorial levels. The change in the function of nation states and, in parallel with it, the increasing importance of regional levels is an interesting development in this context.

In recent times urban planners' attention has been shifting from cities to regions. Peter Hall states that "regions do matter, but how we define these regions and the boundaries of these regions is a complicated question" (2002: 55). Today, new urbanisation is expanding the area controlled by cities pulling down boundaries between distinct cities and creating a continuum stratum of urbanisation where the idea of territory belonging to a city disappears in favour of a new emerging concept of urban region. Previous thinking held to think that anything which could be defined as urban had to be concerned with cities, following the traditional idea that sees cities as compact urban structures developed around centres led to the periphery and then across the countryside to other centres. The blurring of once rigid and clearly defined

boundaries has been an integral part of the globalisation process and the new information age, and this is now reflected in the increasingly ambiguous meaning of what is urban, suburban, or indeed rural or not rural at all (Scott et al., 2001). The rise of globalisation induces also the broadening of the kaleidoscopes of locational preference of both households and firms (Champion, 2001; Hall, 1993; Kloosterman and Lambregts, 2001; Scott, 1998; Scott et al., 2001). "These broader sets of locational needs and aspirations are much better met by polycentric varieties of places than by cities in the narrow sense" (Meijers et al., 2003: 15). A polycentric variety of places, such as collections of historical districts and both administratively and politically independent cities located in close proximity and well connected through infrastructure, make up polycentric urban regions (Klosterman and Lambregts, 2001).

In these recent years also the meaning of territorial development is changing. For instance, "territorial development does not only mean enabling the local and regional market economy to thrive, but also empowering the other parts of the economy (public sector, social economy, cultural sector, low-productivity artisan production) as well as community life (socio-cultural dynamics as a level of human existence by itself, political and social governance of non-economic sections of society, cultural and natural life)" (Moulaert and Sekia, 2003: 300).

Within this framework, local identity and culture have become important factors in urban planning and territorial concerned disciplines (Kunzmann, 2004). Representatives from the cultural sector, whether working for NGOs, public institutions or creative and cultural industries are commonly interested in the potential for culture to contribute to cross cultural understanding, to a new economic dynamic and to socially responsible societies which value imagination and creativity. Richard Florida (2002 and 2008) sets strong emphasis on the role of culture and knowledge to territorial and economic competitiveness, and Graham Evans (2001), in his compendium Cultural Planning, calls for a cultural approach to urban planning and a holistic policy with strong links to local cultural and local economic development.

In the following research work the two above mentioned trends, namely the increasing importance of regions in the urban planning field of study and culture as a strategic factor for territorial development, are combined together to see how culture is used as a strategic factor within processes of regional development. Three European regions that have gone through significant change and challenges due to the decline of the industrial sector are analysed as cases in which culture has acted, or could act, as a soft power for their revival.

The research starts with the review of the experiences of three European regions – namely the Basque country in Spain, the Ruhr region in Germany, Lille and its métropole in France - that lately invested in interesting strategies to reinvent themselves after the industrial decline of the past decades. I believe that those three regions can show the challenges that regions are facing today and their analysis highlights what are the key factors at the basis of regional development in Europe.

The study of these three European regions was a source of inspiration for the definition of a theoretical framework for the analysis of the case study chosen for the research work: the Veneto region in the North of Italy.

The Veneto region of today is a territory undergoing an important moment of transition. Once an example of prosperous economic development, today the "Veneto model" of regional development is suffering and looking for a change. From a first analysis, the Veneto region shows a manifold scenario with a strong tradition coming out from the industrial model turning into a transitioning model still based on the old economy settings. In the same context new sectors tied to the service economy are emerging together with a growing attention to quality of life and increasing issues related to changes of the social fabric in the region. Policies and strategies developed by institutional bodies can be found in between the requirements of the old system rooted in the needs of the industrial production and the new demands coming out from recent changes.

This study wants to investigate the range of directions that the Veneto region can follow for its future regional development path and the formal and informal strategies proposed for regional development today and how do they reflect inner and external changes and opportunities. There are many different approaches proposed for the future of the Veneto region, such as major development projects, infrastructure improvement, mega-events. Taking in to account all the proposed strategies, the aim of this case analysis is to investigate those strategies that value culture as one of the main strategic factors for regional development. Starting from strategies promoted at the regional level by regional administrations, the study is going through different practices that directly or indirectly have an impact on the way the region is organised.

1.2 Research questions and goals of the study

This research aims to contribute to the creation of new knowledge which is knowledge-based but also oriented to offer a platform for discussion for policy-makers, urban planners and local administrations.

More specifically the research intends to:

- offer some practical examples of vast territories in Europe characterised by sprawl and with a polycentric character that have already implemented long-term innovative strategies to overcome the crisis due to their industrial decline. The examples proposed are those of Ruhr Metropolitan region in western Germany, the Basque Country in Spain and Lille and its métropole in France;
- define a conceptual framework for studying polycentric urban regions around Europe;
- offer a review of the concepts of region and regional development emphasising the value of their socio-cultural dimensions for facing present challenges;
- explore different approaches to the use of culture and creativity in practices of local and regional development, from very traditional to more innovative strategies;
- investigate the case of the Veneto region, to see whether the idea of a regional development starting off from culture-led strategies can be applied and which are the practices already implemented;
- advance a proposal of practices that move from the promotion of cultural events to the implementation of culture-led strategies with a long term vision in the Veneto region;
- identify the critical points that need to be addressed to promote a change in the way regional development is perceived in the Veneto region;
- pose further questions on the problems affecting polycentric urban regions and their governance.

In order to accomplish the above mentioned objectives, some questions have been posed. Starting from the most general question, what is the place for culture-led strategies in regional development? to more specific questions, such as what is the difference between cultural events and culture-led strategies and what are the conditions to implement them? Are culture-led strategies included in the policy framework for regional development? And even, can an event, like the one of European Capital of Culture, become a driver -or at least a starting point- for the future re-organisation and development of the region?

The answers to all these questions have been searched in the three European examples chosen and in the literature review used for the definition of the conceptual framework. The results have been used as critical lens to look at the case study of the Veneto region.

1.3   Overview of chapters' content

The research work starts with the description of the methodology adopted. The methodology used in this study is simple and linear in order to deal with a complex topic ranging over different disciplines. The study is based on economic, political and social aspects influencing the way the regions are organised both in terms of material space and immaterial relations, stressing the impacts that recent changes (globalisation, economic crisis, waves of immigration, knowledge economy, cultural diversity) are having on the territory. A broad literature review builds the conceptual framework for the research work. The theoretical framework is supported by practical examples that are taken from three European regional cases: the Ruhr Metropolitan region in Germany, the Basque Country in Spain and Lille and its métropole in France. The case study approach has been chosen to investigate the topic in depth. The subject identified for the case study is the Veneto region in Italy. The study ends with a conclusion and the outline of some recommendations that would be useful for the Veneto region case study and that could also be transferred to other regional cases.

The following chapter focuses on the analysis of three European examples of regions that went through similar processes of regional development in the past century. From being the industrial hearts of Spain, Germany and France, the Basque Country, the Ruhr metropolitan region and Lille and its métropole became their respective neglected territories. After a deep crisis of the industrial system and the increasing of several social, cultural and environmental problems, those three regions faced the need to review their traditional approach to regional planning through the introduction of innovative practices. New practices of regional development adopted by the three case studies include long term visions for the regions and setting immaterial factors, such as culture, creativity and innovation, at bases of their strategies.

Looking at these three examples, some common characteristics have been identified as crucial for their regional development: being European peripheral regions with a common industrial past; the polycentric character of the region is considered as an asset; the implementation of long-term strategies at the regional level for the future development; an institutional change of the definition of culture and the adoption of a culture-led strategy for a broad territory.

The tales of the three regional experiences provide some boundaries for the definition of the conceptual framework for the research work.

The first practical step when defining the conceptual framework for a study in the field of Spatial Planning and Urban Development is to identify a spatial/urban entity to work on. For the purpose of my research I have identified the spatial/urban entity of investigation as the "region". The second logical step would be the definition of the concept named "region". Without being ambitious, to find the ultimate definition of "region", I propose a definition of region that suits

this specific research work. My idea of "region" is not aimed at becoming one of the several definitions available of the concept, rather it is the result of a collection of characteristics I identified as relevant for the topic of culture-led development of vast territories..

The conceptual framework continues with the observation that the approach to regional development has changed in the past few decades in the urban planning field. In a context in which territories are experimenting rescaling processes, and regions are acquiring more importance as centres of power and growth, models of territorial development have changed. Initially, as demonstrated by the long debate on New Regionalism and TIMs as model of regional development, the focus of regional development strategies was set on economic growth. Today new regional development models have appeared including a more community-based territorial-development approach, in which concepts such as culture, capital, governance, innovation strategies and organisational change have renewed meanings.

The concept of "culture" lies at the core of this study and is yet perhaps the most controversial of key terminology to be defined. Despite a significant growth of national and local government policy concerning culture, to this date there in not any accepted official or governmental definition.

The second thematic area is the one of culture-led strategies for territorial development, that has been approached from a cultural policy perspective. The subject of cultural policy is first introduced looking at discourses about the role of culture within local and regional development of regions. Once cultural policy -as an area of research- has been defined through the creation of boundaries and at the same time connections with other fields of studying, the research work moves on to identify some specific programs and strategies related with culture and its impact on the way territories are organised in their processes of development.

After having identified the conceptual framework, the research study continues with two chapters dedicated to the description and analysis of the case study, the Veneto region.

In the past few decades the Veneto region has deeply changed. Next to historical city centres, the agglomeration of rural towns has been gradually sprawling into an urban environment based on a spread industrialisation, made up of small and medium size enterprises. Since the economic boom of the 1950s, the organisation of the territory of the Veneto region has been structured as to satisfy the economic needs, without many restrictions or control, following the principle of "deregulation". What is more evident about the Veneto region today is the continuity of the landscape, the same and chaotic view of towns, industrial zones, residential areas without any individual character or specificity. Towns are organised following the principle of polycentric organisation spread around the region, that offer similar services and facilities, and that are independent among them. Polycentricity ought to become a competitive factor, to facilitate the mobility of people, products and ideas.

The aim of the study is to look at the undergoing process of shifting the traditional strategies and policies for the regional development into new sectors. Whilst the Veneto region is renowned for its industries rather than for its culture, it is very rich in terms of cultural

traditions, built heritage, creative activities, high-arts institutions, which have given potential for the well-being of the territory to be underestimated when compared to other European regions.

In the Veneto region there are already several policies that use culture as a strategic factor for the future development of the region. Some cultural events, such as the Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa, are opportunities to give back to the territory more than the strictly traditional cultural program, as they are able to connect different levels of the community, from the civil society to the business sector under a common project spread around the territory. Following this example, in recent times several culture-led strategies aimed at setting up a new method of governing the region and facing economic and social changes have been attempted in the region. InnoVetion Valley with Provincia Italiana and the bid for the European Capital of Culture 2019 and its Pedemontana project are some of the initiatives implemented that see regional development from an innovative perspective with culture at its heart.

The concluding chapter of the research work presents suggestions for the Veneto region institution, Regione del Veneto, for the delivery and use of culture within the regional framework and an alternative procedure for driving processes of regional development. The suggestions and proposals presented in the research and summarised below could be generalised and applied to other European regions undergoing a similar development process and facing analogous issues.

The first suggestion for running a process of regional development based on culture is the proposal of a new understanding of the concept of culture, and the associated cultural policy, that shifts from culture based on a mix of material and immaterial goods and services (culture for consumption) to a more wide definition that sees culture as intrinsic to different kind of actions (culture as a process). Culture, therefore, assumes a new role within regional planning and this should be recognised through the definition of a "plan for culture" that gives directives to the region in the matter of culture and development. Moreover, in order to govern a polycentric territory today, the governance of the region should have a more flexible structure and rely on concerted urban strategic networks that involve a variety of actors to deal over common transversal issues.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

2.1   Introduction

Any research study starts with the determination and definition of a research question.

This specific research work aspires to give an answer to the following question: What is the role of culture in regional development?

In order to answer that question the vast field of research and analysis has been restricted through the definition of a more specific framework. The concept of culture has been translated into culture-led strategies as programs able to implement activities that see culture as a strategic factor for a series of outcomes that can have an impact on territories. Territories have been restricted to the case of regions, both geo-political regions or relational regions within the European context. The result is an investigation of culture-led strategies applied to regional territories. Considering that, the initial question becomes more definite and can be expressed as:

In which aspects of regional development cultural-led strategies have an impact on? How do they do it?

Even if the questions to be addressed by the study seemed to be simple, the answers are going to be complex as they imply the investigation of a combination of phenomena that involve different disciplines, approaches and understanding of the same concepts. These phenomena need to be investigated as a whole. In order to deal with that complex scenario, it has been chosen to adopt a methodology based on the qualitative approach, which is broadly used to understanding and describing the world of human experience and defined as "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). So, if qualitative research is the practice of asking simple questions and getting complex answers (Chenail, 1995), what is the specific method used to gain information that once they have been analysed can provide sounded answers to the original questions? The case study attempts to shed light on a phenomena by studying in depth a single example of the phenomena and generally answers one or more questions which begin with "how" or "why". Robert Yin defines the case study research method as an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (1994: 23). Yin also specifies that the case study strategies can be considered more complete than the pure qualitative research: qualitative research follows ethnographic methods and not always implies case studies, while case studies can use quantitative and qualitative data in order to confirm or challenge a theory.

There are several debates about the value of case study as a research method. Bent Flyvbierg (2006) observes that case study methodology is not considered as reliable as quantitative research method within academic disciplines. Through the analysis of five misunderstandings[1] about case-study research, the author stresses the value of that methodological tool in social science.

The are several advantages in using the case study method. It is useful for testing whether scientific theories and models actually work in the real world and can provide more realistic responses than a purely statistical survey. Case studies are also very flexible and might introduce the author to new and unexpected results during its course, and lead to research taking new directions, whilst a pure qualitative research tool only try to prove or disprove a hypothesis. Finally, the representation of case studies through analysis and reports might provide more interesting readings for the general public as its content is very connected with real "stories" and therefore able to offer more accessible, and with a stronger impact, information.

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1 The five common misunderstandings about case-study research analysed in Bent Flyvbierg's article are : (a) theoretical knowledge is more valuable than practical knowledge; (b) one cannot generalise from a single case, therefore, the single-case study cannot contribute to scientific development; (c) the case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, whereas other methods are more suitable for hypotheses testing and theory building; (d) the case study contains a bias toward verification; and (e) it is often difficult to summarise specific case studies (Flyvbierg, 2006).

Following the suggestions for drawing a research work based on case studies, the outline of the research work is made up of four main sections: an introduction of a selection of practical examples in which emerge phenomena interesting for the purpose of this research work, a conceptual framework, a case study analysis and a deep analysis of some specific aspects of the case study.

Because the case study analysis is often based on contemporary phenomena, it is necessary to adopt a distant approach to the topic in order to avoid the subjective experience when understanding and describing the world of human experience, which is recognised as one of the most likely risky factor of qualitative studies (Myers, 2000).

2.2 Designing a conceptual framework for the research questions

The study starts with the definition of a conceptual framework. A literature review is conducted to assist in targeting and formulating the questions that are to be addressed in the study. The review is aimed to establish what research has been previously conducted and leads to refine, insightful questions about the problem.

The study is developed around two major thematic areas that are the objects of the literature review: 1) regional and local development; and 2) cultural-led strategies. The two research areas are developed both as single units of investigation as well as through a cross-sectorial approach that sees the integration of the two areas, showing connections and interdependencies among them.

Within the European context, the concept of "region" is studied by researching how economic, political and social aspects shape the way a region is organised both in terms of material space and immaterial relations, stressing the impact that recent changes (globalisation, economic crisis, waves of immigration) are having on the territory. Special attention is set on the fragmented and polycentric aspects that characterise many regions nowadays. After having designed a conceptual framework for the concept of region in urban planning, the discourse narrows down to local and regional strategies for development. An historical excursus of local and regional development strategies is offered and questions about the efficacy of strategies implemented in the European context are posed in this part of the research work.

The second thematic area is the one of cultural-led strategies for territorial development. The topic is approached from a cultural policy perspective. The subject of cultural policy is first introduced looking at discourses about the role of culture (which culture?) within local and regional development of regions. Since the 1970s, culture has been evaluated as a strategic factor for drawing development plans, and it is recognised as an important resource available in order to generate added value on both the economic/productive (Porter, 1990) and social (Matarasso, 1997) dimension of development. In the same years, many European cities have started to exploit culture, tourism, creative industries and so on for the promotion of new strategies of development in a prospective view where those elements are seen as new possibilities to generate economic, social, and urban value for cities. Introducing different meanings of culture, which are discussed in relation to their relationship with territories, allows to study how diverse understandings of the concept of culture leads to specific cultural policies and culture-led strategies with different impacts on the territory. Once cultural policy -as an area of research- has been defined through the creation of boundaries and at the same time connections with other fields of studying, the research work moves on to identify some specific

programs and strategies related with culture and with evident impacts on the way territories are organised and on their process of development.

The concepts of "region" and "culture" are therefore explored and develop to show how, in recent times, their social factor is gaining relevance when discussing about regional development. Culture also becomes a leading component of both economic and social development of regions. New practices of urban planning and different declinations of culture-led strategies are introduced with reference to their impact within the regional framework.

The literature review is based on books, articles, official reports and records, press and literary reviews, existing data collections including social and economic statistics.

In order to explain further the theoretical background that constitutes the framework for the case study the research work is going to look into the experiences of three European regions: the Ruhr region (Germany), the Basque Country (Spain), and of Lille and its métropole (France). The examples should not be confused with the case study. Whilst the case study is in depth analysed in order to answer the research questions and to confirm the thesis of the work, the examples are used to support and reinforced the theoretical framework with evidence-based experiences that act as bridges between the literature review and the analysis of firsthand material of the case study.

The exploration of the examples included in the research work is done through a comparison. The examples have been selected accordingly the following criteria:

- all defined as regions (in some cases also administrative regions);
- all European cases;
- all characterised by polycentricity and do not have a capital city in the region;
- all characterised as being "peripheral regions" within their countries;
- all territories that have undergone important changes due to the crisis of the industrial sector in the last few decades;
- in all the cases innovative regional development strategies have been adopted to overcome the crisis;
- among the strategies implemented, culture-led strategies have played a crucial role in the regional development of those territories.

Ruhr metropolitan region, Basque Country and Lille and its métropole function as examples that are analysed according to specific criteria in order to create categories that illustrate the framework for the implementation of culture-led strategies. Defining similarities and differences among the European examples chosen together with the literature review, allow the draft of a matrix for the analysis of the case study. Through the analysis of the examples it is possible to outline what the factors are that influence the implementation of culture-led strategies and their outcomes, the background of the region implementing the specific strategy, the visions behind

the process of regional development and, finally, to find some similarities that can be generalised to regions undergoing the same kind of process.

As it is already clear by the theoretical framework, it should be pointed out that this long study is both an interdisciplinary work, in fact it involves different research disciplines in a shared methodology and, transdisciplinary, as it aims to involve different types of users.

2.3   Case study analysis

The process of designing a theoretical framework to the research questions that has been illustrated above is useful to determine in advance what evidence to gather and what analysis techniques to use with the data to answer the research questions.

A key strength of the case study method involves using multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process. Tools to collect data can include surveys, interviews, documentation review and observation.

The case study chosen for this research work is identifiable with the Veneto region (north east of Italy) with some reference to the surrounding territories. The Veneto region is an interesting case study because it is a territory undergoing a stimulating process of change. Next to the traditional, and conservative, territorial development strategies promoted by the regional administration, a new territorial governance approach built on cultural-led strategies is emerging through public and private initiatives.

The Veneto region case study is investigated through the documents made available by regional and local administrations, official reports, press reviews, public policies documents, studies, existing data collections including social and economic statistics, etc. made available by archives and resource centres of institutions (foundations, universities, research centres, local authorities) involved in the topic. Press review is an important source of information. A detailed and daily press review of articles published on local and national newspapers regarding the Veneto region was daily collected and analysed. The period of the daily press coverage goes between September 2010 and December 2011 and the articles selected range over a wide variety of subjects, from current affairs to politics, economics, culture and editorial-writing.

Secondary data are also combined with primary sources in the form of face-to-face informal interviews with decision makers and stakeholders (public officers, private and non-profit actors, academics involved in the programs, consultants). All interviews lasted 1-2 hours, and focused on the areas of the informants' expertise according to the focuses of this study – regional development, culture-led strategies, cultural planning and practices in the Veneto region. During the course of work the interviews were transcribed and analysed.

Key and critical information was also collected through the author's participation to several workshops, debates and seminars on the draft of a program for the Veneto Region to bid for the European Capital of Culture 2019. The consultation through meetings started in 2009 and is still undergoing.

Because case study research generates a large amount of data from multiple sources, systematic organisation of the data is important. A sort of matrix, which identifies four categories of development of the analysis, has been developed to assist in the categorisation, sorting and and

retrieving data for analysis and also in the comparison of the experiences chosen as representative. The four areas of investigation identified as relevant when implementing culture-led strategies are: the governance system of the region, economic growth, the contribution to social cohesion and the reuse of industrial heritage and the creation of a contemporary landscape. Four examples of culture-led strategies implemented -or undergoing implementation- in the Veneto region have been examined to understand whether the four areas of investigation, which should correspond to the areas of regional development, have been positively affected by the selected strategies. The four culture-led strategies used in the study as empirical demonstration of their effect on the territory are: Opera Estate Festival, Festival Città Impresa, Provincia Italiana and European Capital of Culture 2019 and its seven touristic routes for the Pedemontana region.

To conclude, the long study is going to be summarised by a conclusive chapter where recommendations, suggestions of future scenarios, reflections and visions are outline for the Veneto region. The conclusion provides considerations that could be generalised and easily referred to regions within the European context.

Illustrative boxes providing descriptions about very specific cases are used within the case study chapters as cases in point addressed to illustrate what has been discussed in the chapters.

CHAPTER 3

Three European regions using culture as strategic factor for their development

3.1 Introduction

The growth and richness of big cities has always been characterised by the simultaneous development of economic and cultural aspects of the city. Some examples like the cities of Florence, Venice or Paris have seen their constant growth being based on a virtuous cycle involving material resources, technological innovation and dynamic cultural life. When considering the regional framework, processes of territorial development might involve different actions and give value to different factors, leading regions to perform unlike cities.

In some European cases vast territories, which were not characterised by major capital cities and their land was used by agricultural production and some rural villages, were were transformed into industrial districts and bluecollar residential areas in the course of the 19th and 20th century.

This process of development characterised several regions around Europe that in few decades became known as industrial regions and "engines" for the economy of their countries. The modern industrialisation induced territories to revise their material and immaterial structures in order to create the appropriate framework for a flourishing, industrial based, economy. The little control imposed on the industrial growth facilitated sprawl, which led to the rising of many different problems related social, economic and environmental sustainability. Capital cities and major urban centres expanded their boundaries to gain space for industrial districts in the periphery, reaching out smaller cities in the suburbs and creating, the city together with surrounding towns, a continuum stratum of urban agglomeration. Away from capital cities, medium-size cities got united by industrialisation too, filling with factories, infrastructure and anonymous residential areas the vast rural lands that once divided different historical centres and villages. On the European scene did happen, on a smaller scale, what the United States already experienced decades before: cities lost their boundaries in favour of a continuum stratum of urbanisation that almost cancelled the existence of non urban territories.

There are some regions in Europe that have gone through similar processes of territorial development in the last century. They are called "regions" even though in most of the cases there is not any formal administrative region behind this denomination.

This research starts with the narration of three European experiences, namely the experiences of the Basque country in Spain, the Ruhr region in German and Lille and its métropole in France. The three stories can count on many similarities that make them comparable cases but also on several differences that characterised their processes of regional development. The interesting fact remains their common turn from a strategy for territorial development strictly based on industrial growth to a more culture and social driven approach to regional development. In the last two decades the regional agenda of the three cases has increasingly given more room to policies following the creative cities movement.

The aim of this chapter is to understand which key factors have induced that turn, the major paths of development undertaken by the three regions and the first outcomes of the implementation of innovative strategies based on culture and creativity.

3.2 The Basque Country: a region that is more than a museum

The Basque Country consists of a large territory, home to the Basque people in the western Pyrenees, and spans the border between France and Spain on the Atlantic coast. It comprises the Autonomous Communities of the Basque Country and Navarre in Spain and the Northern Basque Country in France. In the Spanish part, the three most important urban centres are the metropolitan areas of Bilbao, Donostia-San Sebastián and Vitoria-Gasteiz, which cities cover the territory under investigation. Although the three cities are close to each other, they still have very distinct profiles. The Spanish Basque Country occupies an area of around 7 thousands square kilometres that corresponds to 1.4% of the entire Spanish territory (IGN, Istituto Geografico Nacional, 2010).

Box 1: The Basque Country

Available at: http://www.geo.euskadi.net
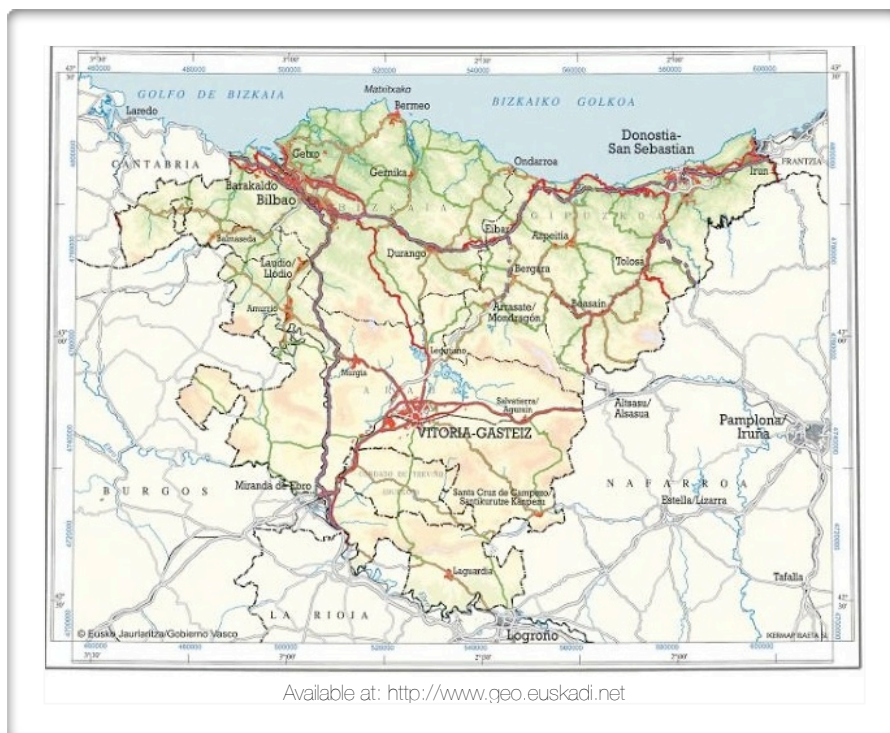
The Basque Country even before becoming an administrative recognised entity, it already existed as a territory characterised by a strong common identity and spread industrialisation that made it the industrial heart of Spain.

The history behind the consolidation of a unitary entity called Basque Country goes back in the 1970s when the area faced a deep economic crisis, environmental degradation, unemployment and widespread urban decline. In the same years, after over 35 years of dictatorship, Spain experienced the restoration of democracy, which included a very strong decentralisation policy towards the regions (called autonomous communities). The Basque Country had the first democratic regional elections in 1979 and the subsequent years were dedicated to building a regional institutional capacity that could tackle the deep economic and industrial crisis of the area (González, 2005). According to EUSTAT[2] while unemployment was almost non-existent until the early 1970s, it reached a record 25% in the first half of the 1980s. The proportion of manufacturing jobs dropped from 46% to 27% (2006).

Within the Basque country framework new regionalism scalar narrative is understood as an instrumental policy frame that sets at the core of its discourses regions and localities as crucial economic subjects, supporting the economic case for Spanish autonomous communities political projects. Nowadays, the scalar political project of the "global Basque region" is being pushed strongly by the Basque Government in an attempt to marry the claims for both increased self-government and international competition (Gonzàles, 2006). According to the Basque government "globalisation and the decline of nation-states coincide with the revitalisation of interest in the geography and the local territory. The very same proposals of Michael Porter, widely recognised in the world of industrial strategy, are also tightly linked with a wide doctrinal approach that confirms the territory as inseparable from economic development" (Gobierno Vasco/Basque Government, 2004: 33-34).

In order to achieve the objective of making the Basque country region a global city-region, Bilbao has been indicated as the economic engine of this process of development (Diputación Foral de Bizkaia, 2003). According to the Basque government, Bilbao has the right numbers, for its size and strong ideology, to be able to "capture economic, social and culture innovation generated in Europe and to diffuse them equally among the different centres and territories in the Basque Country" (Gobierno Vasco, 1997: 87). From the documents available on the process of regeneration of the Basque Country and the central role set on Bilbao, it seems evident how the Bilbao is not only the triggering centre of the whole process of regeneration but also the "diamond point" around which the other centres gravitate as supporting parts of the whole process. The Basque Regional Strategy (Directrice de Ordenación del Territorio, DOT), which foresees the creation of a polycentric system of capital cities -Basque Polynuclear System of Capitals (Bilbao, Donostia-San Sebastián and Vitoria-Gasteiz) - needs to be a process facilitating the merging of the Bilbao in the context of Europe. To reach this objective the

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2 Eustat - Euskal Estatistika Erakundea - Instituto Vasco de Estadística is the public body of the Basque Country that collects, analyses and publishes statistical information about every aspect of Basque Country. See www.eustat.es

Gobierno Vasco has stressed the need to renewing, revitalising and strengthening the Bilbao metropolis as the diamond point of vast territorial area, with a great impact on the whole of the economic, social and cultural life of the Basque Country (Gobierno Vasco, 1997).

Because "none of the Basque capitals, on their own, would possess sufficient critical mass that is needed to offer the set of specialised services, facilities, infrastructure, and options that are offered in cities that are successfully operating at international level" (Azua, 2005: 28), the regeneration process of the Basque Country started from the city of Bilbao, which is the largest urban area in the north of the Iberian Peninsula.

After a first phase with a strong focus on physical urban regeneration, in 1999 the Strategic Plan for the Metropolitan Area of Bilbao was reviewed and its focus shifted towards a qualitative approach to regeneration and the need to invest in knowledge and values as a more effective long-term strategy "to promote Bilbao internationally as a world-class city" (BM30, 2005: 5).

The second step of the regeneration process, in between the late 1990s to the early 2000s, is characterised by a more symbolic approach aimed to improve the image of the urban area within the territory itself and outside it. How to make Bilbao an attracting destination for tourists and, at the same time, an interesting place where to invest or base companies' headquarters and, most of all, to live? The city of Bilbao first of all chose to invest resources on improving the aesthetic quality of the built heritage of the city in order to make Bilbao name known globally as a contemporary "city of arts". The process, later known as the "Bilbao effect", was based on a strategy of attraction of internationally renowned architects in the city to design both public and private buildings. According to the Deputy Mayor of Bilbao "good architecture is not enough anymore: to seduce we need names" (Areso, 2001: 110).

Box 2: Architecture in Bilbao

Available at: http://www.greatbuildings.com

Internationally renowned architects, among the others Gehry, Foster, Pelli, Legorreta, Isozaki, Calatrava, Sterling and Soriano, in only few years were called to design architecture works that today are globally recognised and associated with the city of Bilbao, and therefore the Basque Country. Especially the Guggenheim museum by Frank Gehry symbolises a society's will for change, and the determination addressed to reinvent and construct a 21st century metropolitan region on the ruins of an obsolete productive system. Of course there have been many critics to the sustainability of the "Bilbao effect" and many other cities around Europe have tried to copy and paste the same practice without achieving the same effect.

Together with the beautification of the city of Bilbao and surrounding area, the Basque Government has invested on setting an official framework for cultural policy through the promotion of the "Plan Vasco de la Cultura 2004-2008" followed by the second stage for the years "2009-2012". The Plan gives the definition of what is "culture" for the Basque Autonomous Community, offering the background for each action and strategy implemented in the field of culture: "culture is what makes humanity what it is. Although the word is polysemous - it can mean a personal mental state or the level of development of a group, or the exercise of the arts or of ways of life - here we use the term in a broad sense, to refer to the set of responses to the environment and of social relations in the spheres of *symbolism, communication* and *values*, allowing for social interaction and a sense of recognition or belonging" (Gobierno Vasco, 2005:15)

At the same time, the Basque Government has brought outside Bilbao its interest to invest on culture-led strategies for the development of other major cities in the region. For instance, in 2009, the Basque Government together with the Donostia-San Sebastián City Council and Gipuzkoa Provincial Council signed a collaboration agreement to work jointly on drawing up the bid for the European Capital of Culture title to be held in 2016. It is believed that one of the strengths of their bid that contributed to the achievement of the title was a solid institutional support that should permit collective and inter-institutional reflection on the role of the territory.

3.3   The Ruhr metropolitan region: a 20 year long strategy based on innovation and creativity

The metropolitan area of the Ruhr, in North Rhine Westphalia, Germany, follows London and Paris, as the third-largest conurbation in Europe with 4435 square kilometres and a population of some 5.2 million (2009) who live in the 11 district-free cities and 4 districts with a total of 53 independent municipalities. In the European context, the Ruhr counts as many citizens as Finland with its high density of approximately 1,170 inhabitants/square kilometre (information taken from http://www.metropoleruhr.de).

Box 3: The Ruhr metropolitan region

Available at: http://www.metropoleruhr.de
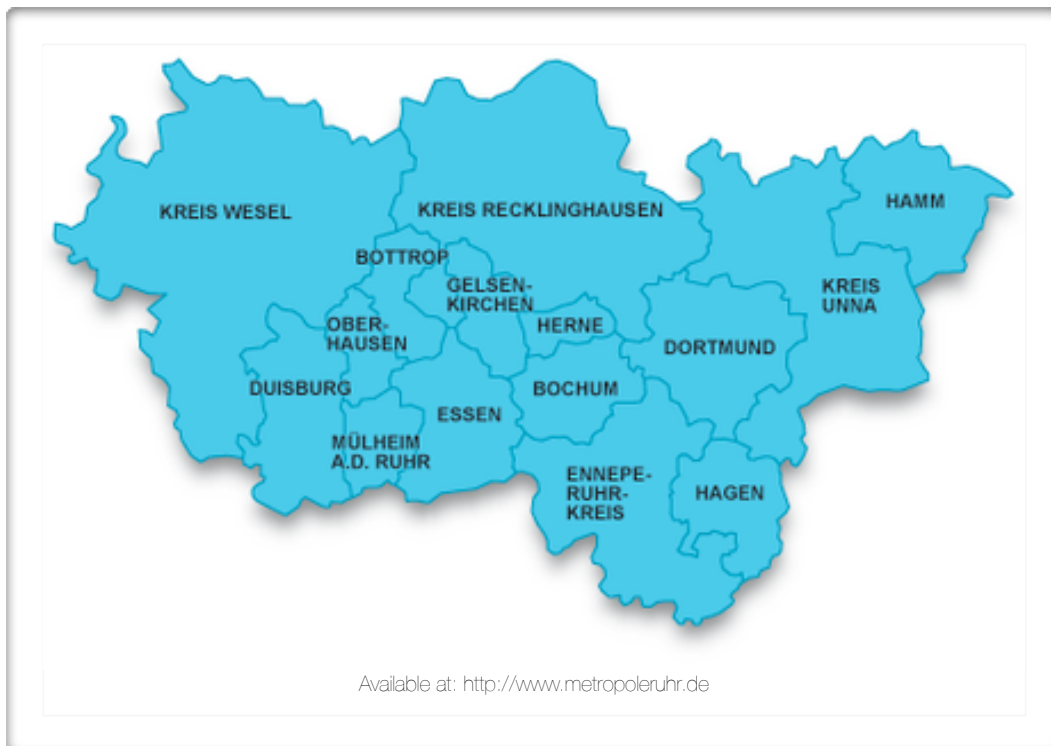
The Ruhr Region is not formally an administrative region, even though it has created regional coalitions to design entities that could better deal with their "conceptual region", i.e. their relational space, rather than with the existing administrative regions in the same territory. The Ruhr metropolitan region well fits the concept of "relational regional space": next to the

geographical proximity, common language and shared culture, which are strongly safeguarded to maintain the identity of such a large territory, and being an excellence for coal mining in Europe were the original force on which the region was structured as a co-ordinated system that became the raison d'être of the region itself.

Born as a functional region, the Ruhr Region served as coal pot for the entire country and has always been deprived from the Central State of any strategic power. Some evidences of the little strategic power granted to the Ruhr region by the German state can be found in the centralised decision of not allowing, until the 1960s, the establishment of universities in the area in order to avoid the increasing of the overall education level of population. An increased education of local population would have meant more awareness regarding local rights for the development of the region. This approach, i.e. to keep power away from the region, is recognisable also when in the 1980s, with the decentralisation phase, the Ruhr was distributed under the power of two different political regions, namely the regions of Rhineland and Westphalia. As it was indicated by Neuschwander and Berthe "the economic and geographical reality of the Ruhr town only exists when they are taken together as a whole and not when they are separated into administrative commune-level units […] it is not so much the inter-communal structure that provides a consistent whole, but rather the way in which they function and the relationships they establish between each other" (1992, pp. 47– 48).

Box 4: Bird's eye-view of the Ruhr landscape

Photo by Massimiliano Lacertosa © European Creative Cities

Within Germany, the Ruhr stands out in having numerous inter-communal management systems and partnerships, a phenomenon that goes back to the 1920s.

The Regional Association Ruhr (Regionalverband Ruhr) is the "Ruhr Parliament" that collects the 53 member towns with the aim to guarantee regional consensus and fair coordination of interests within the region and the goal of improving living conditions in the conurbation of the Ruhr region. The Regional Association Ruhr is responsible forfor regional cluster projects such as the "Route Industriekultur" (the industrial heritage trail), the "Emscher Landschaftspark" (landscape park) and "Landmarken" (landmarks). Because the Ruhr was characterised by the concentration of industrial power but it lacked an adequate physical and institutional infrastructure, from 1920 Siedlungsverband Ruhrkohlnbezirk (SVR) was create to provide continuity within the region through coordinated spatial infrastructure. With the crisis of 1960s/70s the SVR strategy changed. (Houtum and Lagendijk, 2001). "In 1979 SVR was transformed into Kommunalverband Ruhrgebiet (KVR) with a new mandate in the areas of land and landscape protection, leisure and tourism, waste management and wood areas" (Houtum and Lagendijk, 2001: 756).

The Ruhr's industrial past has shaped the physical landscape, economic structure and social make-up of the area. In 1960, every eight employee one was working in the coal and steel industry, dropping to only one every 25 in the 1996. Because the industrial decline, by the late 1990s the Ruhr area was suffering from a lack of growth and jobs. There was insufficient investment, low competitiveness resulting from a below-average growth in productivity and lower than average growth in per capita income. Unemployment was relatively high (15%) and self-employment and business start-up rates were relatively low. Large parts of the area were designated as Objective 2 under the EU Structural Funds for the 2000–06 programming period.

Box 5: Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord

Photos by Massimiliano Lacertosa © European Creative Cities

Among the projects supported by EU Structural Funds, the Zollverein is one of the examples of a series of projects developed by IBA Emscher Park, a model of creative spatial development and a holistic ten years (1989 to 1999) top-down initiative of the Land NRW strategy to change the image of the Ruhr through the transformation of derelict brown-fields into industrial heritage able to combine in their spaces modern functions with creative design.

Today, Zollverein promotes diverse activities ranging from visitor attractions; training academy for management and design; quinquennial World Design Forum; and a business park with incubation facilities focused on design. Some data shows the positive outcomes of this culture-led strategy: 170 enterprises and around 1,000 new jobs have been created, about 70% of Zollverein companies belong to the creative sector, which is growing at the pace of 14% since 2006, twice that of other industry (http://www.zollverein.de).

Box 6: Zollverein World Heritage Site

Photos by Massimiliano Lacertosa © European Creative Cities

Zollverein, as much as all similar experiences around Europe, is a good case of the use of industrial heritage to transform the physical and conceptual landscape in productive and lively area, through the blend of cultural, creative and commercial elements in the same district (information taken from the report: Study on the contribution of Culture to local and regional development. Evidence from Structural Fund, 2010). Today the Ruhr boasts one of the densest composition of subsidised museums and cultural venues in the world: 120 theatres, 100 concert halls, 200 museums and over 1,000 industrial monuments, many of which have become attractive cultural sites. Meanwhile, the Ruhr Metropolis with its more than 20 universities has developed into one of the densest education and research sites.

The metropolitan area of the Ruhr has changed its face into a technological, economic, scientific

and cultural hub within the heart of Europe, thanks to a 20 year-long development strategy based on regional cooperation and the activation of renewed energies and resources. Started with the "economies of partnerships", which "were nurtured through new initiatives based on dialogue, moderation and the search for innovative concepts and processes, these initiatives were triggered by the wish to find new approaches to address the industrial crisis which has hit the area since the 1960s" (Van Houtum and Lagendijk, 2001: 758).

Even though this approach goes against traditional German planning culture, which is based on a strong and well-defined role of the public sector and the principle of hierarchy of places, in 2008 the initiative "Concept Ruhr" (see http://business.metropoleruhr.de) was launched. Being inspired by innovative models of regional development based on the capability of a place and the boosting of its inner creativity, 35 towns with a total population of 4.8 million have developed a common strategy for sustainable urban and regional development for the next ten years with the aim to make the Ruhr metropolitan region more attractive for new businesses and tourists as well. The strategic objectives of the "ruhrbasics" plan have been completed by a project list of 274 specific proposals. All the regional parliaments have approved the "Concept Ruhr". The "Concept Ruhr", which is based on regional consultation, public-private partnerships to develop projects and cooperation with state investments, has developed a common strategy based on five themes that will shape the countryside and the urban structure of the Metropolitan area of the Ruhr in the following ten years:

- ruhrlinesL: the East-West development axes;
- ruhrcitiesC: the quality of the city centres and city districts;
- ruhrexcellenceE: the development of high-quality industrial and property locations;
- ruhrinvestI: creating the framework conditions for further private investment;
- ruhreventsE: using high-quality events to enhance the region's profile.

Within the last theme "ruhreventsE", the title of European Capital of Culture 2010 is a practical example of how the "Concept Ruhr" strategy works. 53 cities around the Ruhr, under the name of "Essen for the Ruhr", actively participated to the program of the European Capital of Culture through the promotion of about 5.500 cultural events. Even though it is still too early to estimate the amount of positive impacts the mega-event had on the region, the overall program was especially appreciated for involving local communities in a common vision for their future. Moreover, it put not only Essen but the whole region back on the international map of tourism and business.

3.3 Lille and its métropole: a newfound hub in the core of Europe

Within 84 kilometres from the Belgian borders, the metropolitan area of Lille, together with the urban districts of Courtrai, Mouscron, Roselaere, Tournai and Ypres, forms a transnational urban agglomeration of around 1,9 million of inhabitants and comes second place in France in terms of population density and therefore the fourth conurbation in terms of size after Paris, Lyon and Marseilles. From the historical city centre, the city has expanded its urban fabric towards the periphery following a radial direction. In doing that, urbanisation has encountered other towns and cities centres unifying different poles under the same territorial net. The INSEE, National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies in France, acknowledges its cross-border dimension. Lille and its métropole is recognised as being one of the largest urban regions in Europe. The term "urban region" is used to identify those cities that have grown outside their original centres giving life to an urbanised territory that covers the main city and many other smaller centres around the city. In many cases, the urbanised area covers such a large territory that shares the same characteristics to be called region, i.e. the urban region.

Box 7: Radial model for Lille and its métropole

Available at: www.lillemetropole.fr
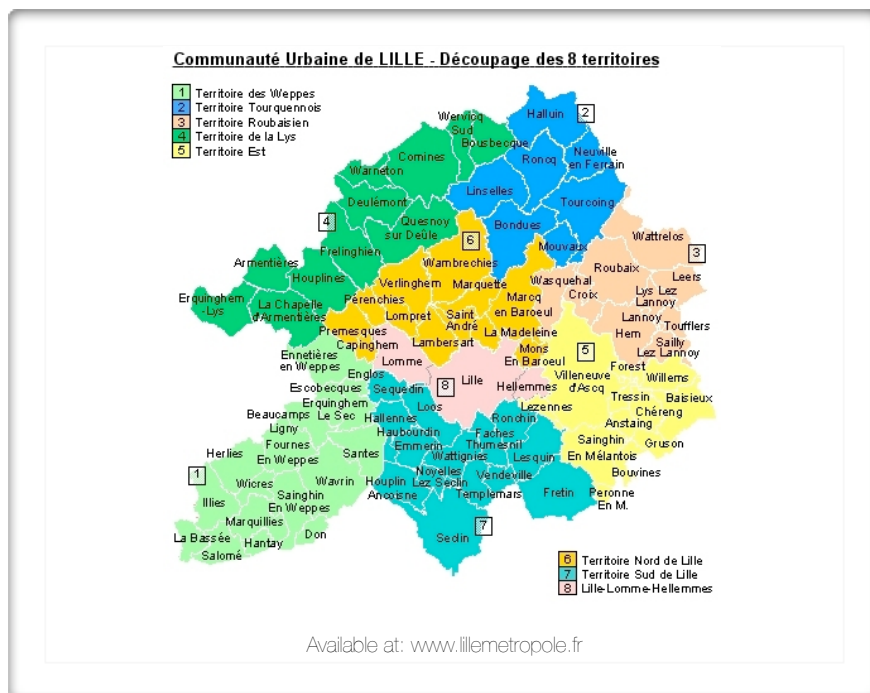
Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine is a public organisation of inter-municipal cooperation established by a parliamentary Act of 31st of December 1966 with the objective to overcome most of the disadvantages due to the division among municipalities within the same large urban agglomeration[3]. The structure, which includes around 85 municipalities from big cities to small villages, aims to develop the urban planning system and the governance of public services following the national directives for the reinforcement of inter-municipality.

Historically speaking, Lille and its surrounding territories became a functional region when, in the course of the 19th century, it was transformed from rural lands to the second largest textile region in the world (Fraser and Baert, 2003) and an important metallurgy hub thanks to the close-by location of coal mines. By 1858, Lille encompassing Roubaix and Turcoing had become the centre of the richest economic region in France, and the rapid pace of urbanisation led to the dependency and blending of the factories and housing into sprawl (Labadi, 2008).

After the Second World War Lille's industries began to decline. Over 40 years (1946–86) the Nord-Pas de Calais region lost 400,000 jobs and the process of deindustrialisation is still going on. According to INSEE, Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, unemployment rate grow from a 2,4% in 1968 to 13, 2% in 2006, while blue-collar workers decreased from representing the 45% of employees in the 1960s to only the 13,8% at the beginning of 2000s (INSEE, 2006). "Faced with poor job opportunities people have left not only the city but also the region" (Labadi, 2008: 84).

In the past 20 years Lille and its métropole has invested on finding a new vision for the region with the aim to shift Lille's future from a rundown former industrial region to a lively place where to live, do business and visit. Next to development of regional transport and in particular bringing the high-speed Eurostar and TGV services through Lille, the region has relied on the regional development strategy through the implementation of mega-event. After the unsuccessful bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games in the 1990s, Lille won the 2004 title of European Capital of Culture. This was an important sign for a region that would had never been associated with culture before.

Lille bid for the 2004 tile of European Capital of Culture of Culture proposing a core idea: a geographical integration of the whole region, with the participation of 193 cities of the Nord-Pas de Calais and also parts of Belgium, to ensure that the economic, cultural and social benefits were shared across this territory. This ensured that the scheme was devised in a sustainable manner so as to change the image of this northern region as a whole. Moreover, this regional integration allowed to unlocking investment from various French authorities, supplementing the resources obtained at the European level and attracting financial investment from Europe, the state, the region, the departments, the urban communities and all the cities involved. This general interest in the initiative has also induced many private companies to support the program.

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3 For more information about it visit http://www.lillemetropole.fr

As it happened for most of the previous cities that hosted the title of European Capital Of Culture, in the case of Lille and its region there was a shared interest in improving their image through the renovation of their historic and cultural buildings and the transformation former derelict buildings into new cultural spaces. Among all the projects promoted within the "metamorphose" program for Lille and the region, the Maison Folie is an interesting case of combining different ways of contributing to territorial development through culture. Twelve derelict industrial structures (former factories, mills, breweries, and so on) spread across the region (three are in Belgium) were rehabilitated and turned into cultural centres. These "Maisons Folie" have been conceived as unique cultural venues to be kept after 2004. As industrial structures, they embody the spirit of the northern region as well as the social, economic and cultural history of their local neighbourhoods. The Maisons Folie were also thought as containers of cutting edge architecture, worth conserving as touch of contemporary times. Most of these Maisons Folie, that host performance area, an exhibition venue, artists' workshops, a kitchen, dining room and multimedia space, are based in poorer city districts. The idea was to set cultural activities on the doorstep of people in lower socio-economic backgrounds with the aim to encourage people who do not tend to go to cultural places to visit them, especially as the old industrial buildings are symbols of the working class, rather than upper class intimidating cultural venues.

Box 8: Lille 2004, Maisons Folie

Photos by Massimiliano Lacertosa © European Creative Cities

The last aspect, together with the enlargement of the program to the regional level and the opening of the Maisons Folie, that should be highlighted about Lille 2004 it is their will to continue further the process already started with the year of European Capital of Culture further. "lille3000 - the voyage goes on" is a mix of art events and initiatives investigating multiple fields: the economy and new technologies, the art of living in the city and the construction of the city of tomorrow, spirituality, and more generally questions of society and civilisation.

3.4 Comparing three stories: the Basque Country, the Ruhr region and Lille and its métropole

The three cases illustrated in the chapter, namely the Basque Country, the Ruhr metropolitan region and Lille and its métropole, present some common aspects that are influent in their process of regional development and are interesting for the investigation of the case study later in the research work.

3.4.1 European peripheral regions and the industrial times

The three regions are all characterised as being "peripheral" regions within their country. In fact, in the Ruhr Region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métropole there are some big cities, mainly former industrial cities, but there are no capital or major cities that, until few decades ago, could not count all the range of services and infrastructure that a capital city should provide. Those regions were known only for being clusters of industries rather than for their history, culture or landscape. Of course Essen, Bilbao, Lille are all important centres today offering cultural activities, educational infrastructure, efficient health systems and well known bases for the global services economy.

From an European and economic perspective Lille and its métropole and the Ruhr are included in the European area recognised as centre of economic development and power, the *blue banana* and the *pentagon* where the economic activities are spatial concentrated. The Basque Country is cut out from the European economic centre of power and included in that category that was defined by Klaus Kunzmann the "metropolitan periphery" (2008).

If the Basque Country could count on a strong cultural identity that has kept together a territory also after the loss of its industrial identity, this was not the case for the other examples. The Ruhr region, before the implementation of coal mines in Germany, was a vast land of forests and small villages without many connections among them. Similar experience for Lille that grew as a proper city, with its own identity distinct from Paris, only when it became a major centre for textile industries in Europe during the XIX century. Once the industrial decline started to hit the regions, little resources, material and immaterial, were left to boost a recovery of the territories together with social and economic lift.

3.4.2 The polycentric character and their PUR strategy

Even though the Ruhr metropolitan region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métrople lack a very functional identity after their industrial decline, each region has one among geo-strategic, functional and cultural aspect of their identity, as PUR-Polycentric Urban Region, particularly developed. That aspect is set at the base to improve the remaining aspects that make up a complete PUR identity.

The three dimensions of the regional identity are all interdependent and they all contribute to the definition of a strategy for a polycentric territory that should permit higher levels of economic competitiveness and higher levels of social cohesion and, at the same time, guaranteeing the sustainability of environmental and cultural systems.

Box 9: Comparing PUR identity in three European examples

	strategic identity	functional identity	cultural identity
Ruhr region	Imposed by the central government not to have any strategic power. Today they are investing in finding a new geo-strategic perspective.	Industrial production of steel and coal. Regional infrastructure highly developed but based on industries' needs.	In need to review its identity that it is not only related to the industrial production of the region.
Basque Country	Looking to find a place within competitive Europe, strategically positioning the Basque Country above Spanish cities.	In need of some structured functional services to improve access, mobility and new developments in the region.	Strong cultural identity (ideology) that supported industrial growth and decline at the political level.
Lille and its métropole	Natural geo-strategic position in Europe that need to be exploited.	Since the industrial decline lacking a functional identity.	Looking to renew its identity as a multicultural place.

Whilst most of the territories that grew into a polycentric urban region thanks to the industrial boom are today loosing their functionality (see the Ruhr region as extreme case), it should also be noticed that in some cases one of the three aspects of PUR acquires renewed meanings and act as driver for future development, such as the geo-strategic position of Lille and its métropole. In all the cases it is clear that the PUR-Polycentric Urban Region is a strategy that contribute to strategic and functional unity to the region, while culture identity helps to maintain the stability of the framework in which the strategy is implemented.

A polycentric urban region can count on a strong functional identity when there is coherence (economic, political or social) among the cities involved in the spatial agglomeration. Functional integration among cities is strategic because itself justifies PUR strategies, even though it is not important what is the level of integration but rather what is the common vision on which functionality can be built on. The Ruhr region is a great example of development of a regional functional identity within the territory based on a distinct economic specialisation for the production of coal and steel. The group of cities in the Ruhr territory got together not to become stronger jointly, but to create a network structure with its own specific functions (Neuschwander and Berthe, 1992). Functional interaction is supported by one of the densest infrastructure systems in the world and by a great variety of institutional networks. Whilst the functional identity did support the industrial boom, today there is the need to improve the strategic and cultural aspect in order to develop the region further. The Ruhr region does have a strategic position in Europe, being on its major axis of development, but, at the same time, it lacks strategic power. Today, a strong cultural identity not only based on their industrial production could also contribute to make the region more reliable from both insiders and outsiders.

It is necessary to keep in mind that a PUR is an image of a given structure given to a territory. In this context the cultural dimension of a region can be considered as a strategic component, because it allows to make the PUR, a given invented structure, real. A shared cultural background within the same PUR makes it something which is distinguished by the "others" (other regions, cities, territories), contributing to make the territory under investigation more competitive. As argued by Anderson (1983), the cultural identity of a community, and therefore of a region, is not a static phenomenon. It is a dynamic and ongoing process, through which the collective consciousness of belonging and imagination of citizens in a given community may be strengthened. A strong regional identity based on culture means the existing of shared values and experiences. Symbols (names like labels, maps, iconic buildings, landmarks), heritage (arts, architecture, nature), languages, festivals, are all factors intrinsic the territory that contribute to the creation of a territorial subject out of a PUR strategy. The Basque Country has an important cultural identity based on ideology, language, folklore. that has characterised the Basque territories even before they were officially declared an administrative region. The industrial boom was supported by the cultural identity that kept people, institutions, companies indeed united in a shared vision. In the years, the Basque Country has constructed a strategic identity (the institution of an autonomous region, a new comprehensive planning

system, internationalisation of the region) with the aim to push a definition of a better functionality among the diverse centres of the region.

The strategic component of a polycentric urban region can be found in the search for a common vision. The identification of a subject territory with a vision matched to a real spatial image, which is often represented by proximity in geographical maps, allows the polycentric urban region to strengthen its strategic component both internally and externally. Strategies of territorial development based on PUR often stress the location of the area on major European development axis and/or in international urban systems and corridors, while locally promote internal synergetic advantages through the creation of relations between cities of the PUR. The city of Lille and its métropole boasts a prime geo-strategic identity because its position on the European map. Being at the heart of a triangle including three major global cities (London, Brussels and Paris) and the consequent proximity with important European markets have always been added values for the flourishing of different activities. Today Lille finds itself in need to exploit its strategic identity through a functionality that would take advantage of it. Because its ambition of becoming a new hub for the Euro-zone affairs, cultural identity would contribute to make this ambition more solid through cultural ties that could help to keep together a territory that tend to look outside to London, Paris and Brussels, avoiding to build its own identity.

3.4.3 Long term regional strategies to further regional development

The three cases have developed specific strategies for the future development of the region that have highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for deliver sustainable outcomes. Starting from the profound need of reinventing themselves, in most of the cases strategies have been based on the boost of innovation and technology, creative industries, culture, soft economy with strong emphasis to the increasing of regional competitiveness through place marketing, internationalisation and the repositioning of the region on a global scale.

The territorial development strategy for the Basque autonomous region, the "Basque Regional Strategy", was one of the first (1990s) territorial development visions for polycentric urban regions. The key idea of this strategy, also known as "Basque Global City", was aimed at developing the networking between its three main cities (Bilbao, San Sebastian and Vitoria). After a first stage that saw the physical regeneration of the region, the strategy has invested on improving the overall quality of the region through the beautification of the landscape, the Basque Plan for Culture and the bid for becoming European Capital of Culture in 2016 with San Sebastian representing it.

Even though there had been many projects involving the whole region in the previous two decades, such as the improvement of the landscape through the IBA Emsher Park project, and the foundation of regional-based institutions to run regional development, such as Ruhr

Regional Association (RVR), the Ruhr metropolitan region had to wait until 2008 to have its own strategy for regional development represented by the initiative "Concept Ruhr". The latter is a common strategy of urban and regional development, marked by the preceding framework and constituting the joint efforts of cities and districts.

In the case of Lille and its métropole an attempt to promote regional development, rather than single-city development, started in 1968 with the creation of Lille Métropole Communautè Urbaine (LMCU). LMCU forms the centre of the administrative and political framework for the management and development of the French part of the area with the purpose of planning and coordinating the main metropolitan public services and is responsible for planning strategy, investment, economic development, environmental services and urban regeneration. Among the sub-strategies, following the experience of Lille European Capital of Culture in 2004, Lille3000 was founded with the idea to continue the efforts already put in place in 2004, through the investigation of multiple fields such as the economy and new technologies, the art of living in the city and the construction of the city of tomorrow, spirituality, and more generally questions of society and civilisation.

The three cases show the importance given to the implementation of a comprehensive strategy for regional development that ranges from physical improvement of the region, the growth of the economic sector, to "soft" objectives regarding identity, culture and innovation in all the fields.

3.4.4 Cultural mega-event and major cultural projects

The changing from a regional development only based on the economic growth of the region to a more comprehensive approach to regional development that stresses the importance of intangible factors has led the Ruhr metropolitan region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métropole to review traditional concepts and their application , such as for the one of culture. As it has been shown in the case of the Basque Country, a broader definition of the concept of culture and the drawing of a policy framework for cultural policy (Plan Vasco de la Cultura) has allowed the use of culture as a strategic factor applied to many aspects of regional development, especially with regards to social issues, space beautification and place marketing objectives for the overall qualitative improvement of the region.

Many investments have gone to urban regeneration of existing industrial districts, such as the program IBA Emsher Park in the Ruhr region, and to quality architecture through the attraction of world renown architects to design public and private buildings, such as the Guggenheim museum by Frank Gehry in Bilbao.

Available at http:// www.lille3000.eu

Available at http://www.ruhr2010.de

Available at www.sansebastian2016.eu
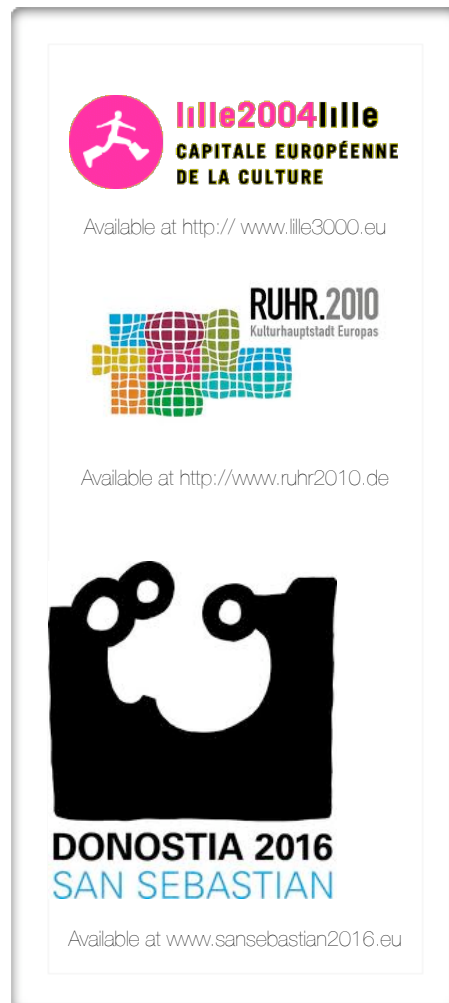
Cultural mega event, such as the European Capital of Culture, seems to be a strategy widely adopted by regions looking to find and promote a new image tied to culture rather than to their industrial past.

Among the objectives of EU agenda for Culture there is no direct reference to the relation of culture with its territory and the role that culture could have in promoting a sustainable development of the territory, however is seems to be the main driver of all the recent ECoC experiences, as the cases of Lille 2004 and Essen for the Ruhr 2010 demonstrated. On the same trajectory, Denosta-San Sebastian 2016.

The common characteristics of their program are the opening from a single city to and involvement of the surrounding region, an attention to their common industrial heritage as starting point for the regeneration of rundown areas from a social, economic and physical perspective and communicating a new image of the region for both insiders and outsiders

CHAPTER 4

Conceptual framework: regions and culture in local and regional development

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4.1 Introduction

This first chapter provides a theoretical framework to the case study, looking at the concept of "region", the process of industrialisation of some European regions and the consequent crisis hitting the industrial system. From a planning perspective the focus lies on the need for regions today to review traditional ways of doing planning in favour of a more articulated and open-minded approach.

In the scenario of a fast changing XXI century, the understanding of a territory is not only based on a set of objective data such as the size of a territory or the number of its inhabitants. Typology of existing international connections and relationships, number of commuters per day, entrances and exits to/from the city, average length of residence in a place and social disparities

should be considered. Territories are not seen as static images on a map anymore but as containers of continuos fluxes of information, objects and people that keep floating around places creating non-places of connections and events.

Hence, the aim of this chapter is to offer a literature review of the topic, highlighting those aspects that characterised the three regions presented in the previous chapter and make them comparable experiences. First of all, they all define themselves and are known as "regions"; secondly their history of territorial development are very similar especially for the last century; there are also many similarities in their spatial development pattern; and all of them have adopted innovative regional development strategies to overcome crisis.

The chapter continues observing that, in times of changes and crisis, a profound reflection over the practice of urban planning is needed to face new challenges of regions and cities today.

More than two decades ago, Ken Corey stated that "urban and regional planning practice throughout many of the world's industrial market economies is in a state of paradigm challenge. In essence, the crisis exists because old planning procedures of how the industrial city functions don't seem to apply for today and tomorrow" (1987: 121). Few years later John Friedmann (1993) suggested the need of "non Euclidean" forms of planning that recognise the existence of "many time-space geographies" within cities and places. Since then, it has been observed how relational rather than absolute theories of time-space are rapidly gaining influence in geography, urban studies, and social theory (Harvey, 1996; Hwang, 1996) and how these new approaches are becoming more coherent with the world we live in today.

In such a territorial complexity, those regions in need of a throughout re-organisation of their urban order have often acted as laboratories for experimenting new urban planning practices and implement innovative strategies for sustainable regional development. As suggested by Pasty Healey, "we should choose and implement those strategies that treat the territory of the urban not just as a container in which things happen, but as a complex mixture of nodes and networks, places and flows, in which multiple relations, activities and values co-exist, interact, combine, conflict, oppress and generate creative synergy" (2007: 1). Healey' statement is supported by some reflections she carried out together with her colleague Steve Graham few years before. Steve Graham and Patsy Healey give few rules to drive planning practice today. First, planning must consider relations and processes rather than objects and forms; second, planning practice must stress the multiple meanings of space and time; third, planning practice needs to represent places as multiple layers of relational assets and resources, which generate a distinctive power geometry of places; finally, in this multiplex world, planning practice should recognise how the relations within and between the layers of the power geometries of place are actively negotiated by the power of agency though communication and interpretation (Graham and Healey, 1999).

New models of regional development have become crucial when discussing about economic, environmental and social development, overall territorial development of a place. Traditional ways of planning, therefore, need to be reappraised, especially when dealing with polynucleated metropolitan regions. In fact, where the existence of regions with such peculiarities outlined above has been accepted, as meaningful entities, it becomes controversial when looking at the

political/administrative situation that see local authorities in the region usually ignoring it. During the past fifty years, the debate over the topic has flourished and still continues to interest urban planners, economists and sociologists and, nevertheless, politicians. Especially today, in a time in which central governments are finding it increasingly difficult to deal with the varied needs of all the different localities that they oversee, when they are often marked by quite idiosyncratic social relationship and faced with important new task for local political integration and representation (Scott et al., 1991).

In the next paragraphs I will go through some recent interpretation of regional dynamics and proposing new strategies for regional development.

Starting from a reflection over the "social innovative region", it will be discussed how in a community-based territorial-development approach concepts such as culture, capital, governance, innovative strategies and organisational change receive renewed meanings. The understanding of the value of such concepts has contributed to the definition of new models of regional development, which are not only based on economic growth. Territories acquire new content of socio-cultural values and traces of the local history are set as basis for their future sustainable development. New approaches to territorial development, such as strategic spatial planning, are introduced in order to embrace all these factors that were not considered before when dealing with urban planning.

Among all the changes, there is a need to reconsider the way territories are governed and policies delivered. The introduction of culture and creativity in policies for territorial development is an example of the changing of the set of priorities in regional governance landscape and the main topic of this research work.

Within the European and the planning frameworks, the study continues with an overview of existing policies and processes that deal with culture, creativity, arts and that have spatial implications on the territories where they are implemented. Different levels of territorial governance are taken into account, from European cultural policies and programs to the local ones, with preference to those policies and procedures with a regional scope.

In recent times culture has been proved to be a catalyst for the improvement of social and economic life in urbanised areas. From the 1970s, culture started to be used as a strategic factor for drawing development plans, it has been recognised as an important resource available in order to generate added value on both the economic/productive (Porter, 1990) and social (Matarasso, 1997) side of development.

Different strategies have been implemented or proposed with the belief that culture, and all the related fields of actions, can add value to the development of territories. Following this trend, some authors have included culture in the discussion on territorial development (Bianchini, 1993; Evans, 2001; Florida, 2002 and 2008; Landry, 2000).

Looking at the literature and materials available, it is difficult to compare different approaches to the role of culture in territorial development as there is still some confusion about the definition of cultural policies and the concepts and actions that they can include (Bennet, 1992; Kawashima, 1995;   Gray, 1996; Gordon and Mundy, 2001; Mercer, 2002). Nina Obuljen

observed that "while it is fair to say that each area of policy – economic, social and so on – has its own unique aspects, additional problems arise in cultural policy, because its content and scope is defined differently in specific states or traditions, often a consequence of the numerous definitions of the term "culture" itself" (2005: 18). A elementary definition of cultural policy is the one given by Geir Vestheim (2009), "for cultural and administrative purposes, cultural policy means a number of activities, which are brought together within a sector, which in its turn is randomly defined category into which given activities are placed and called culture, while other activities or products are kept away and are, not to be considered as culture". This uncertainty mainly derives from the existence of different definitions of culture, which has been periodically redefined according to changes and challenges of the time.

4.2   Regions and regional development

4.2.1 Understanding the variety of meanings associated with the concept of region

The word region is used in many different areas of study and it is not a novelty at all in fields such as urban planning, territorial economy and urban sociology; still there is a confused understanding of the concept of region. When searching for a sound definition of the concept of "region" a manifold panorama opens up. Since the beginning of the XX century the phenomena of urbanisation as consequence of the industrial boom interested many authors who tried to define the new face of territories. Several new concepts were introduced in the urban planning and urban economy literature. Among all, concepts like urban region[4], mega-city-region[5], dispersed city[6], polynucleated region[7] started to be associated with the definition of territories.
Going through the literature available on the topic, it is interesting to note that authors tend to define territories characterised by the phenomena described above as "regions". The argument that justifies why the concept of region suits well the spread urbanisation of the XX century can be initially found in the most extensive definition of region, the mathematical one: a region appears as a mental construction, which enables us to confine, generalise and deal with given clusters of problems. More precisely, according to the Webster's College Dictionary, a region is a "systematic treatment of magnitude, relationships between objects and forms, and the relationship between quantities expressed symbolically". As it will be explained later in the text, the mathematical definition of region well fits with the spatial planning and urban development

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4 Peter Self considers urban regions territories "where 1 million of people live and characterised by, in planning terms, forces that reduce population within urban cores and produce rapid growth in peripheral areas" (1982: 3).

5 The concept of mega-city-region has been developed by Peter Hall and Kaithy Pain (2006) who defines it as "a series of anything between 10 and 50 cities and towns, physically separate but functionally networked, clustered around one or more larger central cities, and drawing enormous economic strength from a new functional division of labour. These places exist both as separate entities, in which most residents work locally and most workers are local residents, and as a parts of a wider functional urban region connected by flows of people and information carried along motorways, high-speed rail lines and telecommunications cables".

6 The dispersed city refers to a group of politically discrete cities which, although separated by tract of agricultural land, function together economically as a single urban unit (Stafford, 1962).

7 The polynucleated metropolitan region is defined as "a large urban region that does not contain a primate city" (Dieleman & Faludi, 1998: 366).

domain[8], which adopts a very open definition of region. This openness allows the reader to understand a territory as a set of forms, objects, ideas, connections and issues rather than as a sectorial independent entity. The fact that the concept of region does not insist on the homogeneous character of a territory but rather on its common aspects and diversities gathered under the same concept, makes this concept suitable for the definition of processes of urban development involving changes at different levels: territorial, economic, social and political. Hence, regions are interesting to be investigated in the eye of the spatial planning and urban development domain as many of them, especially those which have grown very rapidly, have problems of diffused and disorderly urbanisation, difficulties to articulate efficient public transportation systems, imbalances between the location of residential and working areas, lack of identity of the different zones of the region, difficulties in the governance of the territory and administrative fragmentation. At the same time within the same region cities share resources, culture, and potentials.

Two macro-categories are identified to sum up the countless definitions of region: the administrative definitions of region and the non-administrative definitions of regions. This division can be translated with two different notions: the concept of the container space and the relational space concept.

In the first notion, the container space, space exists independently of material bodies, like a box that is filled with objects. An example is the national territory, as the predetermined space/container "filled" with people and objects. Looking at the geo-political tradition of European states, a region is understood as an administrative district of a country that is more or less dependent on the national states, in terms of funding, laws and actions. For instance Italy is divided into 20 regioni, France into 26 régions, England into 9 regions and Germany into 16 Länder. Each country has its own definition of administrative region with diverse competencies, rights, and obligations.

The importance of recognising formalised regions across Europe is one tangible expression of the importance of the concept of region nowadays. The search for region-wide coalitions as a means of dealing has existed since long time ago (provinces, Lander, counties, municipalities). At the present time, because the threats and the opportunities coming up with globalisation trends, some forms of consolidation as adjacent units of local political organisation are becoming more visible, such as the definition of metropolitan areas and départementes.

Administrative regions do exist also at the European level of power. The increasing importance of European Regions is related to the 2004 and 2007 enlargements, the attendant increase in the economic and social inequalities within the European Union (EU) and the increasingly posing of the question of levelling spatial disparities. The line of enquiry, for instance, addresses the impact of growing regional inequalities within the new member states on the "overall balance"

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8 For spatial planning and urban development domain I mean that field of study that embraces the planning of space and the study of processes of urban development. Spatial Planning and Urban Development (SPUD) is also the title of the PhD program promoted by the Department of Architecture and Planning of the Politecnico di Milano for which this research work is written.

and hence the total dynamics at the various territorial levels. To overcome this uneven status several funding programs have been established. To facilitate the distribution of financial resources, the European Union has introduced its own administrative regions - NUTS[9] of diverse levels, and divided accordingly proximity and other factors. This has been the result of a long process that has seen regions to have mounting importance since the 1980s, and it has also been reflected at the political-institutional level with, for example, the founding of the "Assembly of European Regions"[10] in the mid-eighties and the intensification of EU/EC regional policy, and finally the resolution contained in the Maastricht Treaty (1991) to set up official representation at EU level with the "Committee of the Regions"[11].

In the more recent relational space concept, on the other hand, space does not exist as a reality in its own right but is a "relational scheme of physical objects". Regions are more than labels attached to territories. When professor Van der Knaap was asked whether regions still exist in times of globalisation, he observed that "if you talk about a region you talk about a fluid spatial structure and not only fluid in the sense that the boundary is not fixed but also because the activities are not fixed" (2002: 67). Bert Van der Knaap carries on claiming that "regions are not physical at all […] regions are mindsets. They are constructing social space […] the problem in this concept is that you have to link it to real space. It is a social construct, so you have to identify what is the mindset, the frame of reference of those who are constructing it [...] regions are social constructions but on the other hand regions are real" (2002: 69-71).

Evert Meijers reinforces this standpoint suggesting that the concept of region can be distinguished into two main strands: the physical or spatial region, which could be described as the physical characterisation of the area that defines it from its contiguous areas, and the societal activity and process within the spatial region, which is intended as the historical transformation of cultures and societies within the physical region and concerns for instance processes of economics, trade, politics, war, urbanisation and globalisation (Meijers et al., 2003). The idea of recognising the region as a socially constructed phenomenon is also supported by Patsy Healey for whom the region must be "summoned up", evoking Kevin Lynch's idea in his book Managing the Sense of a Region (1976). Patsy Healey, in her study of three European city regions, insists on the fact that a region is less a physical, bounded reality than a shared idea and a place where many people are linked though relational webs (Healey, 2007).

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9 The NUTS - Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics - classification is a hierarchical system for dividing up the economic territory of the EU for the purpose of the collection, development and harmonisation of EU regional statistics; socio-economic analyses of the regions; and for framing of EU regional policies. NUTS 1: major socio-economic regions; NUTS 2: basic regions for the application of regional policies; NUTS 3: as small regions for specific diagnoses.

10 For more information, visit http://www.are-regions-europe.org/index.html

11 The Maastricht Treaty laid down five policy fields (elaborated in the Amsterdam Treaty) where the Commission and the Council must obtain the Committee of the Regions' opinion in the case of legislative proposals. This also includes the fields of culture and education - cf. also the corresponding spot in the article on culture (cig 86/04, provisional consolidated version of the draft treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, Article III-181 (ex Article 151 TEC). For more information visit, http://www.cor.eu.int/

In addition to the two macrocategories, container and relational, region can also be understood as a large urbanised territory that unified several cities under the continuity of its urban fabric, an urban agglomeration. The most famous examples of urban regions are those of global cities that are both historically large urban agglomerations (Paris, London, New York, etc.) or cities fast-paced expanding their traditional borders (Shanghai, Brasilia, Mexico City, etc.).

4.2.2 From rural, through industrial, to service-based economy: spread industrialisation, sprawl and dispersed urbanisation

Another aspect that makes several regions around Europe comparable cases is their common process of regional development of the past century and their history very tied to the fast spread industrialisation taking place in their territories and the consequent crisis that led their economy to decline.

Since the Fordist times, marked by industrial mass production, vertical institutionalisation, realignment of the relationship between work and capital, and national-economic redistribution through social legislation and the welfare state, nation states have been characterised by uneven equal regional development. The disparity in the distribution of resources and opportunities among different parts (regions) within the same country was due to the concentration of national efforts only in specific sites where the industrialisation was likely to growth and generate economic virtuous cycles. Such unequal regional developments as did arise had to be moderated through targeted structural policy aimed at equalisation, such as the settlement of industrial sites in less developed regions, which means the economic potentials were diverted from prospering regions into disadvantaged regions.

After World War II, following the post-Fordism time, public administrations were fascinated by this incredible industrial boom and gave priorities to economic growth when co-ordinating the urban expansion of cities and regions, leaving little out the social and environmental sustainability of the industrialisation processes. According to Palermo and Ponzini "the pure logic of market economy seems to be applied to urban reality. The strength and the dominant interests, the chronic difficulties with local public investments, and the uncertainty of any strategy that is more complex and innovative still favour the tendency to identify development with quantitative growth in the real estate market and economic activities, and therefore with an ability to attract exogenous investments". The two authors carry on in their critical perspective on spatial planning and urban development, recalling that sustainability of financial policies is important. However, "merely quantitative models regarding the production of wealth do not always guarantee environmental and social sustainability. Indeed they could be the source of negative effects after some short-term benefits" (Palermo and Ponzini, 2010: 137).

The neoliberal, and before that the Fordist, approach has had important consequences on the ways territories have developed. The physical change of cities has come along to a functional change that can be found also in regions. Marco Bontje observes a "process of continuos de-concentration of population, work, services" during the post-war period in Northwest Europe (2001: 770). As suggested by Evert Meijers, "a permanent outward moving process of urban functions encompasses wider and wider areas and includes growing numbers of formerly free-standing towns and villages" (Meijers et al., 2003: 14).

This process can be generalised to most parts of Europe. Over the time, cities have expanded their borders, taking industrial production, housing and other services (shopping malls, sport facilities, health institutions, education) also outside cities, creating an agglomeration of small-medium sized cities, which are more or less connected among them and with capital cities of the area.

As it has been said before, this has become a familiar landscape around Europe and the United States and it has been studied by several authors since the second half of the 20th century. The concept which describes this phenomenon dates back to Jean Gottman's Megalopolis (1961), word derived from the Greek and meaning "very large city," adopted by the American author to describe the emerging economic hub existing on the U.S. Northeast Corridor from Boston to Washington. Only few years later the concept of megalopolis was reviewed and renamed by Ian Burton (1963) who introduced the dispersed city, which consists of a number of discrete or physically (but not necessarily politically) separated urban centres in close proximity to each other and functionally interrelated, although usually separated by tracts of non-urban land. In the same years John Friedmann and John Miller (1965) published the article "The Urban Field", which overcomes the traditional idea of separated concept of town and countryside, of rural and urban regions, of city and periphery, replacing it with the concept of urban field based on interdependency between different urban regions. Jean Gottman's megalopolis (1961), Ian Burton's dispersed city (1963), Clarence Stein's regional city (1964) and John Friedman and John Miller's urban field (1965) were all approaches able to represent the spatial trends of the time, being set in sharp contrast with the then popular theory of central place of Walter Christaller (1933) and August Lösh (1954).

At the same time these views did not manage to capture spatial interdependencies, which had been addressed lately in urban planning and urban economics literature. The objectives of such reflection on the topic was to demonstrate that megalopolis, dispersed city, urban field, regional city function together economically as a single urban unit. Many other authors challenge themselves in the task of outlining the best description of such a spatial tendency of dispersal in the European and American territorial pattern: city system (Pred, 1977), città diffusa (Indovina et al., 1990); city networks[12] (Camagni and Salone, 1993); network cities (Batten, 1995); polynucleated metropolitan region (Dieleman and Faludi, 1998); città infinita (Bonomi and

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12 The term "city networks" have mainly two different meanings: systems of distant cities linked to each other by some functional characteristic and a system of proximal cities more or less located within each others' functional hinterlands. Polycentric urban regions are city networks in the latter meaning.

Abruzzese, 2004); mega-city-region (Hall and Pain, 2006). "Global city-regions - here a further attribute to "region" - have emerged of late years as a new and critically important kind of geographic and institutional phenomenon on the world stage" (Scott et al., 2001: 12).

Within this context, it is possible to note a fragmentation of territories. The fragmentation argument is sustained by urban planners when "still administratively independent, the cities in these emerging polycentric urban regions tend to loose their independence as functional systems: their labour markets, housing markets, leisure markets, and other urban functional markets scale up towards the regional level. Interconnected by mobility patterns with extending spatial scopes, these new urban configurations tends to develop functionally into urban networks" (Meijers et al., 2003: 16). According to Manuel Castells, "a network is a set of interconnected nodes […] what a node is, concretely speaking, depends on the kind of concrete networks of which we speak. […] the topology defined by networks determines that the distance (or intensity and frequency of interaction) between two points (or social positions) is shorter (or more frequent, or more intense) if both points are nodes in a network than if they do not belong to the same network" (Castells, 1996: 470). A network of cities is a system where nodes are the cities (o groups of cities) and the links are the relationships of dependence among them. Such dependencies can exist among different or similar functions or a combination of both of the them. What is peculiar of the network system is that the interactions among cities (nodes) can contribute to the creation of advantages (positive externalities) for the members of the network (Trullén and Boix, 2001: 5). There are different kinds of networks: horizontal, vertical and polycentric networks (Dematteis, 1990 and 1991), based on synergies or on the principle of complementarity (Camagni and Salone, 1993), according to the kind of externalities produced, connecting networks - interconnections, transmission of flows and creative networks - nodes do have a creative and intelligence function (Albrechts and Lievois, 2004).

In the European framework some examples of the phenomenon described above can be easily found in "countries in the Northwest of the continent. Particularly the Netherlands (the Randstad[13]), Belgium (the Flemish Diamond), the state of Northrhine-Westphalisa in Germany "show a dispersed patterns of urbanisation, and that pattern is quite pronounced. There, numerous cities of moderate size are located in densely populated areas, often in close proximity […] the suburbanisation of the last three decades has created overlapping commuter sheds surrounding the individual cities. Therefore, groups of cities in some regions in Northwest Europe are often perceived as a single functional unit" (Dieleman and Faludi, 1998: 365).

Even though the pattern of urban development is quite similar in many European cases it is evident how diverse each region is from the others with regard to their functionality or spatial distribution.

For example two outstanding cases in the world of polycentric city regions are the neighbouring

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13 Old concept, existing since the 1930s and indicating the core of the country regions like those three should be considered as one functional whole, to do so would enhance their position in the hierarchy of cities. Of course they would never compete with major centres like London or Paris. Even so, regions like the Randstad can do quite well economically.

Ruhr in Germany and Randstad in Netherlands. The difference lies on the specialisation of the functions in the region. The Randstad is a phenomenon of a specialised kind of polycentric city region: Rotterdam is the port and the commercial city, Den Hague the city of governments, and Amsterdam is tourism and specialised services. In the case of the Ruhr its cities are insufficiently distinguished from each other. The German polycentric region grew up to produce coal and heavy engineering for the rest of Europe.

The industrial boom of the late XIX centuries that continued until the post Second World War period brought new richness to European nation states that spoiled natural resources, lands, human workforce locally, leaving to capital cities the benefit of the increased richness of the country.

The course of history saw the decline of the mass industrial production around Europe over the second half of the Twentieth century, in between the end of the Second Word War and the 1980s. This period was marked by the decline of industrial production in favour of an economy based on the third sector. The city did not escape the rise of the weightless economy, which characterised the world economy (Rifkin, 2000). Regions and cities were deeply affected by these changes on different levels. In a very short time many industriesstopped or began to outsource their production, the workforce of low-skilled employees working in factories was made redundant and unable to take up the requirements of the new service economy, many industrial buildings and warehouses were emptied, infrastructure became obsolete making the already existing connections inadequate for the contemporary city.

Cities and regions around Europe faced this decisive historical moment in diverse ways, according the resources available and their vision for the future. Those places that have always been the first beneficiaries of the industrial richness and that have been used to following the course of history and changing according the times, cities like London, Paris, Milan, Brussels did not have so many problems to adapt themselves to the challenges of the new economy, to find new use for industrial sites, to attract a new working class made up of white collars and to find new jobs for former industrial workers. Manufacturing jobs ceased to exist as primary source of employment and they were often replaced by work to do with the distribution and selling of goods, rather than the production of things. Moreover, in big cities the areas concerned with the crisis most of the times was limited to some specific districts that could be regenerated in short time. What about those large territories that did not have historically the resources to fight this important crisis?

Regions and cities that experienced their fast progress based only on the industrial production have had more difficulties to deal with high unemployment figures, unpleasant image of the place made up of dull and gloomy cities, with historical city centres surrounded by industrial buildings, soulless working-class districts and unhealthy pollution. What was missing in those places was a clear structure and identity from which to start a new cycle of urban development.

4.2.3 Reviewing the traditional approach to regional development

"With the rise (or return) of "Regionalism", the study of regional development and policy has once again become a major focus in social science spatial analysis" (Moulaert and Mehmood, 2009: 104). Since the first reflections on New Regionalism in the 1990s (Markusen, 1987; Courchene, 1995; Keating, 1998; Rodriguez-Pose and Gill, 2003) different discourses ad approaches have come about leading to a double understanding of New Regionalism today, that are going to be explained later in this paragraph. To put the New Regionalism in a nutshell, it can be explained as a renewal of interest in regional programs as a response to increased global economic integration and competition.

According to the regionalism approach among vital ingredients for economic growth and urban development there is territorial competition, which "is concerned with promoting the territory as a competitive place to do business and may be more directed at improving the environment for existing local businesses and fostering new firm formation" (Cheshire and Gordon, 1998: 322). Evert Meijers stresses this idea that "regions, in general, are becoming the most spatial level of international territorial competition" (Meijers, 2005: 765). In addition, polycentric urban regions are believed to be the next stage in the expansion of urban living space (Meijers, 2005; Storper, 1995; Scott, 1998). When debating about competition and improving the competitive position, there was seldom reference to improving the non-(market) economic dimensions of the quality of life in local communities or territories. In recent times several authors and leading international institutions, such as the European Union, have started to discuss whether territorial development, in the long term, and territorial competitiveness are more than just economic achievements of a region. Competition is also based on the capacity of a place to attract and maintain resources, people and ideas, and therefore to promote a sustainable development, as "healthy territory" offers strong factors of competitiveness. In fact, urban competitiveness can also be conceived "as the capacity for a space to offer quality of life and "well-being" to its users and to maintain a sustainable development dynamic in relation to others" (Costa, Seixas and Roldão, 2009: 11).

In light of the above reflections, New Regionalism can be understood through two perspectives: the so called neo-liberal approach and the social-democratic one.

The first perspective, the neo-liberal approach, follows the initial principles of New Regionalism and sees the increasing importance of regions on changing the scale. In this process of rescaling – deterritorialisation and territorialisation- "the spatial scale has to be understood as something that is produced historically [...] through the continuous reshuffling and reorganisations of spatial scale as an integral part of social strategies and struggles for control and empowerment" (Swingedouw, 2000: 70).

The process of rescaling is manly about the national states loosing influence in favour of transnational networks and the resurgence of region-based economic and political organisation;

an enlargement of the traditional view combined to a need of proximity. Here comes about the pivotal concept of "clustering", which stands for the propensity for given types of economic activity (manufacturing and services sectors alike) to gather together in dense locational clusters, also well known as industrial districts.

Several authors (Aydalot, 1986; Porter, 1990; Saxenian, 1994; Morgan, 1997; Cooke, 1998) have appointed as flagships of this category of New Regionalism the TIMs – Territorial Innovation Models, which "are models of regional innovation in which local institutional dynamics play a significant role as catalysts in innovative development strategies. […] Accordingly to the rhetoric of TIM, quality of life in local and regional communities depends on the growth of prosperity and will appear as positive externalities of higher economic growth; no distinction is made between well-being and growth, between community culture and business climate" (Moulaert and Mehmood, 2009: 105).

The approach that sees economic growth as the only objective to be pursued has been recently criticised for having a narrow view of regional development policy. Cultural, educational, transportation, urban development policies, all become more or less subjected to market competitiveness and lose the raison d'être and policy purpose specific to their own logic in contributing to the cultural, educational, environmental emancipation of human beings, and their social groupings (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2005).

In several studies Frank Moulaert (Moulaert and Mehmood, 2008, 2009; Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2005) has pointed out how over the past 20 years regional development has been addressed mainly through the bird's-eye-view of territorial and especially regional innovation models, the spearheads of the so-called "New Regionalism" movement. The second perspective, the so called social democratic perspective, which aims to be recognised as the new face of New Regionalism, stands on a very different perspective than the TIMs model and grows out from the intermediate step of the Learning Region[14]. The social democratic perspective criticises the neo-liberal approach pointing out its lacks. This new approach, mainly theorised by Frank Moulaert, is based on the social geography of global city-regions. It identifies three striking outcomes that dominate the localised effects of globalisation and economic restructuring:

- increased cultural and demographic heterogeneity induced primarily by large scale migration into global city-regions;
- pronounced change in the spatial morphology of global city-regions. Whereas most metropolitan regions in the past were focused mainly on one or perhaps two clearly defined central cities, the city-regions of today are becoming increasingly polycentric or multiclustered agglomeration (Scott et al., 2001). This is why we are experiencing a simultaneous and complex process of decentralisation and recentralisation of the city-region;
- polarisation, disparities, socio-economic inequalities and segregation.

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14 The notion of the learning region was launched by Cooke, Morgan, Asheim and others, and could be considered as an intermediate synthesis in the debate on the territorial innovation model (Cooke, 1998; Morgan and Nauwelaers, 1998).

Once agreed with the three aspects outlined above, it becomes clear the need to propose a more culture and social driven approach.

In his works, Frank Moulaert (Moulaert and Sekia, 2003; Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2004; Moulaert et. al, 2005) underlines that the social innovative region is grounded on a community-based ontology, which starts from a different conception of capital and innovation. When capital and its reproduction (innovation) tune up to community norms of behaviour, or are embedded into a community logic of reproduction, their meaning for development change. The capital needed for local (regional) development is necessarily multidimensional. Within this variety of capital, Moulaert shows the artificiality of borderlines between them. In fact, "capital should be reinvested not only to generate their own type of capital (i.e. more business capital to produce more business capital) [...] but also to establish creative synergies with other types of capital" (Moulaert and Nussbaumert, 2005: 56).

4.2.4 Innovative approaches to regional development

Towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of 1990s the concept of endogenous development was introduced next to the leading theory about the competitiveness-based urban renovation model, first presented by the economist Michael Porter (1980). "Developing the "endogenous potential" of regional and local entities - i.e. processes not determined by externalities, but unfolding from "intrinsic" scope for development - became the catch-phrase of regional policy, and a "territorial mobilisation" was set in motion, which has lasted down to this day" (Minichbauer, 2004: 3). A large amount of literature do exist about territorial competitiveness and many models to explain what are the factors that make a territory more or less competitive have been defined.

In the following paragraph I propose two models that are relevant for the investigation of competitiveness in regions and the drawing of policies for development today: the capability-based model (Amartya Sen) and the creative city (Richard Florida). Even though the two models are different and look at regional development from a very diverse perspective, still I believe they can be inspiring approaches for the definition of innovative methods for regional development.

The first model I mentioned, which was conceived by Amartya Sen, the so called capability-based model, claims that development should not be identified with material growth, which will always and only be instrumental to other goods and values, but with the freedom it enables in the political as well as economic sphere. Development is a process of expanding the real freedoms enjoyed by human beings (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993; Sen,1999). This possibility becomes the primary goal, with intrinsic value, independent from any instrumental use - a decisive resource for the quality of development.

The creative city model theorised by Richard Florida, also known as the quality of life attraction model, is based on the idea that mega-city-regions of today perform functions that are somewhat similar to those of great cities of the past – massing together talent, productive capability, innovation and markets. Richard Florida (2002; 2004; 2005) concluded that urban political priorities should be focused above all on the improved qualification of urban life with the aim to establish the creative capital that wishes to live (more than work) in such locations. This is an essentially "competitive" vision of cities, structured above all around the function of city urban qualification and particularly in terms of high quality urban standards. Even though the effectiveness of the "creative cities" model proposed by Richard Florida has been largely criticised by academics (Peck, 2005; Pratt, 2008; Long, 2009), it is broadly appreciated by local and regional governments in search of a renewed rhetoric sustaining new approaches to local and regional development that are not exclusively based on economic growth.

In this context, "local development becomes less a question of guaranteeing purchasing power, and more that of promoting structural change to improve the individual and collective potential to respond to needs, and thus to participate in a production process aimed at the satisfaction of the basic needs of all" (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2004: 250).

The move from a market to a social approach to territorial development is also supported by supranational bodies, such as the European Union. At institutional level, replacing the much-criticised Lisbon strategy, which objective was to make of the European Union "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010", the new Europe 2020 strategy, which is subtitled "A European strategy for smart, green and inclusive growth", stresses the necessity to bring together the economic, social and environmental agendas of the EU in a more structured and coherent way.

One of the novelty about these new models is that they share the same attention towards the crucial role of the regional level (larger scale than before) when design policies for territorial development. "Economic sciences and policies discovered the region as a relevant spatial dimension in the post-Fordist production setting: for the clusters and networks that came about from the partial dissolution and "deregulation" of hierarchic-centralist large-scale enterprises; in the context of the embeddedness of economic trading in social settings etc." (Minichbauer, 2004: 3). In addition to the regional endogenous development theory, which combines the three principal dimensions of development: the economic dimension, [...] the socio-cultural dimension [...] and the political dimension" (Moulaert and Sekia, 2003: 296) a new conception of space is proposed: territorial space replaces functional space. "In territorial approach, in addition to the usual economic attributes privileged by anterior theories of regional development, space is "upgraded" with a new content of socio-cultural values and traces of the local history" (Moulaert and Sekia, 2003: 297).

Louis Albrechts (2010) refers to this time of change, which most of the European territories are facing, especially those that constructed their richness on industrial development, as a moment in which the market alone cannot provide improvements in quality of life to all the people. Current challenges are central and structural and hence cannot be tackled by means of

traditional approaches and simply relying on economic growth. Siegel and Waxman (2001) point out six challenges of territories today: 1) out-of-date infrastructure, 2) dependence on traditional industry, 3) obsolete human capital base, 4) declining regional competitiveness, 5) weakened civic infrastructure and capacity, and 6) limited access to resources. In order to face those challenges, Louis Albrechts (2010) proposes transformative practices that are focused on the structural problems in society. Transformative practices – in relation to the context and to the social and cultural values to which a particular place/society is historically committed – as something new rather than as a solution (only) arrived at as a result of existing trends. The author stresses the importance to focus on new concepts and new ways of thinking that change the way resources are used, (re) distributed and (re)allocated, and the way the regulatory powers are exercised (2010).

One of the model chosen by planners as the most indicated one to interpret nowadays complexity of city and/or a region and the related decision-making processes, is the strategic planning approach. In few words, the main difference between traditional models and strategic one is that conventional planning would attack the problem directly while strategic planning might instead develop plans for altering the interaction processes through which environmental policy is determined (Lindblom, 1975: 43). In this context strategic spatial planning discipline can be seen as one of the strands growing out from the reflections presented above. In the light of the numerous definitions available about strategic spatial planning, the RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute) offers two definitions globally shared, defining it as a "critical thinking about space and place as the basis for action and intervention" and/or "the making of a place and mediating of space". According to Luis Albrechts "strategic spatial planning is a public sector-led (Kunzmann, 2000) sociospatial (Healey, 1997) process through vision, actions, and means for implementation are produced that shape and frame what a place is and may become" (Albrechts, 2004: 747).

The strategic approach to planning is shown to be very relevant in most of all the efforts underway in many parts of Europe to produce strategies for cities, city-regions, and regions (Albrechts et al., 2001; 2003; Healey, 1997; Pascual and Esteve, 1997; Pugliese and Spaziante, 2003; Salet and Faludi, 2000). Often these efforts involve the construction of new institutional arenas within structures of government (Albrechts, 2004: 749), in order to frame activities of stakeholders to help achieve shared concerns about spatial change. Strategic spatial planning has diverse gradations, accordingly the priorities of the places where it is implemented or the believes of its promoters. Despite different interpretation of strategic spatial planning, what seems to be important as never before is the embrace of innovative governance systems to deal with today new challenges and changes.

As suggested by Francesca Sartorio, "territories where some sorts of strategic experiment has been taking place could be more likely than others to develop innovative and creative capacities in the field of planning and beyond" (2005: 30). This assumption is at the basis of most of the analysis of the following research work.

4.2.5 Mega-events as strategies for regional development

Strategic spatial planning strategies adopted by a region have often included the promotion and implementation of a mega-event spread over a large territory, as it happened in Lille 2004 European Capital of Culture and Ruhr 2010 European Capital of Culture. Urban and regional administrators all over the world are clearly aware that staging "events" that receive international attention is an important contribution to image-building, a positive impression for externals while on the inside they contributes to grow inhabitants confidence with their territory. The mega events that are most effective in this respect, do not only create "software" outcomes but also "hardware" in the form of the permanent exploitable locations, attractions and enduring investments. According to Clark, mega events bring immovable deadlines and the disciplines that come from them, a global audience and professional evaluators, additional investment from external sources, increased visitors who will pass judgement, including intense media exposure, intensified local engagement with citizens, firms, and institutions, and a chance to celebrate human skills and endeavour (Clark, 2008: 28). In his recent book, "Local Development Benefits from Staging Global Events", Clark stresses that it is imperative that a city decides exactly what it wants to achieve in terms of development before deciding to bid for an event (2008: 140) and that staging international events works as catalyst for local development, but hosting cities and nations have to take precise and dedicated steps to ensure that a positive local legacy is realised (2008: 15).

What are the events that are defined as mega and are likely to bring several impacts and externalities to the city, both positive and negative? Usually they are events that are promoted by a partnership of institutions and private actors, have international relevance and bring temporary and long-term benefits to the region. The events are grouped into four main categories:

- trade fairs and exhibition events (the Expo and others);
- cultural events (the European Capital of Culture, Eurovision, etc.);
- sport events (the Olympics, World Cup, and others);
- political summits and conference events (G8, Earth Summits, etc.).

Mega-events can be virtuous opportunities to put a place under the spotlight in the short-run. It is the event promoter's role to be able to keep the light on the event on in the long term. The after-event is called legacy, which stands for the material and immaterial benefits the city will keep for the future. As stated by many authors (Bobbio and Guala, 2002; Clark, 2008) it is the legacy that determines the success of a mega event, whether it is hard legacy (infrastructures, buildings, urban transformation, facilities) or soft legacy (image, identity, culture).

In the cultural field one of the most internationally visible mega event in the European framework is the yearly nomination for European Capital of Culture (ECoC), which recognises

one of the cities of the EU member-states during one year.

Next to gaining visibility, it provides a possibility of redeveloping cultural and non-cultural infrastructure and introducing new services in the city that European Community funds. If well managed, the EU Capital of Culture initiative can promote and encourage local longer-term investments for building sustainability of the city in question, as many studies have shown (Palmer 2004; Garcia 2005; Clark 2008). However, it can also bring numerous problems and raise questions on the local level regarding the relationship between economic development and urban regeneration, heritage preservation and community engagement, which are not always thoroughly thought through and can remain temporary in their effect (Palmer & Richards, 2007). In some cases, the ECoC programme has changed the image, the role and the functions of a city in a dramatic way. Just to mention some, Glasgow 1990, Dublin 1991, Genoa 2004, Lille 2004, Liverpool 2008.

The Culture Programme 2007-2013 has set, in the terms of subsidiarity, that the EU funding must not exceed 60% of the total budget of the proposed project. For this reason sponsorship from private sector is vital to the success of the event. For its small budget, for instance in comparison with EC structural funds, it also important to understand that the event European Capital of Culture can be an important driver for urban development, particularly for infrastructure, but it is not the only source of funding to be addressed for the projects intended. From the Palmer report (2007), all Capital of Culture cities between 1994-2004 invested in infrastructure projects for the city in their host year. The most common projects were improvements to public space/lighting and cultural infrastructure such as refurbishment of facilities and monuments. New cultural buildings such as concert halls and museums were also common features of cultural expenditure.

4.3   The cultural factor in regional development

4.3.1   A difficult task: defining the concept of culture

I found very relevant for defining the concept of culture Fred Inglis' recent work titled *Culture*, a history of the concept of culture from its origins in the German Enlightenment to contemporary attempts to come to terms to the cultural impact of globalisation. The relevance of history for the definition of culture is explained by Inglis reporting Austin (1961), who "was convinced that the origins of a word was the history of its uses" (Inglis, 2004:4).

Here starts a short introduction to the subject with Herder[15], "pioneer of the first notes towards the definition of culture […], in which culture is a whole way of life, caught and apprehended by its art and poems, for sure, but manifested all the time in "the inevitable creativeness of ordinary everyday life"" (Inglis, 2004: 14). The approach to culture already change with "Schiller[16], who may be credited with launching the idea of culture as meaning high art, and high art [...] as the domain of the ideal, because imaginary, account of how life could one day be. As Schiller sees it, culture has curative properties: by embodying the ideal, it provides a criterion for criticism of life as it actually is. […] culture-as-ideal-form criticises culture-as-the-teeming-ways-of-daily-lives in many different countries" (Inglis, 2004: 18).

Few years later eminent authors provided definitions of culture that could be assimilated to Herder's interpretation of culture. Henry James[17], in his Italian Hours – when talking about Venice, he finds its culture in the way in which "art and life seems so interfused and, as it were, consanguineous" (Inglis, 2004: 34); "Eliot [18] insists on the joint meanings of culture as the repository of a society's ideals [...], and on the conception of the ideal as inseparable from the broader meaning of the word designating everyday life" (Inglis, 2004: 87); and culture may

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15 Johann Gottfried von Herder (25 August 1744 – 18 December 1803) was a German philosopher associated with the periods of Enlightenment, Sturm und Drang and Weimar Classicism.

16 Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (10 November 1759 – 9 May 1805) was a German poet, philosopher, historian and playwright. He was interested in issues concerning aesthetics and was part of the movement called Weimar Classicism.

17 Henry James (April 15 1843 – February 28 1916) was an American-born writer, regarded as one of the key figures of 19th-century literary realism.

18 Thomas Stearns Eliot (September 26, 1888 – January 4, 1965) was an American-born English poet, playwright, and literary critic, and arguably one of the most important English-language poets of the 20th century.

indeed be, in Geertz's[19] thumbnail definition "the ensemble of stories we tell ourselves about ourselves" (Inglis, 2004: 145).

All these definitions set the basis for what is considered one of the most famous and modern definition of culture, the one given by Edward Taylor, former director of "British Association for the Advancement of Science" and sustainer of cultural evolutionism as a theoretical approach that seeks to describe and explain long-term processes of culture change, who sees "culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (1909). Taylor's definition of culture is considered to be very modern for its broad approach to the topic, which goes over the traditional aesthetic definitions of culture that still tends to prevail in the Old Europe.

The "complex whole" in Taylor's definition is precursor to the culture as a "way of life" indicated by the World Conference on Cultural Policy in Mexico City in 1982 and anticipated by Raymond Williams in his The Long Revolution where he defines culture as "a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning, but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour" (1961: 57). In this framework, "Herder remains an important milestone in the constitution of the concept of culture and a landmark in the establishment of the truths in relativism exactly because he wished to do justice to the exclusiveness and singularity of different ways of life, and to honour these by characterising the aspects of life which made one people in one epoch wholly themselves" (Inglis, 2004: 13, sustaining the doctrine of relativism, which teaches that "all the human values are bedded in their own historical and cultural context, and can only have local and transitory meaning. There are therefore no universal values" (Inglis, 2004: 13).

In the time, culture has been associated to many spheres of human life. From social to economic aspects, culture is embedded in any corner of our living.

When it comes to culture within politics, and therefore culture and related policies, we face different positions that discuss the autonomy of culture vs. achievement of general political and economic aims/instruments in promoting political and economic interests can be found.

"Eliot's main premises are that culture cannot be planned for as Unesco intended [...] he provides a practical (rather than theoretical) sociology whose main principles are as follows: culture is differentially located in the individual, the group and the whole society; it cannot be planned for in the latter; it holds in tension the ideal and the real, desire and actuality; elite culture and political power may be coterminous but should never be synonymous; the making of culture by elite and by the people -folks- is transformed over time into the collective tradition of the society; such a collective work as culture is does not stop at national frontiers" (Inglis, 2004:

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19 Clifford James Geerts (August 23 1926 – October 30 2006) was a highly influential American anthropologist known mostly for his strong support for and influence on the practice of symbolic anthropology.

86-89). This position is supported by Leavis[20], who sustains that "while culture must live in individual lives, it is collectively made and, he adds, that collective and creative making is the ground of human being" (Inglis, 2004: 94). Still endorsing all these perspectives, William Morris[21], who first joined culture to politics, shares the idea that "culture, whatever is, cannot be planned but will have its way; that it both expresses and forms the hearts and minds of men and women" (Inglis, 2004: 22). Morris was deeply convinced of the crucial role of culture in human lives and when he wrote "if art … is to live and not die... it must be of the people, for the people, by the people; it must understand all and be understood by all" - he was writing, accordingly to Fred Inglis "a political manifesto on behalf of culture" (Inglis, 2004:24). At the same time he believes that culture is subordinated to politics, and that politics is the only instrument we have to turn hope into endeavour, desire into actuality.

The subordination of culture to politics was abused starting from the end of the first World War and it can be affirmed that "after 1928 ideology organised culture" (Inglis, 2004: 36). "Culture into propaganda was an ideological transformation […] the epoch between 1918 and 1989 was, it might be said, the age of ideology, its vehicle of meaning propaganda, and culture the driver of the vehicle. […] the extraordinary force of new kind of sentimental, simplifying, ideologising culture" (Inglis, 2004: 37).

In Fred Inglis' words "people take a word -culture- and fill it up with certain meanings, such that it constitutes a concept" (Inglis, 2004: 3). He reinforces his position saying that "a concept (with or without a word to match) serves to pick out certain identifying features and not others. It is becoming unclear what the concept culture would now exclude" (Inglis, 2004: 135).

What is important now, for the purpose of this study, is to understand how the concept of culture in embedded in the broad agenda of governments, at different levels, form local to supranational governmental bodies.

Today, finding a balance between the instrumental use of culture (the culture of the place) to achieve expectations related the competitiveness of the region (place marketing, internationalisation, cutting-edge infrastructure, etc.) and the development of culture (the culture of people) is still a very discussed topic. The autonomy of culture is put in danger by the instrumental use of culture to achieve general economic, technical, political and social interests. However, Vestheim (2009) asserted that there is no such thing as a non-instrumental cultural policy as policy is per definition instrumental by nature. When power holders make a field of social activities and products subject to political action these activities become "instruments" or means in the sense that all political actions aim to have certain predetermined effects on citizens. What can be argued about the instrumental use of culture in cultural policy is the nature of the expected effects and what sorts of arguments are used.

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20 Frank Raymond Leavis (14 July 1895 – 14 April 1978) was an influential British literary critic of the early-to-mid-twentieth century.

21 William Morris (24 March 1834 – 3 October 1896) was an English textile designer, artist, writer, and socialist associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the English Arts and Crafts Movement.

4.3.2 Cultural policies between instrumental and non-instrumental use of culture

In this study, the investigation focuses on the use of culture in strategies for local and regional development and its pivotal role for creating sustainable regions. To achieve better integrated regions, it seems to be necessary to understand the culture of the place (region) under analysis in order to asses the potential of culture as a driver of development through the implementation of cultural policies. Economic transactions, social customs and relationships, political ideologies, artistic expression, language, and religious practices reflect cultural values and behaviours.

Cultural policy is therefore connected to all the major issues of our society: economic stratification, race relations, globalisation, technology, education and community development, etc. As it was observed by Françoise Matarasso "governments can no longer limit their focus to areas such as heritage, libraries, the arts or broadcasting that have conventionally been seen as the domain of cultural policy. On the contrary, culture is always a dimension of decision-making, even – or especially – when it is so embedded as to be unnoticed" (2010: 2). Although cultural policy is most evident in the formal positions adopted by governments about these domains and activities (museums, performing arts, monuments, heritage, creative industries, etc.), it would be a mistake to think that it ended there. Françoise Matarasso continues his discourse explaining that the policy or action that seems quite unconnected with culture may have large, if unintended, effects on it. To add VAT to building repairs but not to new construction may be seen as a fiscal measure designed to increase the housing stock. But, by incentivising the demolition and replacement of old buildings, this policy's impact on the built heritage may be greater than many formal cultural heritage statements. Therefore, the idea that culture is a marginal concern for most people, or that it is not a priority for public policy, is not reconcilable with this analysis (Matarasso, 2010).

Globalisation of course has contributed to enlarge the domain controlled and influenced by cultural policy. In the 1960's findings of sociological research indicated that the strategy to disseminate culture that was taken up in the two first decades after World War II, commonly named the "democratisation of culture" [22], had failed. It was the well-off, well-educated middle and upper classes that went to the theatres, concert halls and opera houses, who visited the art museums and read the «good» books. The growing consumer capacity of the working class was wrested towards the international, and primarily American, cultural industry.

In 1970 a "new cultural policy" was introduced and the concept of culture was widened to include not only the fine arts but also amateur culture, popular culture, sports and other forms of leisure activities. Regional and local traditions were emphasised. In the 1980's new liberalistic winds blew also through the cultural sector, touching cultural policy makers, who looked for

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22 For "democratisation of culture" is meant making artistic culture available to all citizens equally, disseminating major cultural works to an audience that does not have ready (reason for example demographic structure) access to them, for lack of financial means or knowledge derived from education.

new ways to legitimise public support of culture. Public policy documents, not least at the regional and local level, argued that public support for culture was an investment that would pay back in terms of economic surplus, a creative population, new businesses and more work places. Market concepts became part of public debates on the role of culture. In the late 1990's the economist perspective was complemented by ideas of culture as a means of counteracting social exclusion, and of improving the quality of communities.

During the last half century of changes in cultural policy objectives, Unesco[23] has always been a very active actor in cultural policy issues and a strong conceptual definer in cultural policy. For all European, and American, nation states, regions and local entities, Unesco is the definer of the frames for analysis and definition of cultural policy. At the beginning the attention was directed towards the conservation of the world tangible heritage, which was manly about historical buildings, art works, archaeological sites, etc. until the World Heritage Convention was signed in 1972. The Convention, pushed forward by the USA, stated the importance of the natural heritage as well, declaring natural parks, lakes, etc. as part of the world heritage. For the first time Cultural and natural heritage were valued and valorised together in a holistic vision of nature and culture. Although Unesco objective was to conserve and promote culture worldwide and in several regions, such as Asia, Africa, and South America, the organisation was stuck for many years in the idea of heritage as tangible assets, until the end of the 1990s when a new concept came about, heritage as intangible asset. The new Convention for the safeguarding of intangible heritage was ratified in 2003, and it defined heritage as -"the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills…as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, recognise as part of their cultural heritage" (Unesco, 2003: 2). Until this moment Unesco has contributed to enlarge the definition of culture and heritage. Nowadays challenge for Unesco is to continue to pursue its objectives and be flexible enough to work in world where globalisation is breaking down barriers and building new ones. The new key word is diversity[24]. The first step that leaded the adoption of the Convention on the protection and promotion of the

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23 The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations established on 16 November 1945. Its stated purpose is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through education, science, and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and the human rights along with fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the UN Charter

24 Diversity, which as different meanings: diversity in the population. Unesco try to influence policies in order to address issues related multi-ethnic society, genders, races, children and young people; creativity diversity, the right to express yourself and your culture, moving away from the mainstream culture, promoting the freedom of expression; enhancing creativity not only in the cultural sector, but also in industry, business, technology, politic, etc; diversity between individual rights and collective rights, how to safeguard both; media access and competition, because we want to promote the freedom of speech ; diversity in the cultural market, in order to protect subcultures from the mainstream culture.

diversity of cultural expressions in 2005, was the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity[25] (2001), when, for the first time, cultural diversity was acknowledged as "the common heritage of humanity, the defence of which was deemed to be an ethical and practical imperative, inseparable from respect for human dignity…". For the first time, thanks to the contribution of Unesco, there is a clear interaction between culture and development.

Nowadays the discussion about cultural policy and its role in sustainable development is strongly effected by the more or less instrumental approach to it (Belfiore 2002; Selwood 2002; Mirza, 2006). Several cultural commentators would like to see the end of the "instrumentalisation" era, when culture is merely used to achieve social, economic or political objectives, in favour of the restoration of the so-called "art for the art sake principle" where the "intrinsic" value of the arts is the rationality in the definition of cultural policies (Gray, 2006; Tusa, 2000). In order to avoid all this uncertainty, Eleonora Belfiore suggests that "the solution in policy debates has often been to avoid the problem altogether by falling back on institutional definitions, where the arts simply become whatever the arts funding system happens to be supporting at the time" (Belfiore and Bennett, 2007: 136).

In line with the neo-liberal perspective and its increasing mobility of capital, privatisation, communication revolution, destatisation, experience economy, introduction of culture and creativity in regeneration process and planning (i.e. planning former industrial sites to attract the creative class), cultural tourism and travelling, etc. culture has been pushed to become an industry and a product. On the other hand, industry and production has respectively got the tendency to become cultural, aesthetic (brands, virtual, flexibility, design, communication). In this view culture has lost its intrinsic value to become a mean of action for alternative public policies for development.

A more non-instrumental way of understanding cultural policy would consist of interfaces of art and politics which try to make space for the person and a better world, urban republic, transnational community. Following Charles Taylor's thoughts it is possible to create a notion of *deliberative cultural policy practice* that embraces social imaginary and its phenomenological underpinning which Taylor describes as "the ways people imagine their social existence how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underline these expectations". This approach could also be defined as a "socio-cultural orientation" , because the focus is on the way ordinary people imagine their social surrounding, or in Taylor's words "this is not expressed in theoretical terms but is carried in images, stories and legends" (Taylor, 2004: 23-24). Fred Inglis indirectly supports Taylor's position affirming that culture "provides those absolute presuppositions we must make about the world in order to think ad feel at all. It

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25 This book is the result of a three-year study by the World Commision for Culture and Development, which gathered a   panel of specialist under the chairmanship of former United NAtions Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuéllar. It responds to a crucial question: Is culture the last frontier in development? The book provides perspectives on the interactions between culture and development. Published in 1997.

is those attributes and materials which make us feel at home (or estranged) in our culture" (Inglis, 2004: 148).

4.3.3 Culture and the many faces of sustainable development

"A distinction between the culture of citizens and the culture of cities has to be made in the socio-cultural orientation: the culture of citizens concerns their way of life; the culture of cities concerns first of all their attractiveness to non-residents as places to visit and stay for a while" (Buursink, 1997: 3). Which culture is this research work talking about? I would say both, the culture of citizens as much as the culture of cities as these two aspects of culture are closely interconnected and dependent on each other.

Cities, because their citizens, have always been places where cultural, political, social and economic life happen, poles of attraction for people living in and outside the city. There are some authors, as Ferrão (2003) and Seixas (2006), who see the city as a complex organism or the city as an eco-system place, with spatial and landscape facets (the *body* of the city), networks and flows (the *blood* of the city) and its culture and cosmopolitism (the *soul* of a city). This approach was championed by Jane Jacobs, in the early 1960s, who saw the city as an "ecosystem composed by physical-economic-ethical processes interacting with each-other in a natural flow" (Jacobs, 1965: 155-156).

The growth and richness of cities and more generally of territories have always been characterised by the simultaneous development of economic and cultural aspects of the city. People tend to live around cities, which are the centres for culture, commerce and economic production. From ancient times, temples and fora where the places for the gathering of people. Renaissance is the historical period that saw the spring of arts: markets, cathedrals, and palaces, the places where different social classes would meet up for sharing their cultures. Also outside the cities, villas acted as settings where high culture for rich people was provided but at the same time they were cultural attraction for those coming from rural areas. Some centuries later, in the Enlightenment era, museums and theatres were founded for a restrict audience. Since then a reflection on the nature of culture started to be done, high culture was more or less separated by low/popular culture and concepts of democratisation of culture and cultural democracy were introduced.

With the industrial era and the consequential spread industrialisation, industries substituted villas outside the city centres, attracting big portion of the population and creating new urban areas and extending the peripheries of the historical centre. New centres for culture started to be erected around production sites to meet workers' need of leisure.

High culture tends to remain in the historical centre of cities while low culture, or popular culture, moves outside cities to accommodate its venue where the poorly educated audience

lives. In the spread industrialisation landscape we find poles of entertainment (shopping mall, cinemas, sport centres) next to fabrics and infrastructure to move goods, and people, around. The industrialisation of regions, have expanded the borders of cities, creating new urban poles rather connected among them. In the post-industrial era, in which we are currently living in, the landscape of dispersed urban centres continues to grow while the core of the economy driven by the service sector moves back to cities' centres leaving abandoned industrial districts in the peripheries of cities. While cities' centres start to flourish again and attract well educated and wealthy people, peripheries and small centres outside cities stop to make their living out of industries and begin to decline socially, economically and physically.

In the transition from industrial to post-industrial era, which characterised Western societies, the cultural factor has often been used to promote new ways of development and to recover rundown communities and buildings. The development strands in which culture plays a crucial role are mainly three: social development that sees culture as a common background; economic development believes that culture contributes to turn the production chain towards the intangible economy; and territorial development sees culture a useful tool in process of urban regeneration. In the last few decades the focus of discussion among policy makers and practitioners has focused more on the economic development potentials of culture rather than its effects on social fabrics. "All the countries that are characterised by advanced levels of industrial development are experiencing a massive re-shaping of their productive sectors" (Sacco and Blessi, 2007:2). As shown by the competitiveness-based urban renovation model of Michael Porter (1990), which focuses upon the transition from an investment-based industrial orientation toward a self-sustaining innovation based economy.

Culture has got a strategic role for the definition of a new competitive context for cities and countries in the post-industrial society. The chain of value is easy to define: culture is source of creativity that is at the base of innovation, which is a driver for technological change, which in turn boosts economic growth today. In fact, the assumption starts from the identification of the role of innovation and creativity, which are seen as crucial for the possibility to give new sense and providing new ideas to the production and consumption of goods (Rullani, 2004), and also as the base for innovation processes in economically advanced countries (Porter, 2003).

Even the EU, through the report known as the Figel's Report, supports this thesis and offers an overview of the economic dimension of the cultural and creative sectors. Pointing out the increasing economic value of culture and creativity, it clearly supports the main objectives of the Lisbon Strategy, adopted on 23-24 March 2000 by the European Council, which was that of building a Europe by 2010 where "the economy is based on the knowledge more competitive and dynamic of the world, able to promote an economic sustainable growth, offering better jobs and social cohesion" (EU, 2000). The basis from which each European nation should start to rethink their investments are to be found in the fields of research&development, creativity and culture.

David Throsby tells us how the rhetoric of the creative economy is persuasive. He notes that "since in many developed countries the cultural industries can indeed be shown to have grown

faster than other sectors such as manufacturing and agriculture over the past decades or so when measured in terms of value of output or levels of employment, rhetoric is converted into fact" (2010: 6).

One of the most famous model adopting this view is the creativity-based attraction model by Richard Florida (2002), that emphasises the role of quality of life and of technological infrastructure in the creation of a critical mass for the emergence of a knowledge-oriented economy. Florida brings in the example of the Silicon Valley in United States (U.S.) as good practice for the economic development of a region based on three T: Tolerance, Technology and Talent, which are also the set of indicators used by Florida to classify U.S. cities (Florida, 2000, 2002; Florida and Gates, 2001), and some years later, some European countries (Florida and Tinagli, 2004). In this context Andy Pratt gives emphasis to the importance to be critical when adopting Richard Florida's rhetoric and stressing that "a creative city cannot be founded like some cathedral in the desert; it needs to be linked to, and to be part of, an already existing cultural environment" (2008: 35).

Next to the economic development power of culture and creativity, there is also a line of thought, which has a long intellectual history, dating back to classical times, that support the notion that art and culture can have a transformative effect on both individuals and society (Belfiore and Bennet, 2006). As argued by Françoise Matarasso in his renowned Use or Ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts (1997), at the social level, culture is seen as a tool that promotes cohesion through the creation of a common language, thus setting the stage for socially-driven development of human potential.

Amassment of cultural capital has thus become an engine for further relevant goals such as the creation and/or regeneration of the social fabric, the generation of systematic opportunities for social networking, and more generally the optimal management of accumulation processes for other key intangible assets such as social capital (Bordieu, 1983) with consequential benefits in terms of social order and cohesion (Everingham, 2003). An important and recent contribution to the literature sustaining culture as a pillar of social development is the KEA Report (2009), a study prepared for the European Commission on the impact of culture on creativity, which shows how culture can contribute to social transformation and promote social cohesion in new ways. According to KEA "social cohesion can be defined as a set of shared norms and values for society which also encompasses the diversity of people's different backgrounds and helps to ensure that those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities. It is the ability of cultural activities to help us express specific cultures, while also developing strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools, and within neighbourhoods" (KEA, 2009: 7).

"The view that culture has a role to play in delivering social objectives is not an uncontentious one, with critics often decrying such instrumentalist rationales, not only as inadequate social policy but also as "bad for the arts" (Mirza, 2006). On the other hand, some argue that culture can offer new approaches both in terms of tackling what are sometimes referred to as "wicked social problems", for which current approaches are deemed inadequate. They argue that there

are transformational possibilities arising from engagement with creativity which move beyond the instrumental, by allowing creative activity to help determine new policies by developing and negotiating shared understandings of policy challenges and mapping out solutions" (KEA, 2009: 80).

Culture is also related to territorial development, which somehow includes social and economic aspects. The next chapter discusses the place of culture within territorial development, bringing about several examples around Europe.

4.3.4 Culture within territorial development in literature

The cultural dimension of territories is gaining a very relevant place in local and regional development in Western countries. According to Pier Luigi Sacco and Dragone (2006) culture is becoming a essential factor in local and regional development at national and international level because its capacity of offering contents and innovative practices able to answer to the challenges of globalisation.

Although it has never been demonstrated that culture can make a substantially positive difference in processes of regeneration and more generally in those of urban development, the discussion about the impact of culture seems to be endless, several academic studies explain why culture should, at least, be part of these processes. As Kelnar and Holden (2006) assert, culture must be part of processes of territorial development because it provides meaning (encouraging us to question the elements to which we are exposed, promotes the development of our power of criticism and encourages us to explore the world around us); serves as a magnet and glue (magnets attract people to live and work in an area in the first place, glue is what keeps them there). Magnets are changing: strong magnets used to be companies, but their power of attraction is fading and to increasing extent job opportunities as seen as a necessary, but insufficient, reason for migration. Powerful magnets today are open and diverse communities that embrace creativity in all its form. Magnets and glue are pivotal for the development of successful cities, and culture therefore is a powerful force in generating and sustaining such magnet communities. Where there new ideas are, there is also innovation and technology development); nurtures engagement (involvement with culture encourages engagement within local communities); make connections (not just between areas that have a shared history, but also between one culture and another, between employers and residents, sponsors and local authorities, schools and artist, old and young). As the two authors point out, culture can bring several potential benefits in the development of an area. Those benefits are both for the local community, the economy and the territories, and they can be achieved through intangible actions, such as communities' projects, and tangible assets, public art works.

At the urban planning level, culture often plays a crucial role in the renovation of specific parts of a city. In such instances, culture is called to prompt a multi-faceted regeneration process, focused on both physical renovation of buildings and on a deep rethinking of the social logic of space utilisation (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993; Stevenson, 1998; Evans, 2001).

In the past, when the concept of regeneration was introduced for the first time, the practice was based on activities of rebuilding and physically redeveloping rundown areas. This was the case of the reconstruction of several city centres in the aftermath of World War II. What governments were looking for was to return the ravaged parts of the city back to the status quo ante. So, urban regeneration was focused primarily on rebuilding key sectors needed for everyday survival: infrastructure (roads, transports, and railways), public buildings (hospital, schools, town halls) and housing.

A second wave of regeneration, which contributed to broadening its definition, was due to the general crisis that many industrial cities went through all over Europe in the early 1970s - late 1980s. After years of prosperity as industrial or port cities, cities such as Liverpool, Rotterdam, Turin, and Marseille, among others, found themselves struggling due to the supremacy of the services on the industrial sector, and the shifting of the manufacturing production from local to outside the country. This crisis left cities with disused industrial buildings and several social problems (e.g. poverty, immigration, racism). Regeneration began to be seen as an overall strategy to tackle not only the physical, but also the economic and social environment, in order to guarantee long-term sustainability for the cities. By the end of the 1980s, economic and social regeneration of communities that were disadvantaged, along with the physical environment, became a relevant part of policy makers' agenda.

In the late 1980s, when "social regeneration" became a priority alongside physical development, practitioners began to think about which factors can lead to good social regeneration. The first areas of interest to be investigated and exploited were education, health, community involvement, and safety, followed, only recently, by culture activities and the arts (Zukin, 1995; Evans, 2001; Scott, 2000). The increasing interest for culture as the engine of local economic development finds its antecedents in certain experiments in urban and regional planning, such as the urban regeneration plans carried out by the Great London Council, based on a strategic vision focused upon building cultural infrastructure and activities (DCMS, 1999).

In general, the strands followed by the implementation of culture and the arts in projects related the territory and the relations within it, are public art, finding new uses for old buildings, capital projects, education and training, street furniture, etc..

In which way culture is part of local and regional development? Culture contribution to territorial development is understood in many different ways in relation to the meaning given to the concept of culture and it assumes different roles: culture is used for the beautification of a place and to achieve place marketing objectives (cities of art), and/or acts as strategic factor for a comprehensive plan of regional development (cultural districts) and/or is the content and the aim of a mega-event.

4.4 Conclusion

The first chapter introduces the the concept of *region* stressing the difficulty about giving a distinct definition of it. Several different attributes have been associated to the word "region" in the past decades within the context of spatial planning and urban development: the *urban* region, the *mega-city*-region, the *spatial* region, the *polynucleated* region, *polycentric* region, etc. All of these concepts have in common an understanding of "region" as a whole made up of relationships and linkages among different poles and stakeholders or, in some cases, the lack of those connections among poles characterised by proximity or shared factors (geography, economy, political power, culture, etc.). It is evident how the concept of region plays an important role in the definition of their territories from different but equally important perspectives, such as the geographical interpretation of physical borders, the formal and informal administration of territories, the existence of immaterial ties to be found in social and cultural factors.

A common historical background and similar processes of territorial development make several European regions especially interesting to compare: the sudden and disordered growth thanks to the spread industrialisation followed by a deep crisis distinguished by the industrial decline are the premises for the revival of the last decades.

In the past century, the focus on the economic development of regions contributed to the creation of a model of territorial development based on fast economic growth, industrial and manufacturing production and sprawl. The industrialisation acted as connecting fabric of industrial regions influencing the way products, people and ideas move around the territory. Infrastructure were mainly designed as skeleton of regions and to serve industrial districts around the polycentric territory.

There are several cases of metropolitan areas across Europe that are increasingly growing together into megaregions, with interdependencies in their economies, infrastructure, natural resources, and welfare of their citizens. In some cases these regions are recognised as administrative regions and have their own government. In other cases the region does not reflect an existing administrative region; there, they have only few linkages in terms of governance. Different jurisdictions, state, and regional sectorial agencies and regulatory bodies make independent and conflicting decisions over the non-administrative regions. In this latter case, the outcome is a complex system without a public entity that focuses on the overall welfare. A myriad of public and private players whose actions have large and small impacts have neither incentive nor opportunity to work together to address shared problems. The risk is the reinforcement of territories characterised by sprawl and unable to build synergies among diverse components, adapt to changing conditions in a productive way, or address region-wide issues.

In the previous pages it has also been observed how the approach to regional development has changed in the past few decades in the urban planning field. In a context in which territories are experimenting rescaling process, and regions are acquiring more importance as centre of power and development, models of territorial development have changed. Initially, as demonstrated by the long debate on New Regionalism and TIMs as models of regional development, the focus of regional development strategies was set on economic growth. Today regional development models have shifted to a more community-based territorial-development approach, in which concepts such as culture, capital, governance, innovation strategies and organisational change receive renewed importance. The social innovative region is at basis for the analysis of regional development.

Along side these observations, it has been shown how regions should consider a vast range of factors as key components for their development. Social cohesion and environmental sustainability are at the core of regional endogenous development. In practical terms, when it comes to design strategies for regional development, all these new priorities and ways of understanding the development process of regions have to be considered. Strategic spatial planning seems to be the more suitable approach for planning regional territories. The design of a regional development strategy with polycentric criteria within the context of the new economy gives rise to coherent responses regarding the so-called "urban trilogy" (economic, society and environment).

In this context the idea that a city acts as a deposit for culture and at the same time as the initiator of the cultural evolution of a place and the prime stage of cultural activities is set as central to further the discussion. With reference to cultural aspects of territories, the urban space becomes an asset with high strategic value for the definition of policies for economic development (Landry, 2000), urban regeneration (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993; Evans, 2001) and social inclusion (Belfiore, 2002).

The last part of the chapter went through different models of local and regional development based on culture. Cities of art, cultural districts, creative cities, practices of culture-led regeneration and cultural mega events are all models that have been demonstrated to be more or less successful according to the objectives the promoter of the initiative wished to achieve. There are still some limitations to local and regional development based on culture. The "Bilbao effect", focused on flagship buildings, place marketing, tourism, and attracting inward investment, has been demonstrated to be only partially successful. The literature available on the topic show that to guarantee a sustainable territorial development based on culture there is a need for the implementation of urban and regional cultural policies based on values (for example, resilience, sustainability, intergenerational equity, solidarity, intercultural exchange and internationalism) which are shared by the community of stakeholders in the region. Pier Luigi Sacco and Giorgio Tavano Blessi (2007:3) are consistent with this position and explain that there are indeed several cases study that confirm that culture may be a good bet for city planners (see e.g. Greenhalgh, 1998; Landry, 2000), but what is needed now is to get a more solid grasp of the critical conditions that make cultural policies fail or succeed.

How a model of regional development based on culture is set in motion? Usually a region wishing to follow a given kind of model of territorial development based on soft resources promotes a series of culture-led strategies integrated among them in order to achieve the overall vision of the region. As explain by David Throsby, once the objectives of cultural policy are determined, the implementation of policy is effected through the use of various policy instruments available to governments (2010: 45). Here it is seen policies as guidelines to achieve the vision of the region and policy instruments as specific culture-led strategies. The region is made up of a government and a series of decision makers coming from different sectors that lead the process of implementing the model chosen.

The choice of the model to be followed for territorial development is most of the time suggested by the policies delivered by local governments, although sometimes the initiative first come from the private sector and it is followed by public institutions. As explained by Pier Luigi Sacco and Giorgio Tavano Blessi, in principle, there should be basically two alternative routes to culture-driven local development: a bottom-up one, based on self-organisation of the local system, and closer, and a top-down one, guided by a strategic vision and agency (2007:5). In the examples presented, culture-led strategies adopted are top-down and in line with a specific long term vision for each region. The focus of the strategies lies in between a search for a renewed economic growth based either on the creative sector and on internationalisation, and the need to redefine the identity of regions, for insiders and outsiders as well. Regarding the identity issue, the use of former industrial building to host cultural activities is an interesting strategy. In fact, it demonstrates how regions did not neglected their past as industrial territories but rather they evaluate it as an element of their common identity. In this way, local cultural identity finds its continuity from the identification of people with the industrial production in the past to cultural activities today, both hosted by the same place - brownfield sites- but in different times.

CHAPTER 5

The case of the Veneto region

5.1 Introduction

Among the Italian regions the Veneto region appears to be the only one that could be compared with the three cases illustrated at the beginning of this research work. As it happened in the Basque Country, the Ruhr metropolitan region and Lille and its métropole, the Veneto region developed from a mainly agricultural territory, with only few urban centres where historical and cultural aspects were concentrated, into a high urbanised region characterised by sprawl.

The rapid pace of urbanisation led to the dependency and blending of the factories and housing. In few decades the coexistence of industrial districts, agricultural lands, residential areas, commercial quarters, with historical city centres created a confused image of the territory. The distinctiveness of the Veneto landscape rapidly lost its meaning in favour of a new mental picture made up of "capannoni" (basic buildings to host manufacturing and industrial production) and "case-capannone" (houses built in close proximity or even adjacent to the factories). Cities maintained their status of places for social and cultural activities but, in order to be left out and safeguarded by urbanisation led by the economic growth, have also complied with their "museification". Next to Venice, also Treviso, Vicenza, Verona have been pushed by their local authorities to become first of all "cities of art".

Within this framework several authors and opinion makers have stressed the idea of reviewing

traditional way of planning regional development and new practices from the very local to the regional level have been implemented to overcome issues induced by the current economic crisis.

5.2 The Veneto region today

5.2.1 Veneto: a multi-faced region

From a historical perspective, Veneto had been for more than a millennium an independent state, known as the Venetian Republic, until it was eventually annexed by Italy in 1866 after a brief Austrian and French rule, and today is one of the 20 administrative regions of Italy. It is located in the North-East of Italy, it has borders with Austria (north) and its eastern part touches the Adriatic sea.

Different understandings of what the Veneto Region is can be found in geo-political, economic and cultural literature. Starting from the theoretical definition of "region" and the variety of understandings of it within European regions, the first part of the chapter advances a description of the Veneto region in order to provide a framework for the case study.

Veneto region is first of all a container space. The Veneto region is understood as a 18,398.9 square kilometres *container* with seven provinces (Belluno, Padova, Rovigo, Treviso, Venezia, Verona, Vicenza) and 581 municipalities, with Venice as capital city of the region. It is the 8th largest administrative region in Italy and the fifth most populated region with about 4.8 million inhabitants.

Box 11: The Veneto region within Italy

Veneto region is also a relational space. In fact, it is recognised for being a region based on a strong character that can be found in both its cultural identity and economic power, two factors that distinguish its relational space. Strong cultural identity is a result of a long existence as an independent republic in past centuries. A federalist political movement, Liga Veneta, took up this legacy and gained prominence in Veneto during the 1970s and 1980s, demanding more autonomy for the region, or even independence, and promoting Venetian culture and its language and history.

As many other regions in Italy, Veneto is blessed with a vast cultural, architecture and natural heritage that make it the first region for cultural tourism in Italy. The numerous villas, museums, theatres, festivals, culinary and winery traditions, etc. contribute to the increasing of that feeling of belonging to the region by local communities.

The feeling of belonging to the Venetian identity due to a strong cultural background is supported by a shared interest in economic growth and the value of work that has contributed to the definition of the Veneto region as a model of economic development around Europe. In only few decades after WWII, the Veneto region managed to come out from the profound crisis hitting the whole country and thanks to the entrepreneurial spirit of its people to start a new cycle of economic development based on small and medium size manufacturing companies. During the second decade of the XX century the Veneto region acted as a laboratory for fast growing businesses and in few decades it became the engine of Italy for economic growth. Economic connections and entrepreneurial dynamics make up the relational space of the region.

The relational space of the Veneto region goes far beyond the regional borders. Looking at the Veneto from an international perspective, the region can be considered as a transitional territory, in between the major centres for development and the periphery[26]. It share some disadvantages with other European peripheral regions but at the same time it can counts on a strategic position on the European geographical and geo-political map: it is a gate towards East and represents the continental point of contact with the Mediterranean sea.

The Veneto region is also understood as an urban agglomeration, a continuum stratum of urbanisation that goes beyond its borders as administrative "container". It is a worldwide renown example of sprawl and agglomeration at the same time.

Within this context, the idea of Veneto as polycentric urban region is at the core of a discussion that has undergone for almost 20 years in academic and political discourses. Aldo Bonomi and Alberto Abruzzese (2004) discussed about *città infinita* (infinite city), Francesco Indovina et al. (1990) of *città diffusa* (spread city), Ilvo Diamanti recognises some shared socio-economic factors and urban planning aspects that can be found in the area and that make it a region, Bernardo Secchi (2010) discussed about the Veneto region, together with the Grand Paris, in his

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26 Klaus R. Kunzmann defines a metropolitan periphery as the area made up of those territories, which, as a rule, are more than 100 kilometres away from the closest metropolitan core. In periods of globalisation, metropolitan peripheries are disadvantaged by means of their limited accessibility to the metropolitan core and by size of their labour market, as well as in their access to all of those cultural and social facilities, which only a metropolis can provide (2008).

recent work "A New Urban Question". The Veneto region is also part of that *megalopoli padania* investigated by Eugenio Turri (2000) that lies between the cities of Turin and Trieste alongside the river Po.

In the case of the Veneto region urban dispersion can be understood from many different standpoints. *Box 12* offers a clear image of poles of urban agglomeration and areas of sprawl within the Veneto region.

Box 12: Urban agglomeration within the Veneto region

Available at: http//www.inuveneto.it
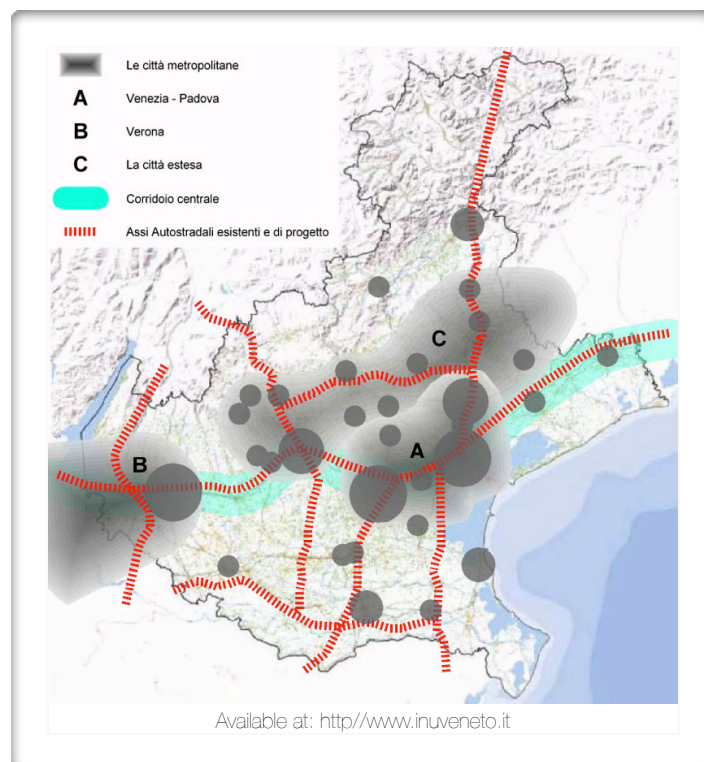
Looking at the infrastructure system already existing, and planned, together with the development of settlements and the urban pattern at the regional level, it is possible to identify three major territorial systems, which have also been identified as key areas of development by the PTRC (Piano Territoriale Regionale di Coordinamento - Regional Territorial Coordination Plan). The first one develops along the axis of Corridor V and include the area around the three cities of Venice, Padua and Treviso (on the map of *Box 12* indicated by the letter A). and is called the Veneto City-Region -or Venice City-region- which covers an area 200 km long and large about 100 km that includes the cities of Venice, Treviso and Padua and surrounding

territories. It counts around 2,6 million of inhabitants with a pro-capite GDP of almost 40 thousands dollars, which is comparable with that of Toronto and Barcelona, and a rate of economic growth that can be found in cities like London, Stockholm and Huston (OECD, 2010). The second territorial system can be identified by the city of Verona and surrounding territories (on the map of *Box 12* indicated by the letter B) where international corridors V and I met. This area can be seen as an important hub for international infrastructure. The third territorial system is the one developing along the Pedemontana axis, at the moment still a only designed route that goes from the Western to the Eastern part of the region and that follows the line of the mountains arch, is a large territory that in recent times have experienced the biggest industrial proliferation in the region even without proper infrastructure supporting it (on the map of *Box 12* indicated by the letter C). A common character of the Pedemontana axis is the "proximity" and continuity of industrial sites, manufacturing companies, residential areas, services, amenities and landscape, that make it a concentrated -and also extreme- example of dynamics undergoing in the whole region.

Box 13: Pedemontana route

Available at: http://www.pedemontana.vi.it

According to Francesco Sbetti, the identification of the three territorial systems is based on the evidence of strong relationships and complementary factors, within the region, from territorial, functional, and infrastructure perspectives. At the same time the three areas do not have clear borders and are not independent among them as there are some elements of physical and functional interactions (Sbetti, 2010: 34).

In the cases of the B and C areas, the urban pattern of the territory goes beyond regional borders, continuing over the bordering regions Lombardia, Trentino Alto Adige and Friuli Venezia Giulia.

These are not the only case in which the three regions, Veneto, Trentino Alto Adige and Friuli Venezia Giulia, have been associated as representing a single large territory. Behind the understanding of the three administrative territories as a large single urban agglomeration there are historical, political and economic reasons. The Tre Venezie, also known as Triveneto, is a concept that dates back at the end of the IXX century and indicates a territory with some common cultural characteristics that used to be under the power of the Austro-Hungarian sovereignty and that were transformed into the three administrative regions when it became Italian. The Northeast of Italy, commonly known as Nordest, is also one of the five official statistical regions of Italy used by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) and it includes the already above mentioned three region plus a fourth one, the Emilia Romagna. The Nordest is a concept often associated to the economic development of the Italian north-eastern part and to the economic model of industrial and manufacturing growth that it represents.

All those examples do not represent formal agglomeration of urbanised territories but rather they are tied together by informal agreements for the use of resources, space and collaborative projects that take into account the similarities of the area.

5.2.2 Sprawl and polycentricity in the Veneto region

The first stage of the industrial revolution in the Veneto region dates back in the 19th century and it is characterised by the flourishing of several enterprises. Factories were built nearby towns that, in only few decades, became magnets for the new workforce who moved from rural to urbanised areas. Factories, new residential districts and facilities for the workforce contributed to enlarge the urban core of towns. Whilst until the first half of the XX century, the connective fabric between villages and cities was mainly constituted of agricultural land and little space was left for industrial and manufacturing production, it is easy to image how rural lands in few decades became completely urbanised. More agricultural lands was designated to a different use in only two decades (1961-1981) than in the two thousands years before (Luciani, 2002: 196). Large empty spaces far away from wealthy city centres were able to host the industrial boom of the end of the XIX century. Regions, and their industries, often supported by national governments, provided the basic services to enable the economic growth of the whole country. Primary infrastructure were developed to allow workers to have a decent life next to the hard work: residences, some schools, transport systems, and little health system. The speed of the urban growth, the pace of establishment of new industries and the need to construct settlements for the large waves of blue collars who immigrated in the region to work, did not

follow the enlightened ideas of the utopian socialists of some decades before, who understood industrialisation as a mean to foster economic and social development at the same time.

Within the Veneto Region, the postfordist time was characterised by an economy based on industrial districts, recalling the Marshallian industrial agglomeration theories that sees clustering of industrial activity based on pure economic rationales such as reduction of transaction cost, share of resources and risk minimisation (Marshall, 1890; 1919).

The specialisation of production influenced the division of geographical areas that became very integrated areas within the district but quite untied to the rest of the territory: footwear manufacturing in Riviera del Brenta between Padua and Venice, jewellery production in Vicenza, leather clusters between Verona and Vicenza, petrochemical industries in Marghera just outside Venice, etc.. In only few decades, between the 1960s and the 1980s, most of the agricultural land changed its use to become space for industrial and manufacturing sites, several small-medium size companies working on manufacturing were spread over the territory. Polycentric settlements grew with continuity one upon the other during the past centuries. According to the assessment and recommendations given by the OECD Territorial Reviews on the case of Venice "this enshrined an inefficient and noneconomical rationale for infrastructure extension, elevating the capital costs of building more schools and extending roads, water and sewer lines, and storm water drainage systems. In the absence of a metropolitan transport network, traffic has increased: passenger traffic nearly doubled from 1990 to 2003" (Fondazione Venezia, 2010: 68).

In those years polycentricity of settlements turned into urban dispersion. Next to villages and cities several industrial districts emerged. Veneto became the land of "capannoni" (basic buildings to host manufacturing and industrial production) for which it is well know today and that is one of the symbol of the Veneto region landscape. In the same years the Veneto region became an international case, which has been studied by many experts of regional economy with the aim of understanding what were the factors that contributed to foster such an important economic growth in only few decades. Among all the outcomes of many studies (Bagnasco and Trigilia, 1984; Bellotti and Bordignon, 2003; Diamanti, 1998; Messina, 2001) dedicated to the Veneto region and its industrial districts, there have been important reflections over the territorial organisation of the region that permitted the flourishing of that kind of economy.

From one side can be observed the lack of spatial organisation, with respect to the landscape and land-use planning in the era of the economic boom of the Veneto region. Sprawl can be understood as one of the outcome of the lack of regulation given by local and regional administrations towards those entrepreneurs that wanted to locate a new business or enlarge existing ones. The liberal market was the main informal ruler of spatial planning in those years.

The infographic of Box 14, elaborated by the regional administration, shows the distribution of economic production activities within the Veneto region and their agglomeration following the production districts model.

Back in 1985, Hohenberg and Lees investigated the concept of network system of cities, and found North of Italy one of the first example of territory characterised by urban systems based

on the idea of nodality in a network of linked settlements (Hohenberg and Lees, 1985) . In their work, Magrin and Martellato show how, over the years, Venezia has progressively lost its supremacy over its surrounding hinterland. The Veneto Network City –, i.e. a composite city-region which encompasses Venezia, Padova, Vicenza, Treviso and Verona, is an area where the central place hierarchy has been substituted by a more complex spatial organisation in which relational linkages among centres tend to be horizontal rather than hierarchical (Magrini and Martellato, 2000: 6).

Box 14: Production districts and economic development

Source: PTRC, 2011
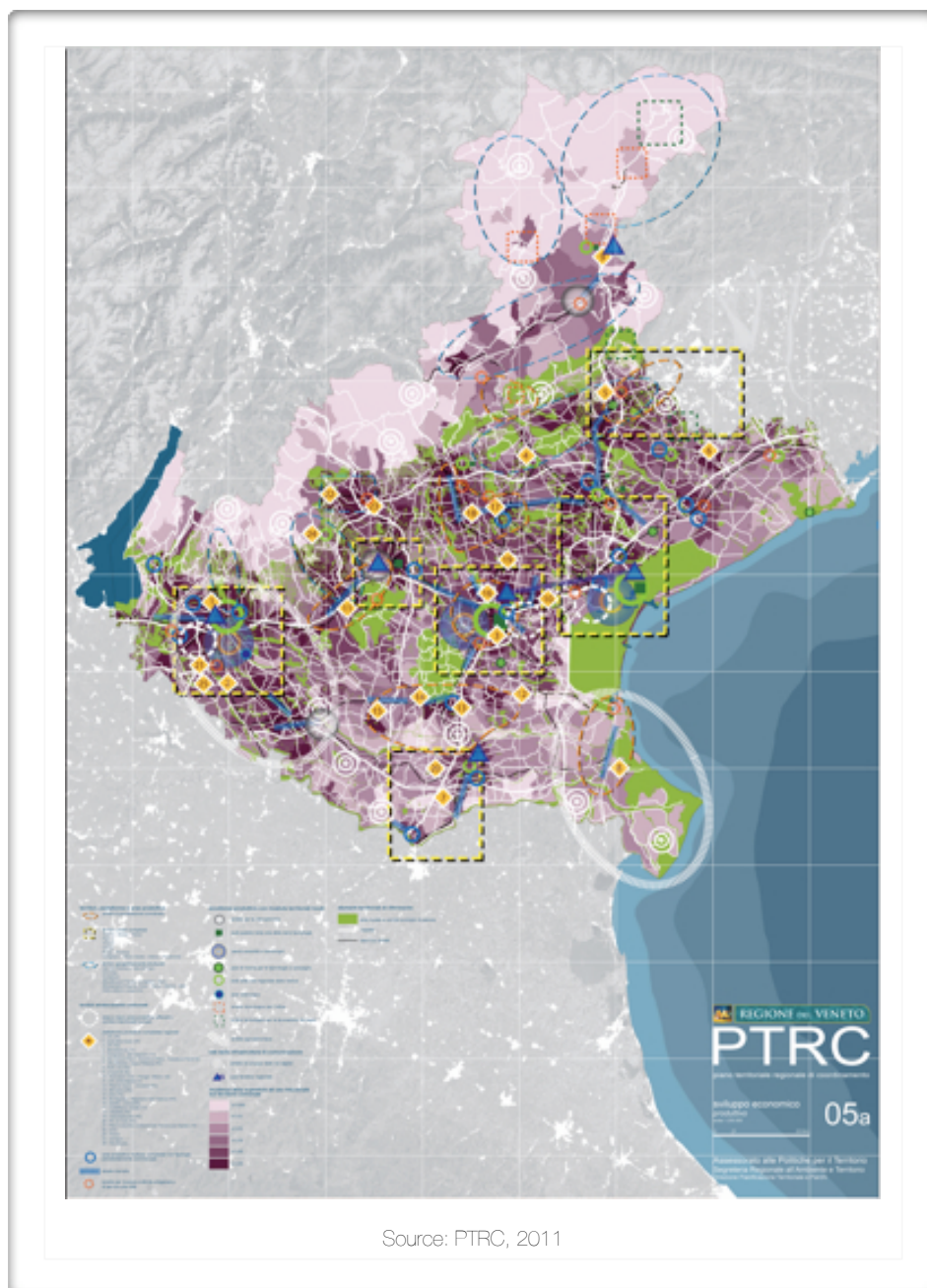
Having many independent poles has also limited the investments in infrastructure (as people and business could find everything they need around the same area) and encourage the rise of individualistic feelings in the region. Moreover, most of the facilities available in the Veneto region are there because they were thought as to serve the needs of industries, more in general of the market, rather than those of people living in the territory. The question remains, if the market has changed its rule, is it the framework still matching contemporary needs of a renewed economy and society or not?

As it has happened before in many other industrial and manufacturing-base regions around the world, such as the Ruhr Metropolitan region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métropole, also the Veneto region has been experiencing a decline of its successful model of economic growth due to the global crisis. According to Stefano Micelli the Veneto region had to face three "shocks" that required a profound process of economic reorganisation: the first shock is about the introduction of the euro currency in Europe; the second shock regards the increasing competition with the Asian market especially for clothes and shoes production; and the third shock is about the use of new technologies for information and communication that small-medium sized companies were not able to implement effectively for a long time (Micelli, 2010: 22-23).

Changes and challenges can be found both in the economic and social fabric of the region. Looking at some data made available by ISTAT-Italian National Institute of Statistics and some other statistical institutes, it is evident how the socio-economic landscape of the region has changed in the past years.

Starting from the economic situation, it can be seen how the economy has been suffering in the last ten years with a dramatic drop in the past three years, since 2007. *Box 15* shows figures of employment by sector and %GDP between 2000 and 2009 (Fondazione Nord Est, 2009: 43).

Looking at specific economic sectors involved, the "hard" sectors, such as manufacturing industries and constructions, show a relevant decline while the "soft" sector, identified with the services, seems to be more steady and be only partially affected by the overall crisis. This is also confirmed by Luca Romano (2011) who shows that employment rate grows in the agricultural (+14.6%) and service (+2.4%) sectors while it is declining (-11.9%) in the industrial sector. In this context it should be mention that unemployment hits especially the young bracket (15-34 year old) up to the 7.6%.

Box 15: The economic downturn in Veneto between 2000 and 2009 by GDP and by sector
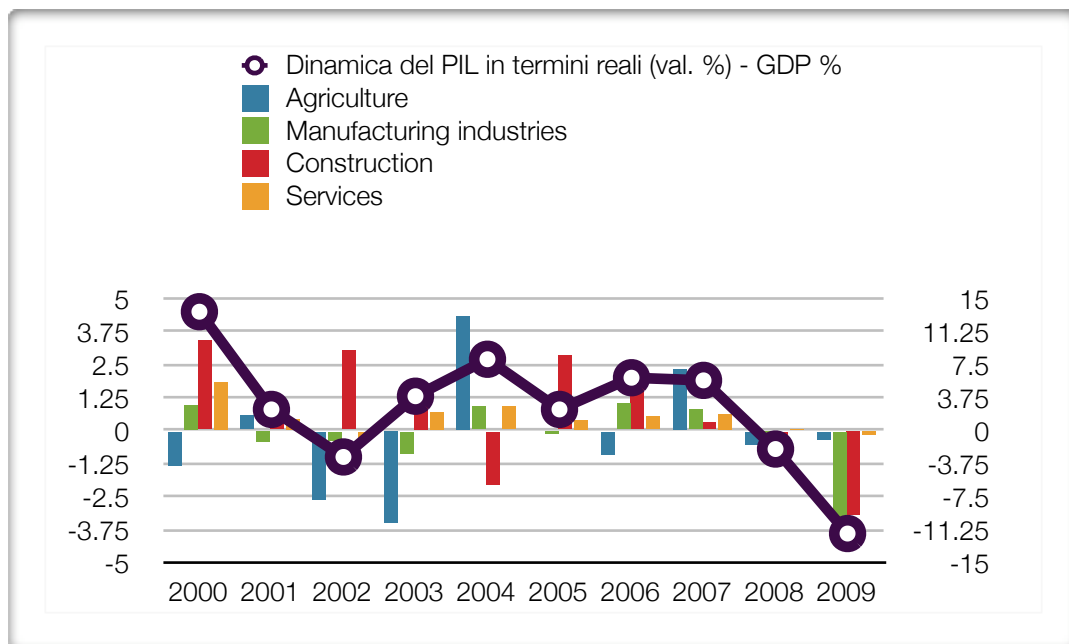
In times in which the industrial and manufacturing sectors are declining, the data about tourism in Veneto seems to go towards the opposite direction (*Box 16*). Since 2004 there has been an important increasing of number of tourists, positioning the Veneto region among the first destinations for tourists in Italy (ISTAT, Veneto). These figures indicate the attractive power that the Veneto region still have for outsiders.

Box 16: Presence of tourists in the Veneto region between 2000 and 2009
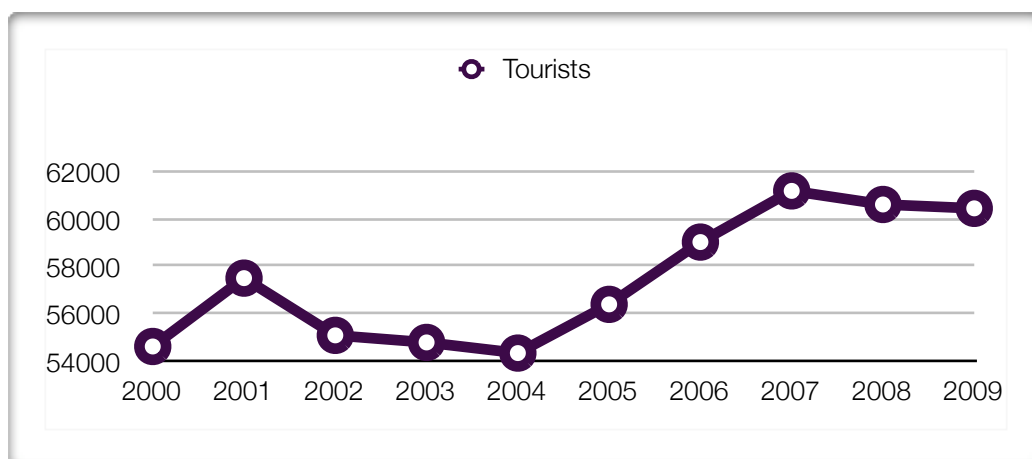
Demographics are also changing, due to ageing inhabitants, immigrant settlement and the rapid depopulation of historic cities. From a Veneto that was the first Italian region for number of migrants, between 1876 and 1976 about 3.300.000 people left Veneto to go abroad in search of a better life (Stella, 2003), to a Veneto land of immigration today. Due to the important economic growth of the last three decades, Veneto has turned into a land of immigration and has been attracting more and more immigrants since the 1990s and the projections forecast the same trend for the next decade (Osservatorio Regionale Immigrazione, 2008).

In 2008 the Italian national institute of statistics - ISTAT estimated that 403,985 foreign-born immigrants live in Veneto, equal to 10.2% of the total regional population against the national 7.5% and EU 6.5% average (Osservatorio Regionale Immigrazione, 2011). Even though waves of immigration have important impacts on social and cultural integration with the local population, still they are fundamental for the local economy as they provide key workforce, which is not available in the territory. moreover, foreign-born immigrants do contribute to increase the birth-rate that otherwise would continue to decline.

Box 17: Foreign-born residents in the Veneto Region between 1997 and 2009 and projections till 2029
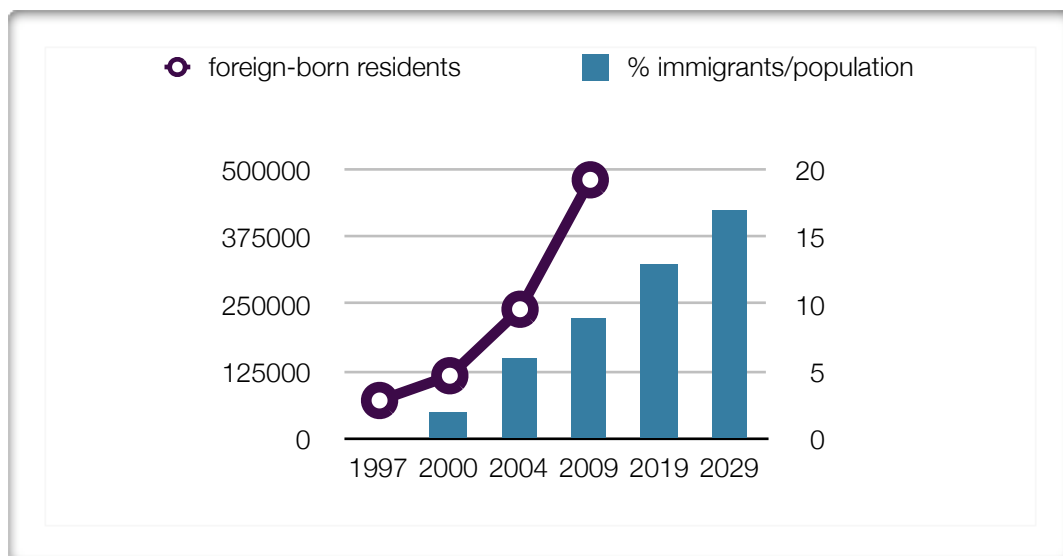
Having observed the changes in the economic structure of the region and the deep transformation of the social fabric, it is possible to conclude that the Veneto model of regional development based on the industrial production and local workforce is not that evident as it used to be because the conditions that made it possible have changed, the development has changed

its requirements (Rullani, 2006).

The analysis of the Veneto Region through the literature review, interviews with key actors and the media coverage (see *Appendix AI.1*) identifies some key aspects, such as the debate about the crisis hitting the Veneto region and its model, the length of the crisis, issues related the integration of the large and increasing percentage of foreign-born residents with local residents, unemployment and young people as the weakest part, that lead to the need to change and innovate within regional development. The discussion focuses on the need to start with an acceleration of the reorganisation of the economic and social system in order to promote effective growth and competitiveness in all the sectors, following the fast going phenomena of globalisation, competition, new technologies and innovation and, overall, an improved quality of life for the whole community.

5.3 Veneto as a polycentric region: challenges, tools and practices

5.3.1 Challenges for governing the Veneto region today

Looking at the Veneto region case study, current debates have focused on how the recent crisis has induced further reflections on new challenges. As it has been pointed out by Enzo Rullani, in the Veneto region there are no such big cities able to act as catalysts of services, professionals and facilities that rule the current economic system (Rullani, 2006). The Veneto region has to continue to rely on its small-medium size cities and to find a way to make them more connected, virtually and physically, in order to share resources and facilities able to compete with global standards of big cities today. How to do it?

From an analysis of the literature available on the subject, a thorough press review of local and national newspapers of the past two years, and some interviews with key actors involved in the regional development process, the pivotal aspect to start to think afresh about regional development and that has been identified as starting point for a new setting of the Veneto region is a reviewing of the governance system. The current debate on the media (see *Appendix AI.2*) suggests the need to put into effect a new governance that involve not only the political class of the region, but also actors from the other governmental sub- and supra-level, such as local authorities and national and EU organisations, together with private sector and the voluntary sector.

"Nord Est 2009", "Nord Est 2010" and "Nord Est 2011", which are the past three years' reports investigating society and economy of the Veneto and surrounding regions issued by Fondazione Nord Est, indicate some priorities to face the crisis:

- to sustain processes of integration among different subjects, people, institutions, territories, processes and between local and international dimensions;
- to encourage the replacement of old governmental and managerial class in favour of the new generation that should be able to manage the new process.

The two orientations are in line with the belief that the Veneto region do suffer of a lack of a co-ordinated and efficient governance system able to interpret and put together all the resources already available in the region (Messina, 2009; Romano, 2009).

Several authors do share the same standpoint on local and national newspapers, complaining about a weak political class with a conservative character that makes difficult for the region to progress.

In recent times the debate about having a more efficient regional governance has focused often

on the need to have a recognised "metropolitan region". Appendix AI.3 collects a series of articles that stress the idea of a metropolitan governance system for the Veneto region and support the idea that the application of the metropolitan model would open new perspectives on the ways the Veneto region is governed and would contribute to improve the overall regional situation. According to the press review available on the topic, it is largely believed that the Veneto metropolitan region is already there but it needs to be recognised by all the stakeholders (local communities as much as the political class) and organised, from both a social and a spatial perspective. It would be the first real organisation of a broad territory that for decades has followed mainly the rules of market rather than following the need of people living in. As described by the articles, the metropolitan model of governance at the regional level would choose to share resources and implement decision for the governance of the territory at a larger scale rather then on local base. The new concept of region for the Veneto also needs to open its boundaries to the outside world, not only in economic terms with the import/export market, but also in terms of cultural integration, infrastructure facilities and international cut. In fact, "if the local level seems privileged in the mobilisation of alternative development, this does not exclude the importance and, indeed, necessity of co-operation with agents outside the locality" (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2004: 251).

5.3.2 Spatial planning tools for governing the Veneto region

At the Italian level the Programma Regionale di Sviluppo[27]- PRS 2010-2015, is the programming activity that defines what the priorities are for a Region and provides the framework and a series of strategies for local development.

The PRS of the Veneto region outlines four priorities (PRS, 2007):
- the centrality of people and families within the Veneto society (welfare, health system, education and culture, cultural heritage);
- environmental and territorial resources (mobility, infrastructure, space organisation, environmental sustainability);
- driving forces of the Veneto economy (innovation, international relation, human capital, sectorial policies);
- institutional innovation and new governance.

This last priority is especially important because it sees as decisive for future regional development a multilevel governance perspective applied to multiple-stakeholders environments, where participatory planning and the acquisition of new knowledge become key practices for governing the region.

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[27] According to art. 8 - l.r. n. 35/2001

Within the Veneto region, in the last decade, there have been some efforts to build an integrated governance system through the use of regional networks. Some of those attempts have been promoted by the regional administration itself, such as PAT, PATI and IPA. Others are the results of some bottom-up initiatives, most of the times market-led.

The Piano di Assetto del Territorio - PAT, as defined by article 13 of the regional law 11/2004, defines aims and conditions of sustainability of all those interventions and transformations that are allowed in a specific territory and it is drawn by localities. In conjunction with PAT there are the so called PATI- Piano di Assetto del Territorio Intercomunali, or by topic, and they function involving in the same PAT different localities that share same kind of issues and objectives. PAT and PATI support the urban network theory and facilitate different localities to work together over a shared, often transversal, objective that can be identified as the so-called "common interest" of a broad territory. Still, PAT and PATI involve only given groups of stakeholders, mainly related to local administrations, excluding other actors that could be influential in the planning of their territory.

Among regional laws for the governance of territory, IPA - Intese Programmate di Area, seems to be the most appropriate tool for a new approach of governance for the Veneto region. IPA is a governing tool part of the decentralisation programme of the Veneto region and provided by the regional law 35/2001, through which the Region offers the possibilities to private and public actors and the voluntary sector to take part in the regional programming phase. IPA supports collaborations among local administrations that are only little institutionally influenced. They are characterised by a governance system that advocate multi-level relations in between local and regional administrations, and multi-actors working together for shared projects, public and private actors and the voluntary sector as well. Among the objectives of IPA there are: the promotion through a plan of the sustainable development of the area interested by a specific IPA; elaboration and sharing of economic, territorial and environmental studies; the drawing of policies to be advanced to the regional governing level; to find more efficient courses of action to achieve shared objectives; to make more clear local strategies to address different funding possibilities; showing the adjustments of local planning tools; etc.

The Veneto regional administration recognises 24 IPA within the regional territory. An example of IPA is the one that collect municipalities in the western part of the region, which is called VeGAL and is illustrated in the following *Box 18*.

Because its multi-level and multi-actors character, IPAs support social cohesion and are coherent with directives given by the European Union Cohesion Policy 2014-2020, which sets at the heart of the new development strategy the so called "functional regions", which are territories that do not always match administrative borders, but they are included in networks for strategic development.

GAL Venezia Orientale (VeGAL)

VeGAL is an agency for territorial development founded in 1995 among public and private actors belonging to the Western part of the Veneto region.

The mission of VeGAL is to work for the development of the territories of Western Venice/Venezia Orientale through inter-sectorial actions aimed at qualifying local systems, at integrating ambitious business sectors in the territory, and at strengthening local cultural identity. The objectives of VeGAL are:

- to support innovative initiatives promoted by private and public local operators as a response to the needs of both production and social realities in the territory.
- to bring together different entities operating in the territory with the scope of working together on a common goal.
- to qualify the local enterprise systems
- to widen community-based experiences and stimulate cooperative transnational initiatives.

GAL Venezia Orientale works in sectors involved in rural development, intended as virtuous integration of the various economic sectors affecting the area. These areas include tourism, agriculture, enterprise, environmental protection, and local services, with focus, above all, on integration and development of cooperative proposals.

The results of VeGAL's activities have been realised through the direct elaboration of the Plans for Territorial Coordination (L. 662/96, art. 2, commi 203 e ss., Plans for Territorial Coordination are agreements promoted by local administrations or by other private or public subjects with the aim to implement a set of actions for the local development of the area), the realisation of various local co-financing initiatives including fundraising and individual pilot projects. It concerns an activity of governance that has involved VeGAL's institutional bodies (Assembly of Partners, Management Board, and Office of Planning and Projects), as well as public and private entities and institutions aimed at creating development plans for "operational governance".

Information available at: http://www.vegal.it

In this context the network theory is interesting for the Veneto region because it sheds light on the capacity of a territory to achieve better results when differences among nodes (cities/stakeholders/functions/resources) are kept to avoid the homogeneousness of the area. The novelty lies on the focus on relations among nodes and to the approach that deals with a territory as a polycentric network and not only as a geographical area.

The three characteristics of polycentric urban regions (see *chapter 3.4.2*), which are also at the based of the polycentric urban network theory, can be applied to the Veneto region. Functional, strategic and cultural urban networks can all contribute in different ways to the consolidation of an effective governance system, a new approach to economic development, more attention to issues related social cohesion and better understanding of the value of landscape. In a traditional approach to urban planning, functional urban networks are the most used to solve connection problems among large regions. For functional urban networks is intended the whole skeleton made up of logistic networks, high speed connections, highways, broadband, ports, etc. In

Veneto there is a need of a single projects that makes the region the new hub for the south-east of Europe, with Corridor V, a single highway axes between Venice and Milan, high speed train to Trieste, a large airport platform to serve the whole region, and the new logistic place for portual matters in Europe. Are the infrastructure what the Veneto really needs?

Urban networks can be very different from traditional infrastructure. They can create intangible connections among immaterial poles or physical sites to achieve strategic objectives or to consolidate the cultural background of a territory. An example of strategic urban network within the Veneto region is that of UNIVeneto illustrated by *Box 19*.

Box 19: UNIVeneto, a strategic urban network

UNIVeneto, a strategic urban network

An attempt to think about a more integrated governance system, following the metropolitan region model and the urban network theory, is going to be applied to the university education structure. To become more competitive as a territory and with the aim to offer an improved quality of the education, the universities of the Veneto region got together to give birth to a new university institution called UNIVeneto. The universities of Verona, Padova and Cà Foscari and IUAV in Venice signed the agreement to develop a shared project. The first outcome is going to be the development of regional PhD programs in the economic and historical fields. This is an interesting experiment at the governance level as it show the importance of creating a co-ordinated university body that goes beyond individual cities. This new approach to the governance of education and research is also involving many research centres, both private and public institutions, in order to work together.

5.3.3 Mega-event strategy for the Veneto region

Around 10 years ago the Veneto region lost its chance to host a mega-event when some "cultural" delays stopped the realisation of the Expo 2000 in Venice. According to Fondazione Venezia 2000 the Expo was proposed as a provocative event after a long period of active cultural involvement for the reinforcement of the Northern-East part of the country. For Venice, together with the Veneto region, could have been a moment of a found balance with respect to many issues that were already threatening the Veneto model of territorial development. A laboratory for experimenting a new model of polycentric region with an achieved equilibrium among key actors involved in the process. Only in this way the Veneto region would have had that, still needed, internal and external lift towards a further sustainable development

(Fondazione Venezia 2000, 1995).

Already in the 1990s there was an awareness that what was really needed for the Veneto region, in order to guarantee an equilibrated economic growth, urbanisation and social development for the future, was an action based on a strategy able to activate transversal processes involving the economic, financial and cultural sector as much as the social fabric of the region.

After the Expo 2000 in Venice, there is a new opportunity for the Veneto region since the European Capital of Culture title for 2019 will go again, after Genova 2004, to an Italian city. Around seventeen Italian cities are about to take part in the bid. Among these, four are based in the Nordest region (Venezia, Verona, Bolzano and Trento). Some intellectuals and opinion makers are promoting the idea of creating a system of cities regionally-base able to offer a common programme as European Capital of Culture. As Roberto Morelli -chief editor of nordesteuropa.it- stated in the issue of June 2009, which was fully dedicated to "2019 Nordest Capitale", "...just for the bidding, even before the year of culture, the Nordest would understand for the first time its identity and its institutional status, the vision and some common objectives to be achieved. The unity of the cities could represent the diversity of the places together with their many similarities. To achieve positive outcomes the cities have to renounce to their own centricity in favour of a greater centrality, represented by the mega-city-region". This initiative could help the Region to strength the network of actors, resources and infrastructure of the area, to create a renewed governance of the territory based on co-operation and to reposition the Veneto region and surrounding territories on the international map.

Why not to try what other regions already did in Europe, to bid for the European Capital of Culture as a region, a large territory, instead of as an individual city? In the past editions of European Capital of Culture the European Community has already given preference to those cases bidding as larger territories rather than single cities. The first case of a region that was awarded the title of European Capital of Culture was the one of the Luxembourg and the Greater Region in 2007, followed by the Ruhr that won the title as a region in 2010 with Essen representing it. In the near future there are already two cases that present themselves as regions rather than cities: European Capital of Culture 2012 and 2013. The ECoC 2012, which includes Maribor as its capital and five other partner cities from the same region: Murska Sobota, Novo Mesto, Ptuj, Slovenj Gradec, and Velenjet, all together they defined themselves the East Cohesion Region based on the integration of Slovenian cities, covering the southern parts and the whole geographical eastern part of Slovenia. The ECoC Marseille-Provence 2013 promotes its regional scope as central to the cultural programme with the aim to give visitors an opportunity to discover a whole region.

5.4   Strategic paths for the Veneto region

5.4.1 Strategic directives for regional development

In order to achieve a better governance of the region it has been shown that the definition of some strategic lines of actions are needed to focus the future development of the territory under investigation.

Starting from the capability of a place while keeping in mind the challenges imposed by the crisis and the needs of a changing society, a feasible first step towards an effective regional development model it is the organisation of all the resources and stakeholders in the regional territory towards shared aims also called an "acknowledged common interest".

"Nord Est 2009", "Nord Est 2010" and "Nord Est 2011", which are the past three years' reports investigating society and economy of the Veneto and surrounding regions issued by Fondazione Nord Est, suggest several factors that are identified as strategic in the transition period the region is going through. Among all, there is a clear interest towards those activities involving creativity and culture that assume a central and strategic role for the identification of innovative strategies to tackle challenges regions are facing today:

1. changing the ingredients of economic growth: focus on culture and creativity;

   at the heart of the new process of development there are culture and creativity not only as new sectors of the post-industrial economy but also as transversal agents of the new production process covering from the industrial to the service sector;

2. challenging social fabric, issues of local identity and social cohesion;

   cultural economy also stresses the importance of territorial factors, such as the value of local identity, diversity and quality of life within territorial competition;

3. a renewed attention to the landscape to correct uncontrolled urbanisation of the past century and save what is still left undamaged;

   landscape is seen as a resource, there is a need to free the territory from the without regulation urban development of the old industrial times in order to follow the principle of quality, and also to be in line with EU policies in matter of landscape.

5.4.2 Changing the ingredients of economic growth: focus on culture and creativity

A third stage of capitalism sees the end of investments in manufacturing in favour of the growing of a network capitalism. In this new context a mixture of companies do not have in common their production as before but rather their interest towards innovation, technology, culture, sustainability, and quality among the others. In a region where the average industry is made up of small-medium size companies there is the need to act together to facilitate the formation of a critical mass.

At the economic level culture does have a strategic role for the definition of a new competitive context for cities and countries in the post-industrial society. The assumption starts from the identification of the role of innovation and creativity which are seen as crucial for the possibility to give new sense and providing new ideas to the production and consumption of goods (Rullani, 2004).

The selection of articles presented in *Appendix AI.4* collected on the topic of culture and creativity as drivers for a new economic growth of the region, focus on an idea that sees the arts and culture as strategic factors for future development.

The reflection starts from the fact that the Veneto region is the first Italian region for culture consumption in 2010 and the cultural demand is still increasing in 2011. The media coverage supports the idea that creativity, especially creative industries, are included in a new concept of "wealth" linked to the quality of life of people as workers as much as citizens. The articles also suggest to stop to think about culture as a tangible passive heritage that only need to be safeguarded, rather to culture with an active role in the promotion of a more sustainable development of territories, such as the spring for the creation of new job occupation. Some remarks are also related to combine arts and culture with the business sector. There are many ways to do that, from collaborative projects with artists that enter factories to the re-use of former industrial building to host cultural and creative activities.

Many different fields of work go under the label of creative industries, from design to architecture and fashion. Industrial districts are therefore changing into creative clusters of companies that work more on ideas than on products. In this framework the Veneto region can count an important fashion district that includes many international renowned brands with high culture and innovative content. Next to fashion, there is a new-born attention for innovative processes and high tech. The start-up system is well represented by H-FARM, which is the first private Italian incubator, with the aim of transforming innovative ideas into successful startups. In few years since its foundation in 2005 in the countryside of Ca' Tron, near Treviso, new offices were established in Seattle, Mumbai, and London.

In order to facilitate the growth of a new market economy there is the urgent need to update the governance system too and connect these new realities based on ideas to the old industrial system in order to innovative it. A reviewed governance structure can sustain the emerging of a

new kind of market where cultural and research networks act as catalysts of resources to produce awareness of the transformative times we are living in and able to connect products with services. Competition is therefore seen important not only when discussing about markets, but also in those fields that anticipate the market evolution, such as education, research and innovation.

5.4.3 Challenging social fabric, issues of local identity and social cohesion

The Veneto region is characterised by a contradictory attitude towards regional identity, which makes rather difficult to develop further social cohesion in the region. From one side there is the well known independent and competitive inclination to think by themselves: individually, as a village, as a city and province and as a region as well. Each of those actors tend to act independently from each other creating divergence that is difficult to overcome.

Within the Veneto region there are many cultural aspects that contribute to keep strong ties among difference urban centres and local communities. At the same time local diversities are considered very important, especially when thinking about traditions and folklore. In order to think about a single program for regional development both peculiarities - i.e. common background and diversity - should be taken into account.

On the top of that, new issues are growing with relation to immigrant communities. Veneto is a land of immigration due to its capacity to offer jobs in the industrial sector. Integration happens especially because the value given by local communities to work, as long as people produce economic growth for the region there is no matter of race. As pointed out by the fourth report by Caritas/Migrantes on social integration of immigrants in Italy (2003), Veneto appears at the first region for the rate of integration of immigrants. The report points out that only regular immigrants, who follows local rules and respect culture, habits and traditions of the place where they live in, are accepted and integrated within the system.

Today crisis is leaving also immigrant people out of jobs and integration issues started to grow. Regional policies are in between the promotion of policies for the integration among locals and immigrants and the creation of policies that tend to exclude the "others", like the proposal to have the dialect of the region as official language. There should be more effort in trying to improve the relationships among different localities, including both immigrants and locals, in order to activate new programs and projects that include all the citizens.

Even though the topic of integration among immigrants and local community is not explored that much in the local press, still it is a pivotal aspect for the future development of the region. The fact that one of the asset of the Veneto region is its strong cultural identity and ideology, in the time, has played a controversial position, moving in between being a factor of social

cohesion of the population but also a break within the same region, especially today with such a large of foreign-born communities that have different cultural identities and are seen as a danger for the local ideology.

Benetton and Nardini, two examples of territorial corporate responsibility

A worldwide famous example is Fabrica. Fabrica, Benetton's communication research centre, was set up in 1994. The centre is located in Italy, near Venice, in Villa Pastega Manera, an ancient villa built in the seventeenth century, which architect Tadao Ando restored and enlarged. This project included the creation of study areas, laboratories, offices, facilities such as a library and an auditorium, a cinema, meeting and refreshment areas.

Fabrica is an applied creativity laboratory, a talent incubator, a studio of sorts in which young artists come from all over the world to develop innovative projects and explore new directions in communication, from design, music and film to photography, publishing and the Internet. These artist-experimenters work to blurring the boundaries of culture and language and transgressing the traditional borders between a diverse range of communication mediums. The communication research at Fabrica services a wide variety of social causes and disciplines such as economics, social or environmental sciences. Because of that Fabrica contribute to face issues of social interest. How this relates to the social cohesion of the territory in which the cultural centre is based? Fabrica also works with the territory, bringing in international young creative people who contribute to the internationalisation and cultural exchange in villages and territories that are usually cut out from contemporary challenges and experimentation. More info at: http://www.fabrica.it/

A second example is the Garage Nardini. The Nardini, a leader company in the market of distillery, based in Bassano del Grappa in the province of Vicenza gives as a concession its former spaces of production for festival of urban culture. Garage Nardini is the result of the Nardini family's passion for contemporary art and the city of Bassano's necessity for a space to showcase the creativity of artists from all over the world.

The space, one of the disused buildings of the distillery in the heart of the city of Bassano del Grappa, is now open for events involving young people and international artistic communities. It is especially used to host street art events which find places for expressions with difficulties with local administrations. Among the latest festival, B-Motion (contemporary art festival) and INFART (underground music festival and urban art). More info at http://www.nardini.it/garage-nardini.html

With the objective of dealing with social cohesion and integration among different communities, a important part is also played by the private sector that have started to invest on social responsibility, moving around resources addressed to improve territories where companies are placed. New spaces for social interaction and culture exchange have been promoted. Companies

have decided to invest on their own territory rather than merely investing in international advertising. Corporate Social Responsibility[28] is nowadays more tied to the territory where the business is based. This approach to the improvement of social cohesion within the territory in which the company is based goes under the discipline of TSR - Territorial Social Responsibility. According to Donata Gottardi "TSR is the attention to the culture and well-being of people major competitive advantages of a territory. The Veneto region is among the first place for that as it only needs to exploit further its existing historical and cultural heritage" (Gottardi, 2007:30). Programs offered by companies to improve the social cohesion of the territory are most of the times related culture and creative activities.

In line with the two examples in the above *Box 22*, there are several more around the Veneto region. Most of those examples make use of former industrial spaces, contributing in this way to the regeneration of the regional landscape.

5.4.4 A renewed attention to the landscape to correct uncontrolled urbanisation and save what is still left undamaged

In 2009 the Veneto Region signed an agreement with the Italian Minister of Cultural Heritage in order to draft together the Piano Paesaggistico (the landscape plan) according to the directives of an official text that collects the national legislation in matter of cultural heritage and landscape, called Codice Urbani. The Piano Paesaggistico is meant to be a chapter of the Piano Territoriale Regionale di Coordinamento - P.T.R.C, which is the territorial plan for the region and it is aimed at integrating issues regarding the landscape within territorial and urban planning policies together any policy that can have a direct or indirect impact on the landscape, such as cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies.

The Piano Paesaggistico appears to be an important step implemented by the central regional administration towards the inclusion of municipalities and provinces in the governing of the regional territory and the search for a renewed meaning to its landscape. Moreover, the Piano Paesaggistico looks at safeguarding not only those areas that are already listed as in need of protection but also those neglected and rundown places and contemporary spaces, in order to answer to a single vision that sees the general improvement of the Veneto region landscape. The Piano Paesaggistico is going to be the policy framework for future actions in matter of

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[28] he European Commission initially defined Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as "a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis" (COM(2001)366). More recently the European Commission updated that definition stating that CRS is also "the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society". Respect for applicable legislation, and for collective agreements between social partners, is a prerequisite for meeting that responsibility. To fully meet their corporate social responsibility, enterprises should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders (COM(2011) 681: 6).

landscape and cultural heritage.

Next to parks and built heritage, the Veneto region has also had to face several issues related the impacts of spread industrialisation over the landscape. As it has been said earlier in the text, the little control imposed on urbanism during the industrial boom era induced to the proliferation of constructions without a comprehensive scheme on how urbanism should have developed in the region. Since the 1950s the urbanised territory has grown of 324% with only an increasing rate of the population of 32% (data provided by ISTAT). In the region there are about 1500 industrial districts, which means around 5/6 small manufacturing areas for each municipality (Vallerani and Varotto, 2005). Industrial buildings, houses, services were built without considering the non-built space in between them and the consequent space fragmentation, that space once used to be agriculture land and that today find difficult to take up new uses. A bird-eye view of the region show a continuity of buildings and infrastructure that is spread all over the territory.

Box 20: Urban settlement in the Veneo region

Source: P.T.R.C., 1992
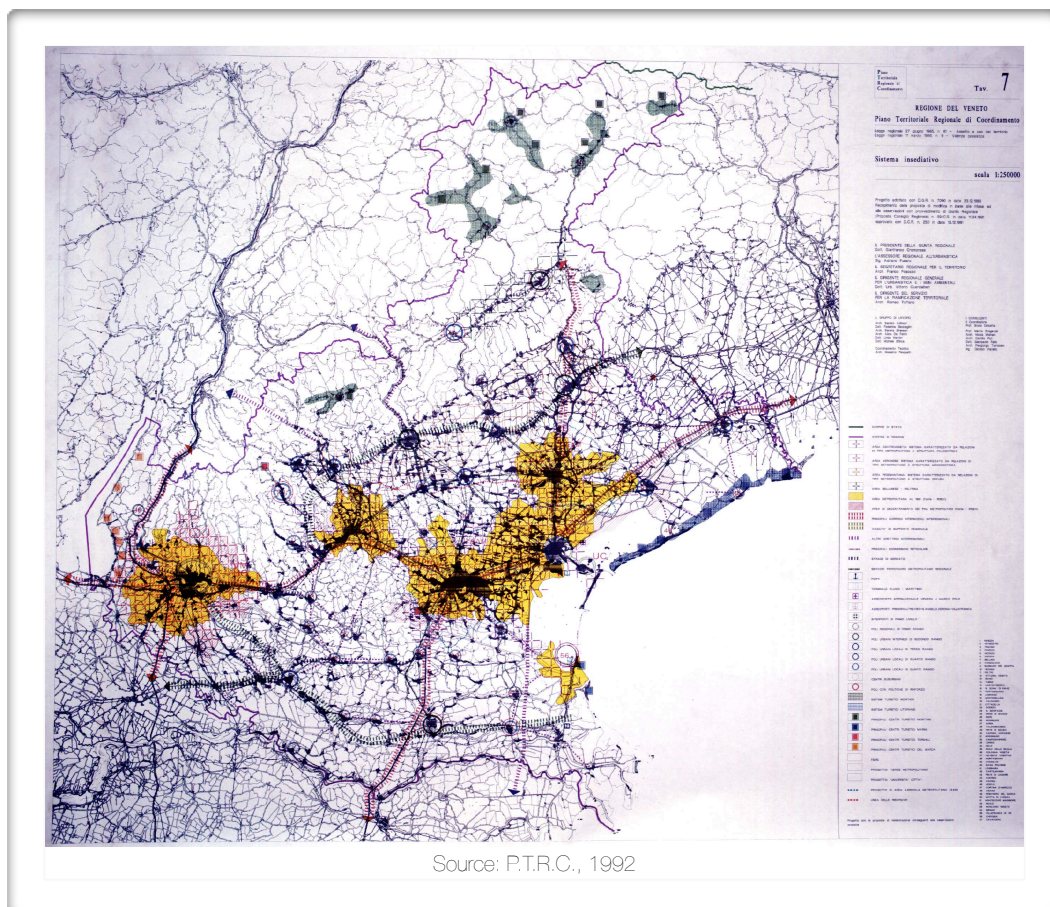
Today there are studies that investigate and discuss about a new typology of landscape for the Veneto region. In the next lines some remarks by three local thinkers. Marco Paolini defines today Veneto as the Terzo Veneto (third Veneto), which is the stage following the Primo Veneto (first Veneto), the era of beauties, and the Secondo Veneto (second Veneto) the era of concrete buildings and infrastructure. Terzo Veneto is today represented by the effort to save what it is left of the original Veneto landscape before the industrial invasion. According to the writer Guido Piovene, ugly buildings do not exist only because speculation but also because people do not fall in love with the places of their memories and roots anymore. The same concept is reinforced by the local poet Andrea Zanzotto who believes that saving the landscape of your own land means to save its soul and also the soul of the people who live there. Culture and creativity exist at the base of the soul and identity of a place. This is the reason why they are considered as strategic factors to give back and strengthening identity of places through restoring traditional values through contemporary tools.

Following the crisis and considering the large number of capannoni that were built between the 1980s and the 1990s to meet the economic boom, there are now many buildings that have been left empty and need to find a new use. The capannone has been for decades the emblem representing the identity of the Veneto region. This aspect makes even more interesting to think about converting the capannone into a space for culture and creativity. Renewed capannoni take on new meanings related to identity but at the same time this kind of regeneration processes allow to set systems and infrastructures for the arts and culture while stressing design and adorning the city with cultural concepts. In the Veneto context there have been several studies and insights on the topic of finding new uses for capannoni related with culture and creativity, such as the design workshop, "Capannone senza padrone - shed without an owner"[29], which was led by the architect Aldo Cibic and that was held in Pieve di Soligo at Villa Brandolin during the Festival Città Impresa 2011. Capannone senza padrone was aimed to collect desires of people that identify themselves into new communities that share similar expectations about the future and the reality of built volumes that remain unused, and putting together a challenge to the creation of contemporary life-styles in those spaces.

Again the media coverage (see *Appendix II.5*) reflects on contemporary issues affecting the Veneto region. Regarding landscape, the focus lies on the idea of "capannone" -an industrial building o warehouse- as symbol of the economic boom in the previous decades, the uncontrolled urbanisation of the countryside and today the image of a spoilt landscape. In the articles some opinion leaders comment on the state of the landscape today. Gian Antonio Stella and Sergio Rizzo (2010), in their recent book "Vandali. Assalto alla bellezza d'Italia" blame who allowed the uncontrolled urbanisation of the past decades without an adequate plan for the protection of the regional landscape. Luciano Benetton, president of Fondazione Benetton, invites to stop to think about major projects of urban development but rather to work on existing smaller realities that should be set in a network to be more efficient.

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29 For more info visit http://www.cibicworkshop.com

The importance of re-thinking today Veneto region landscape made up of capannoni for its future development is also stresses by by a series of projects put into action by Fuoribiennale, an international platform of actions about contemporary culture in the fields of art, design, architecture and that has its headquarters in Vicenza. Fuoribiennale, so far, has promoted and organised projects like Innovetion Valley, which defines the Veneto region as the area with the highest degree creativity in the world, and ProvinciaItaliana, a programme of events and activities taking place during the 12th Venice International Biennale of Architecture in Palladian villas, industrial areas, and abandoned factories around the Veneto region, it is a laboratory for rethinking the territory (see *Chapter 6.4.1*).

Box 21: Bassano del Grappa: good practices and archistars in the Vicenza province

Bassano del Grappa: good practices and archistars in the Vicenza province

The improvement of the quality of the landscape is also supported by the design and constructions of new buildings with high quality architecture and aesthetic contents that are well integrated with the surrounding landscape. Because the high cost, this kind of action is mainly supported by the private sector.
A couple of examples that well represent the new way of thinking are the Bolle of Nardini and the new redevelopment plan along the river Brenta in Bassano del Grappa, in the Vicenza province.

The Nardini company has contributed to the improvement of Bassano del Grappa landscape not only with its Garage (see the following paragraph) but also through the commission to the archi-star Massimiliano Fuksas of the Bolle, a contemporary architectural work created to widen culture on the world of distillates and liqueurs: the interior hosts a research laboratory and quality control centre, as well as an auditorium to receive clients and the ever-growing number of visitors. During the summer, Bolle becomes a setting for major events of dance, music, theatre and the showcase for top names on the Italian and international cultural scene, all events promoted by the Operaestate Festival with which the Nardini family has developed a close collaboration (for more info visit http://www.nardini.it/bolle.html).
In the same context, few kilometres up the river, a new architectural project has been commissioned to the UK based archi-star David Chipperfield. In this latter case, which was approved in 2010 but still under discussion, the project is more than a building, it is a urban restyling with the ambition to connect the two side of the river into a single urban space that has at its heart the former slaughter redeveloped into a cultural polyfunctional center. The most interesting aspect of this project, which will see the realisation maybe in the next 10 years, is that it is supported and funded by two important entrepreneurs and patrons of the arts coming from the Bassano del Grappa area, Renzo Rosso, founder of the fashion brand Diesel, and Luigi Bonotto, director of the textile company Bonotto SpA (for more info visit http://www.archiviobonotto.org).

Next to the investigation on the topic of landscape in the Veneto region, both the public sector and the private initiatives are taking up actions to improve the aspect of the territory. From one side there is an interest to find new uses for former industrial buildings in order to maintaining this precious industrial heritage. From another side there are some interventions aimed to improve the contemporary landscape through the design and construction of buildings characterised by cutting edge and high quality architecture. Cases of renewing of industrial buildings to host cultural and creative activities are many, more or less famous according their scope as spaces for local communities, such as the Lanificio Conte in Schio near Vicenza, a former building for textile manufacturing converted into a multifunctional space by the local administration for cultural activities and part of the eco-museum for the archeological industry of the area.

5.5   Culture and territorial development in Veneto

The analysis starts from an overview of the place of culture-led strategies within the broad framework of policies of the Veneto Region. It can be noticed a twofold panorama: a conservative (or traditional) definition of culture, cultural policy and culture-led strategies at the governmental level and a more progressive understanding of the concept of culture in the private-led and in EU-led initiatives.

In order to give an overview of existing cultural polices and culture-led strategies in the region, two macro categories have been identified, namely "culture for consumption" and "culture as a process", to represent the panorama described above.

5.5.1   Veneto: the first Italian region for culture consumption

This first category stands for the more conservative understanding of the concept of culture as high-arts or traditional culture. This interpretation of culture can be found in all those sectors controlled by regional and local governments.

The Veneto region can count on a very vast cultural heritage that is protected, preserved and promoted following international, national and regional legislation. Museums, villas, monuments, parks, are part of a rich heritage together with languages and folkloristic events, libraries and archives. For instance within the Veneto territory there are about 3477 registered villas, which means that about 91% of the municipalities in the Region host a villa in their territory. This data indicates the amount of cultural heritage existing in the area that is one of the factors that makes the Veneto region the first destination for cultural tourism in Italy and the presence of tourists is increasing at fast pace.

The Regione del Veneto allocates funding and promotes events to communicate this vast heritage and to keep it alive. The Regional administration categorises "culture" into three areas of intervention[30]:

1. cultural activities and performing arts: cultural activities, celebrations, live performances (music, theatre, dance), filming and audiovisual productions, publishing, identity and Veneto language;

2. cultural heritage: books, historical, architecture and art heritage, cultural services and activities, archeological sector, museums, libraries, archives and cultural landscape;

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30 For further information see the web-site of the Regione del Veneto at http://www.regione.veneto.it

3. strategic projects and EU policies: EU, national and regional funding that are not ordinary but that can be activate for the development of specific cultural projects.

The above categorisation of culture into three distinct strands indicate that the Veneto regional administration is still tied to a very traditional idea of culture that concerns cultural goods and only some intangible heritage, such as languages, identity or celebrations.

The Veneto Region lacks a document illustrating the guidelines of its cultural policy. Even in the last Veneto Region document "Piani e Programmi Regionali - PRS, Programma Regionale di Sviluppo" (Regional Plans and Programs - Regional Development Program) issued in 2007, the place of culture within regional development is very little and still focused on the conservation and protection of cultural heritage (assets) from one side and the safeguarding of regional traditions, such as culture, on the other side. In a document of almost 300 pages, the place of culture covers not more than 2 pages. Moreover, there is no reference to culture or creativity neither in the other sections, such as that dedicated to the economic development of the region. Whilst the Veneto Region has to follow the directives of the new national Rules for cultural and environmental heritage (Codice dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali, d.lgs. n-42), the so called Bassanini Law (Legge 15 marzo 1997, n.59), which promoted regional devolution, allows more decisional power to region in matters of valorisation and promotion of the regional cultural heritage. This means that the regional administration should be free in boasting their own program for cultural development, to propose more innovative practices and, at least, a sound cultural document policy to provide a framework for cultural activities in the region.

In this context the discussion is about an interpretation of culture which sees it a "passive" concept and limited to the conservation of past heritage, tangible and intangible, and to put on a show the existing cultural assets. In the category of "culture for consumption", therefore, culture manly refers to cultural tourism, it acts as tool for place marketing and it is a window for the city.

Cities of art[31], also known as city of tourism, are very popular in Europe and Italian cities represent the best example for this category of cities that base they renovation policies upon the relation between culture, cultural events, cultural heritage, and tourism. The definition of a development strategy focused on these factors is seen as a priority and as a fast way to increase the value of the urban and regional areas since those have impacts on all the social actors (Bianchini and Parkinsons, 1993). The strategy of cities of art, which was very popular around two decades ago, is considered today as an obsolete practices because the specificity in its contents. When transforming a city in need of renewal into a city of arts there is always the risk to incur in an expensive beautification of a place that may cause the exclusion of some groups of the society from the enjoyment of the city-museum. Instead of development we can often speak about the death of cities, what is actually happening in cases like the one of Venice.

Moreover, Pier Luigi Sacco and Giorgio Tavano Blessi point out how "the focus on tourism

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31 Gianfranco Mossetto defined the art city as a "complex cultural asset with its own economic characteristics, which make it possible to study its functions of supply and demand" (1992: 4)

clearly downplays the role of innovative and creative cultural production at the expenses of seeking events that capture the general consensus, i.e., blockbuster exhibitions and shows running on the beaten tracks. […] the emphasis on tourism naturally leads itself to the consolidation of a room-and-board-, souvenir-rent-based economy that essentially sells out the city's cultural clichés through a progressive trivialisation of its cultural and historical identity and sees residents as beneficiaries in economic rather than in cultural terms" (Sacco and Blessi, 2007:7-8).

To conclude, it is clear that cities of art exchange their intrinsic culture and opportunities of sustainable development for an economic income which lasts temporary until having spoiled the available resources of the place. At the same time, investing in major art projects can guarantee visibility and the meeting of place marketing objectives that are important for the competitiveness of the region.

Within the Cities of Art framework, in the past few years there has been a new sensibility towards policies and strategies related to contemporary art. In March 2003 the Italian State together with Regions and local authorities signed an agreement called "Patto per l'arte contemporanea"[32] (convention for contemporary art) with the intent to set up common actions for the growth of the public cultural heritage with new ideas and works. The "Patto per l'arte contemporanea" is an important step for the building of a national network of places, projects, works and activities related to creativity and arts, through the identification of a network of existing places of excellence and the creation of new and innovative models of management of centres for the promotion of contemporary art, educational activities, communication and information about contemporary art in Italy.

The result of the Convention for contemporary art signed in 2003 is an interesting opening up of new activities and practices. Among the novelties, special attention has been given to activate collaborations between the private and the public sector and, at the same time, there has been a great attention on the rehabilitation of abandoned spaces with the aim to find for those places a new use up to date with contemporary needs. Juts to mention one example, the C4 centre for contemporary art in the province of Vicenza, a villa devoted to contemporary art and laboratory of new ideas, it is an example of best practice of collaboration among different stakeholders and rehabilitation of the Palladian villa (*Box 23*).

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32 The Patto per l'Arte Contemporanea is part of the national PSC-Patto di Stabilità e Crescita (SGP-Stability and Growth Pact). The Stability and Growth Pact is a rule-based framework for the coordination of national fiscal policies in the economic and monetary union (EMU). It was established to safeguard sound public finances, an important requirement for EMU to function properly. The Pact consists of a preventive and a dissuasive arm. (see http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/index_en.htm)

C4: training innovation, partnerships, and heritage

C4 – Caldogno Contemporary Culture Centre – is a new laboratory and research centre dedicated to contemporaneity, inaugurated in 2006, in a suggestive setting, the Palladian villa of Caldogno (Vicenza). As explained by his artistic curator, Luca Massimo Barbero, C4 "It's not a museum. It's not an exhibition space. It's not a "place to visit". Instead, it is a laboratory of thought". It is, in fact, a "laboratory" of research into contemporaneity that involves teachers, artists, public administration directors and corporate executives all sharing the goal of encouraging innovation and creativity as tools that can be used in their respective fields.

Among all the interesting and innovative aspects of C4, I believe that three of them should highlighted as good practices:

- the content of project: C4 is a project founded on an innovative method of training that uses contemporary art as a key tool. Its originality derives from a new conception of territorial identity and economic development that defines a strategic system for new cultural and territorial development policies that penetrates the social and economic fabric;

- the involvement of different stakeholders: supported by public and private institutions working alongside the business world, the C4 was first funded by the Veneto Region, the Province of Vicenza and the Caldogno Municipality. Among several private partners that have sustained with continuity or on project based C4, UniCredit Group, through its UniCredit & l'Arte programme, and A Scuola di Guggenheim (At School with the Guggenheim), an educational project of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, have been very involved with people and resources from the beginning;

- the original setting: the home of C4 is a combination of a traditional cultural heritage, the Palladian residence Villa Caldogno, and an impressive historical heritage, a bunker from the Second World War. The didactic approach is also founded on the dynamics of the relationship between territory, tradition and contemporary culture, that is evident in its spaces as well.

Information available at: http://www.c-4.it
and photos by Massimiliano Lacertosa © European Creative Cities

5.5.2 Understanding culture as a process in the Veneto region

When thinking about culture as a good for consumption, there is a risk, as suggested by Pierluigi Sacco in an article for the Italian newspaper Sole 24 Ore, that culture will be increasingly socially legitimised as any other form of entertainment, because its capacity to create consensus and generating economic growth. Culture is a lot more than that. It acquires social and economic meaning only when it is intrinsic to them (Appendix AI.4, "Non si vive solo di grandi eventi).

Culture, in fact, can also be understood not only as an outcome but also as part of a process, as a strategic factor that contribute to economic, social and culture development of the region. In the "culture as a process" category, culture is the strategic factor from which creativity develops, it is part of the so called "knowledge based economy", it is the driver of innovation. Moreover, it is the culture of people that makes up their identity.

Charles Landry's work on the Creative City is about an inclusive and participatory city where arts and culture are means and practice of place making and living. Culture and creativity are "ways of doing", set against the dead hand of bureaucracy or non-democratic planning. In this vision, culture is embedded in everyday life and can be a strategic factor for the development of the areas indicated as crucial for the future development of the region. Andy Pratt reflects on Charle Landry's work on the Creative City and defines it as "useful corrective" (2008:35), the thesis is not about consumption, but about process.

In line with this approach, the cultural district is a model for both economic and territorial development and planning. The cultural district model was first theorised in the 1990s by Hilary Anne Frost-Kumpf (1998) and later by several authors in Italy, such as Walter Santagata (2000, 2002, 2006), Pier Luigi Sacco and Pedrini (2003), Cuccia and Walter Santagata (2004) and Valentino (2003). The cultural district model follows the principles of the Marshallian industrial agglomeration theories, which explain that clustering of industrial activity is based on pure economic rationales such as reduction of transaction cost, share of resources and risk minimisation (Marshall, 1890; 1919). In the opinion of Mattias Legnér and Davide Ponzini, the term district in relation to culture may range "from a simple portion of space including a given number of cultural activities to a more complex insight in the way culture, creativity and entertainment organise in urban and regional environment" (2009: 17).

Some example of Italian industrial districts, which produce design goods based on the local culture and tradition, are also considered as cultural districts: from art ceramics in Faenza, Deruta and Caltagirone to string musical instruments in Cremona, textiles in Biella and jewellery in Arezzo, Vicenza and Valenza Po (Santagata, 2009: 26). There are many other examples of culture districts in Europee and overseas. Just to mention some the Mount Vernon Cultural District in Baltimore (Ponzini, 2009), MuseumQuartier in Vienna (Mokre, 1998).

In the last decade Pier Luigi Sacco developed further the concept of cultural district proposing a new model called "advanced cultural district". The issue of the advanced cultural district has

interesting connections to several lines of research in apparently diverse fields. Three basic aspects of culture-driven development are recognised as integrated parts of the advanced cultural district model: the competitiveness-based urban renovation model of Michael Porter; the creativity-based attraction model of Richard Florida; and the capability-based model of Amartya Sen (1994, 2002), which underlines the central role of a general social involvement in capability building activities as a prerequisite for viable economic development. In a way, the "advanced cultural district" model ideally encompasses all these aspects in a common theoretical perspective where the crucial integrating role is played by cultural innovation and production and by its gradual transmission to different industries and fields of activity (Sacco and Blessi, 2007:5).

Regarding economic growth, reports have recently shown that the creative industries continue to grow (unlike many other sectors) in many European states. According to the last research work by Pierluigi Sacco and Christian Caliandro, "Italia Reloaded", there is a strong connection between cultural production and innovation. And Italy, included the Veneto region, needs innovation to boost its regional development (Sacco and Caliandro, 2011). In 2010 Italy scored only the 17th position for innovation and the 12th for cultural production in Europe. The Veneto region have stopped to produce new ideas, and it is became very marginal to the creativity world.

Even though this latter understanding of culture is mainly supported by private initiatives, academic research, and EU program, there is an increased interest of the Veneto Region to investigate further about these trends that are already consolidated practices abroad, through the commission of studies and the promotion of specific projects.

Looking at the two research programs mentioned in *Box 24* it is interesting to note that both projects have been funded by EU programs that do not set culture among their priorities. The fact that the DiCE project was funded by INTERREG[33] and the project by MACLab by the ESF[34], confirms that "culture" and "creativity" are moving out from traditional spheres controlled by cultural policy documents and acquiring more importance in other areas such as cross-borders regional cooperation and social cohesion. Culture is addressed as one of the tools to achieve development of the territory and communities that live there.

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33 INTERREG is an initiative funded under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) with the aim to support cooperation between regions of the European Union. Started in 1989, INTERREG is now at its fourth edition for the time frame 2007–2013 (http://www.interreg4c.eu).

34 The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the EU's Structural Funds, set up to reduce differences in prosperity and living standards across EU Member States and regions, and therefore promoting economic and social cohesion (http://ec.europa.eu/esf)

Studies and projects that see culture as a process

Progetto DiCE, Distretto Culturale Evoluto della Regione del Veneto. Rapporto finale per l'Analisi ed elaborazione di un sistema di distretti culturali nei territori veneto e sloveno.
The Veneto Region, within the framework of the operational program INTERREG IIIA Italia-Slovenia, commissioned to the IUAV University of Venice, which worked together with the University of Littoral in Koper-Capodistria, Slovenia, an innovative project of mapping of the region Veneto and the northern Capodistria. The aim of the project was to create a System-Wide Cultural Districts. System-Wide Cultural Districts sees Culture as the activator of the local social and economic processes and it is founded on the premise that culture can be a primary platform of communication between all the economic and social subjects in a particular area, becoming an instrument of aggregation and development (Sacco and Ferilli, 2008).

Creative districts in the Veneto region
The M.A.C.Lab - Laboratory of Arts and Culture Management - Department of Management, Ca' Foscari University of Venice has been commissioned by the Veneto region a study to investigate creative districts in the region and the strategic adaptability of creative industries economy. The first report with the results should come out in Spring 2012 after the first year of field investigation. The research is funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) under the chapter of "Regional competitiveness and occupation".

Through these research works the Veneto Region and its private partners wish to understand further the creative sector in order to improve the effectiveness of its cultural policy.

A new understanding of the concept of "culture" and the potential of cultural activities for the further development of the region can be found in Documento di Programmazione Economico Finanziaria - DPEF 2012[35], cultural policies are meant to secure in the territory creativity, cultural diversity in terms of richness and exchange.

According to the text (in Italian) in *Box 25* below, to sustain culture means to sustain social and economic growth. There is the need to renew the concept of culture that is still too tied to only high arts and cultural heritage in favour of a more open understanding of culture that enhancing its social and economic value. In order to achieve a common vision where culture can contribute as a strategic factor, actors who work in the cultural filed have to be involved in networks that deal with urban and regional development.

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[35] Documento di Programmazione Economico Finanziaria - DPEF (Document for the economic and financial planning) is, together with PRS (Regional program for development), Sectorial Plans, PAS (Plans for implementation and expenditure), and the drafting of balances, one of the planning tools indicated by article 7 of the regional law no. 35 of the 29th of November 2001 "New regulation for planning", that sees planning as implementing tool of political action (DPEF, 2012).

Box 25: Cultural policy in the framework of economic and financial planning

Cultural policy in the framework of economic and financial planning

"Sostenere la cultura come opportunità di crescita sociale ed economica
La coesione sociale rientra innegabilmente tra le possibili funzioni e potenzialità attribuibili alla cultura. Assumono, pertanto, rilevanza strategica le azioni volte a sostenere e rendere convinzione comune il forte valore sociale ed economico della cultura, liberandola da quei preconcetti che tendono ancora oggi a confinare i beni e le attività culturali tra i "costi a perdere", anziché includerli tra le opportunità, particolarmente forti ed identitarie, e tra le strategie per la crescita sociale ed economica.
Per il raggiungimento di questo obiettivo e per ottenere il riconoscimento del ruolo della cultura, che rappresenta uno degli elementi costitutivi dello sviluppo del sistema economico del territorio, anche in virtù della componente di creatività e di innovazione che essa porta nella filiera produttiva, si rende necessario che la Regione del Veneto governi il complesso sistema dei beni e delle attività culturali, stimolando i soggetti a rapportarsi con il territorio e a dialogare con tutti coloro che operano in esso con finalità medesime o affini. Si intende pertanto agire in una logica di rete, capace di valorizzare il contributo che ciascuno porta al sistema e che, al tempo stesso, permetta di ottimizzare e razionalizzare gli investimenti nel settore." (DPEF, 2012:3)

5.6   Conclusion

Chapter 5 explains that the Veneto region is one of the administrative regions of Italy, but it is also a relational space, an industrial region that grew out from the manufacturing boom of the past decades and eventually a territory strongly characterised by specific cultural identity and ideology. Because its process of fast urbanisation, the Veneto region is an agglomeration of factories combined with residential areas and agricultural lands where little respect has been given to the safeguarding of the landscape while historical city centres are undergoing a process of museification.

Whilst academics and opinion leaders discuss about the Veneto region and whether to consider it a territory with given characteristics that make it comparable to world mega-cities in the globalisation era, the image of a contemporary territory undergoing profound transformations is becoming more evident with its skyscrapers, new road networks connecting cities with cutting-edge lighting and contemporary design, home of many internationally renown brands' head offices, etc. At the same time, it is the same region that have not found an agreement yet to build the high speed train facilities that should connected the western part of the country with the neighbour Slovenia, topic in line with the EU directives of Corridor V. It is also the region that hosts more than 20 universities which are currently competing among them but they are unable to create a shared vision to be competitive nationally and internationally, increasing the overhead costs and the scattering of public funding. The model of economic development that made the Veneto region one among the best practices for regional development around the world in the past decades is now suffering because the challenges imposed by globalisation and the overall crisis hitting cities as much as regions.

Within this framework, the Veneto Region is facing a moment of change that is comparable to what the Basque Country, the Ruhr metropolitan region and Lille and its mètropole already experienced few decades before. Most of the industries have ended to make their prosperity out of low-cost manufacturing systems. Those businesses that are surviving the crisis are thriving thanks to several investments in innovation, territorial competition, design, high quality products, etc.. Also cultural consumption and the average level of education is increasing. All these changes did not happened overnight, they are the result of a long process of profound transformations that have lasted almost 20 years and has affected the social fabric of the region as much as the territory and its spatial organisation.

The polycentric character of the Veneto region, which have contributed to the development of industrial districts and the consequent economic growth, is today a weak factor for the Veneto region. The region has grown in terms of population, products and exchange flows, and its polycentric character is not able to answer efficiently to today's demands as the region lacks a

structured central organisation that can have the control over the web of nodes. It becomes very difficult to catalyse resources and people around a territory characterised by spread urbanisation and where many different nodes, such as towns or small cities, offer competitive realities. The global crisis had an affect on the economic Veneto model too, making it obsolete with new challenges, such as the change of the economic system in favour of the service economy and the change of the social fabric that have transformed the territory from a land of migration to a land of immigration with a 10.2% of the population made up of foreign-born residents in 2008. The crisis of the Veneto model has also highlighted some critical aspects of the Region that had always been underestimated by the governing elite as much as by most of the stakeholders involved in the process of regional development.

The first step towards a new understanding of regional development for the Veneto region able to deal with today challenges is to find a "common language", a vision able to offer some specific directions for the long-term development of the region.

In the past few years there have been several initiatives that have tried to face the challenges listed above. Those initiatives are signs of understanding and awareness of the need to change and correct some of the aspects that have characterised the region until now but that might not be sustainable anymore. The Veneto region administration has proposed some programs to implement new ways of governing a large territory through coalition of municipalities, such as PAT, PATI and IPA. The challenge is to think about a system that can be transversal and integrated at the same time, able to govern the territory following some strategic directives and by theme rather than by geographical proximity.

For the case of the Veneto region three aspects have been identified as "wounds" that need to be recovered: economic decline, spoiled landscape, lack of social cohesion. The same three "wounds" are reversed to become strategic factors for the new process of regional development: innovative practices, quality, research and creativity at the heart of the new economic virtuous cycle; a renewed attention to the landscape to correct chaotic urbanisation of the past century and to save what is still left undamaged; and to avoid disparities, inequalities and improve overall quality of life of people.

These are not the only areas of intervention, but for the purpose of the study the three areas indicated above are especially interesting because they combine aspects of local and regional development with the use of culture and creativity as strategic factors for the achievement of the desired outcomes. The cultural factor act as common denominator for innovative approaches to regional development.

As much as functional urban networks, also identity and cultural urban networks can be useful to face today challenges. For example, an understanding of cultural identity and shared values within the same territory can make collaborative projects easier to be implemented. At the same time, the identity of the region is a distinctive factor for setting the territory on the map of European regions.

In the Veneto region there are few practices taking place, or still being planned, where culture assumes a central role for the further development of the region.

Specific culture-led strategies are thought as platforms and laboratories for testing a new typology of regional governance that could be implemented, in the future, to govern the Region. The new governance system proposed through the implementation of culture-led strategies is based on the interaction among the variety of stakeholders and the combination of resources available in the region. People and institutions work together to achieve shared goals.

Updating governance, finding new drivers for economic growth, encouraging social cohesion and giving value back to the landscape, cannot be considered as independent areas of intervention. Most of the strategies analysed or proposed tend to involve different aspects of different areas, covering in a horizontal way the three tracks, which often influence and co-operate with each other through the network metaphor.

CHAPTER 6

Comprehensive culture-led strategies as laboratories for regional development in Veneto

6.1 Introduction

Every year the Veneto region boasts several cultural events and projects that make it a very cultural active region, from small events to worldwide famous festivals such the the Venice Contemporary Art Biennial.

Among all the cultural events promoted in the region, the past decade have seen the flourishing of some cultural projects that have not only provided cultural events for the territory but also have inspired and promoted some aspects of regional development. The novelty about those cultural events, which can be also understood as culture-led strategies, is to serve the territory on several levels: they provide cultural activities for local communities, they attract tourism, they catalyse resources and actors around the same focus and, above all, they can transform territorial "wounds" into territorial strengths.

The aim of this chapter is to look at some relatively new culture-led strategies already implemented in the Veneto region to see whether their innovative approach to culture and issues related to their territory could be a promising methodology to implement new strategies for the future development of the region. In this context I refer to culture-led strategies as laboratories for new practices of regional development.

I believe that practices such as the Opera Estate Festival, Festival Città Impresa, Provincia

Italiana together with InnoVetion Valley and European Capital of Culture 2019 can be considered positive efforts to use culture as a strategic factor for the development of a vast territory and to achieve several different objectives at the territorial level that are usually achieved through other means.

Among the examples illustrated in the chapter, some are culture-led projects that, in the time, could become culture-led strategies for regional development (Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa); others have been created with the specific aim to be strategies based on culture for the future development of the region (Provincia Italiana/InnoVetion Valley and European Capital of Culture 2019). Even if the histories of their foundation might be different, they do share some characteristics that I believe to be relevant for the future development of the region and cannot be found in more traditional cultural events.

In the following pages the study will investigate the potential of those culture-led strategies for "filling up" current "empty material and immaterial spaces". For material spaces I mean the spoiled landscape and several former industrial spaces, "capannoni", that used to serve manufacturing and industrial production around the region. Immaterial spaces to be filled up are those related with the relation space, such as the identity of the region and the lack of a structured governance system. In between material and immaterial spaces, there is the new economy with its need to renew its production and its content.

6.2   Innovative practices: overview of festivals and strategic projects

Opera Estate Festival, Festival Città Impresa, Provincia Italiana and European Capital of Culture 2019 are only some of the cultural initiatives that could be considered interesting for the territorial development of the Veneto region. I have chosen to discuss about those four cases as I believe they are all important efforts directed to matching culture, as a strategic factor, with the polycentric character of the region.

Box 26: Overview of a selection of cultural initiatives around the Veneto region

	focus	since	promoters	territory involved	funders
Opera Estate Festival	Opera, dance, theatre, concerts, performances	1981	Municipality of Bassano del Grappa Veneto regional government	35 municipalities around Pedemontana	Public+Private Region, local municipalities, national and local sponsors
Festival Città Impresa	Debates on local and global issues involving cities and businesses.	2008	nordesteuropa.it Corriere della Sera + several municipalities	22 municipalities within the Veneto region	National (UniCredit and Telecom) and local sponsors
Provincia Italiana (InnoVetion Valley)	Strategic planning for the Veneto region	2010 2008	Fuoribiennale Centro Studi Usine	Vicenza, Padova and their provinces	Private sponsors
ECOC 2019	European Capital of Culture program	2019	nordesteuropa.it Fondazione Nord Est Fondazione Cuoa Gruppo Giovani Imprenditori Confindustria Veneto	Venice and the Veneto region	EU funding Regional funding Private sponsors

Among those cultural initiatives, some of them were founded on the idea of promoting cultural events in the region and only later on they have been appreciated for having a more than only an impact on culture consumption in the territory; others have been thought from the beginning as culture-led strategies for territorial development, starting out from culture and with the aim to achieve a broad range of objectives.

Starting from the oldest one, the Opera Estate Festival, which celebrated its 31st edition in 2011 since its foundation, it can be described as one of the first example of spread culture-based event able to tie together innovation and tradition and to work as a network on multiple levels. The Opera Estate Festival represents a case in which a traditional cultural policy promoted by a local administration -the municipality of Bassano del Grappa and later together with the Regione del Veneto- has created an event that is having an important impact on the municipality itself but also on the larger territory where it is based. Today, the Festival involves around 35 municipalities in the Veneto region with a program of 400 events over two months in the summer season. From a cultural perspective the Festival is an excellence for contemporary dance. Today the Festival promotes several collateral events, mixture of cultural activities, dance, cinema, music, theatre, opera and contemporary urban culture. Innovation lies in the fact that it is not just an event but also a time dedicated to research that involves the audience as much as artists, offering new aesthetic experiences together with insights, twisting knowledge with reflections, representation with reality and space to the landscape.

The second case proposed is the one of the Festival Città Impresa. The past four editions -2011, 2010, 2009 and 2008- of Festival Città Impresa can be seen as an attempt of experimenting a governance structure based on urban networks. Promoted by the media group noerdesteuropa.it, the Festival aims to offer a series of opportunities of discussions around topics related to the new knowledge economy, with special attentions given to creativity and the arts. The focus on economy and on issues about the current crisis are also embedded in the organisational structure of the Festival. In fact, it aims to become a financially self-sustained festival.

Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa are examples of events, cultural festivals, that in the time become more than only a series of cultural events for their territories.

They go beyond the classical definition of festival[36], broadening both the time frame and the number of selected location for their events within an innovative coherent cultural project. In fact, under the same coherent, but very open, cultural project, the two Festivals open up their time frame extending the length of the festival from a limited period to a series of events taking place all the year around, they find new places that are "unconventional" for cultural events and "outside" the geographical area of the city promoting the Festival, in the case of Opera Estate Festival, and spread over the territory for Festival Città Impresa. Moreover, they involve local communities as much as international stakeholders, both in terms of artists, guest speakers,

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36 According to Kotler and Scheff (1997) a festival is usually understood as a series of events in the framework of a coherent cultural projects taking place in a limited time frame and in the same place.

audience, professionals. Key words for the Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa could be "openness and inclusiveness" of contents, places, ideas and people.

A second category of cultural projects includes InnoVetion Valley with Provincia Italiana and the bid for the title of European Capital of Culture 2019 by Venice and surrounding territories. Both cases are thought from the beginning as strategies based on culture for the future development of the Veneto region.

Provincia Italiana is a permanent laboratory promoted by Fuoribiennale[37] to rethink about the idea of "province". The first edition of the project was organised as an extra-event of the 2010 Architecture Biennial of Venice. For the first time, a Biennial-related event was taken away from the city of Venice and brought to peripheral territories in the provinces of Vicenza, Venezia, Padova and Treviso. Meetings, conferences, exhibitions, talks, etc. bring together a series of local actors creating an important common platform of discussion about contemporary themes (innovation, green economy, design, creative economy, etc.) for local policy makers, creative community, local communities, local business sector. Provincia Italiana can also be seen as the "field-work" of another project promoted by Fuoribiennale, InnoVention Valley, which is a strategic planning project for the Veneto region and its surrounding territories with the aim of bringing together public and private institutions under the same network, and working on themes such as innovation and creativity of the economic sector, with special attention devoted to young people.

Among culture-led strategies presented in the context of the Veneto region, the most complex is the one of the European Capital of Culture 2019, which can be understood as the sum of the previous cultural projects. Endorsed by the media group nordesteuropa.it, the same one that promotes the Festival Città Impresa, the bid for the European program Capital of Culture is an important bet for the Veneto region. Together with its surrounding territories, the Veneto region wish to candidate the largest urban area since ever in the EU history of ECOC - European Capital of Culture. Most of the aspirations that characterised the bidding for the Venice Expo 2000 are still present in the bidding for the European Capital of Culture 2019 title. The challenge is to show that a region with a integrated and coordinated polycentric system can serve as a platform to achieve a sustainable regional development. Industrial districts, once the skeleton of the region, can be substituted by a more contemporary vision of territorial organisation, which is based on immaterial factors, such as ideas and people rather than products. The European Capital of Culture year should be able to experiment practices that move around people and ideas rather than physical products through the use of strategic urban

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37 Fuoribiennale is a non-profit organisation based in Vicenza (Italy) and an international platform of actions about contemporary culture in the fields of art, design, architecture. It extensively deals with innovative projects on the concepts of public-art, environmental interaction and relations between business and culture, making the territorial contextualization one of its privileged access-points. Fuoribiennale involves factories and art galleries, streets, underpasses and county roads, housing projects and historical palaces, shopping centres or flour mills, trains, underground-trains, asphalt cement, squares... with clear intentions of re-qualifying the territory of re-setting rundown areas of "uninterrupted ugliness", of urban/art design, of working on site specific. For more info http://www.fuoribiennale.org

networks.

The last example is the one of the cultural routes along the Pedemontana axis, which is a project part of the drafted program of European Capital of Culture 2019. This practical example shows the importance set on building immaterial networks, such as paths of cultural development, next to physical infrastructure in order to achieve a cohesive territory.

6.3   Cultural events filling up spaces, recovering wounds

6.3.1   Immaterial spaces: governance and common interest

Cultural events, such as Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa, can act as laboratories to implement a new approach to the governance for the region. From the analysis of the above mentioned cultural events, it has come out that they clearly support the need of reinventing the governance system of the Veneto region through the creation of solid networks among actors and places. The solidity, but also flexibility, of networks lie on a shared common interest reflected in the mission of cultural events themselves.

When dealing with large territories where different actors, resources, needs and interests coexist, it is difficult to define an effective model of governance that answer to all the variety of requests. Strong leadership of the political elite together with the creation of ad-hoc territorial boards with the aim of doing research, finding strategic directions and co-ordinating the development and implementation of a shared vision in the long term through a short-term program, are seen as necessary.

Cultural events spread in the large territory, if well co-ordinated, can act as a testing ground for bringing different actors and places to work together over some shared issues promoted within the cultural sector. Having common projects constructed over the identity of a place help to raise awareness and involvement of actors and community. The nodes that this virtual infrastructure is connecting are both spaces (cultural venues, urban spaces, villages, cities, public spaces, ...), institutions (local administrations, regional administration, national bodies, European Community chapters, ...), people (artists, audiences, local community, international professionals, decision-makers, ...), business sector (sponsors, suppliers, both local and international), etc.. Moreover, cultural events can become the glue that keeps together different kind of networks under the same umbrella: networks of institutions promoting the events, networks of funding bodies, networks of artists and professionals and networks of audiences within the civil society.

Both Opera Estate Festival and the Festival Città Impresa are good examples of doing governance for a cultural event that could be transferred from the cultural event itself to the general governing of the whole geographical area that the Festivals touch on.

Opera Estate Fesival involve about 35 towns and small cities with their spaces, resources and people in the project. It is a virtual infrastructure that connect different points of the Pedemontana through the organisation of more than 400 events.

In a similar way, Festival Città Impresa involves about 22 municipalities and connects more that

300 entities, among territories, companies, associations, universities, research centres, local, national and international institutions, etc. that have decided to invest and work together for the festival, with the aim of experimenting an event able to involve different actors and places within Veneto region and beyond, and to demonstrate that it is possible to act in this broad region as it was just one, and integrated, polycentric region.

In the Veneto case the common interest at the base of the system of relations that could make up a new governance system can be translated into two faces: the socio-cultural interest at the base of the creation of an urban network and the feeling of belonging to the same polycentric territory.

The two cases under analysis, Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa, they do both answer to this request. They find a common language, based on traditional culture and innovative topics, to bring together a variety of people and institutions, connecting them among themselves and to places that they might not be usually connected to. In this way events contribute to reinforce relationships among people and to create new ones and, at the same time, they help to link these relations to their territory. Therefore, in the view of a new vision for the governance of the Veneto region it should be given priority to socio-cultural networks that intervene on the intersection of culture with economy, environment and social issues, through actors and places. Culture might not bring evidence in the outcomes but play on values and on its capacity of creating bonds. The values of culture facilitate the process of decision making as based on ideas that come out from intrinsic -cultural- resources of a territory. In addition the inclusion of contemporary themes and innovative approach open to a new perspective that look at the future of the region. This approach is in line with the European Union directives that support the structural use of culture. When the territorial framework is broad and a problem of governance remains, in order to achieve a new course of territorial policies, culture can become a strategic factor for new models of local and regional development. It is not a matter of "what" kind of cultural projects is implemented but rather "how" its implementation can be included in a broader process of development.

The second aspect for an effective governance is to share, among people and institutions, the feeling of belonging to an integrated common territory. One of the most evident peculiarities of the Veneto region is its polycentric character. It has been demonstrated that the polycentric character that once was the skeleton of the economic success of industrial districts, is today unable to take up global challenges of competition and speed of transfer of ideas, people and products around and outside the region. What the Veneto region is lacking it is either major centres -hubs- that attract resources and people or amaterial and immaterial infrastructure systems able to connect all the smaller nodes, transforming them into engines for the whole region and their connections into immaterial devices for the transport of ideas and frame for transformative practices. The shift from big manufacturing companies-based economy to a knowledge-based economy, made up of small enterprises, international high-skilled workforce, flexible but insecure work and high mobility and turnover of workers, has transformed urbanised territories into temporary places. The contemporary cities and regions function as

milieus where proximity and joint presence creates an abundance of current and potential exchanges, they are agglomerates of flows of people, goods and information.

In this context cultural events can help the creation of a feeling of trust on the territory that should help to virtually connect the same territory, which is at the base of a fluid exchange of ideas and the working-together approach.

6.3.2 Immaterial spaces: improving social cohesion

It is important to keep in mind, as it is shown by the Festivals' organisations, that the territory has to gain value not only for external but also for local people. If the locals do not understand and value their own territory, there is little chances that the same territory seems sustainable for external actors, maybe for tourists but not for permanent activities, such as the attraction of new investors and businesses.

The communication is also towards a change of perception of the territory, people must feel as they were part of a cohesive region to support its unitary development, there is the need to create an urban culture that does not exist at the moment. For example, the impact of the Opera Estate Festival on the perception of the city of Bassano del Grappa and surrounding territories it is increasing in the last edition. The collection of data of the 2009 edition shows an improvement of the perception of the territory from local communities: 84% of the local population has an improved positive perception of their territories thanks to the festival and 87% of them goes back to other events. The Festival therefore contribute to increasing the value of the territory perceived by people living in and people coming from outside.

The Opera Estate Festival is having an important impact also on the improvement of social cohesion in the area. Usually the Festival fosters interaction between the local community and the international actors involved in the events, creating new moment of cultural exchange. Because its attention to innovation and urban culture, the Festival is also very closed to young generations and try to offer spaces for expression without excluding them from major venues. An example is INFART a collateral event taking place in between an underground space, Garage Nardini (see *Box 22*) and the historical site of the Castle of Ezzelini. *Box 27* presents one of the project of INFART, "Boxing". Boxing brings together socially excluded young generations with local communities of elderly people in a single artistic project aimed to open a dialogue between the two generations but also to improve the feeling of being part of the same territory of two categories that rarely used to meet before this project was implemented.

Boxing: young immigrants together with local elderly

Among the projects promoted by Estate Opera Festival to foster social cohesion, the project called Boxing seems to be the most interesting one for people involved and methodology. Boxing is a multicultural intergenerational project involving participants of elderly inhabitants and immigrant children who have moved into the region where the project is based. The aim is to allow the community to include new ways of dialogue and living together. Boxing, which is supported by the European Cultural Foundation, Comune di Bassano del Grappa, Kismet Teatro OperA Bari, Nederlandse Dansdagen Photofeature,The Place, Leica Camera AG, Manfrotto and Carterie Tassotti, in 2011 it has been developed not only in Bassano del Grappa in the context of the Estate Opera Festival as it happened in 2010, but also in Bari, London and Maastricht.

The British photographer Lara Platman runs the project. Adults tell stories to children starting from suggestive urban spaces that become stage for the storytelling. Lara Platman teaches children how to take pictures of things that most attract them coming out from adults' stories. Each participant is given a box where to secure memories, objects, ideas came out from the meeting. The boxes' contents together with the pictures taken by children and Lara Platman's reportage becomes the final exhibition.

For more info about the project visit http://www.infartcollective.com/

As well as the Opera Estate Festilval also Festival Città Impresa addresses issues related social cohesion and among its objectives it aims to create unity in the region through the definition of a new identity for cities and its inhabitants that is not tied only to the industrial production anymore. International well-known guests are invited to speak about global issues, economic growth but also insist on the importance of involving local communities in this process of change. Insights on the way the territory is changing are important moment for building the framework of the Festival.

6.3.3 Material spaces: cultural value for spoiled landscape and empty industrial buildings

Cultural events can add value to existing cultural infrastructure, through the hosting of international renowned performances, inviting well-known speakers and at the same time discovering, experimenting and promoting unusual urban spaces.

The Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa offer opportunities to review the meaning of landscape associated to some areas of the Veneto region. The large variety of formal and informal venues that host festivals events include public squares, villas, castles, theatres, industrial spaces, urban settings, etc. that can be at the heart of town centres or in the periphery

located in industrial context or even rural lands. While the two Festivals contribute to the creation of virtual tied connections between the many centres involved, their connections also reach territories in between the centres, creating a virtual continuity among spaces.

The venues that host the events of both the festivals are mainly symbolic places for the region. The landscape assumes an important role as it becomes the connective fabric of places that usually are not in contact among them because space distance (they are far or not well connected by infrastructure), content (industrial spaces with venues for high arts), form (contemporary buildings vs. historical heritage, open space vs. constructions), etc.

In the case of the Opera Estate Festival, most of the times, artistic projects are created and tailor made to the physical context where they are performed. Exclusive projects based on local resources and in line with the character of the territory are at the heart of the artistic program of the festival. Shows that are innovative and international but at the same time rooted in the territory are able to add cultural value to the space.

Box 28: Locations of Festival Città Impresa 2011

Institutional spaces	Places for business	Former industrial buildings
Asolo - Municipio Asolo - Teatro Duse Castelfranco Veneto - Teatro Accademico Colugna di Tavagnacco - Teatro Bon Feletto Umberto - Auditorium Comunale Gorizia - Centro Polifunzionale Montebelluna - Auditorium Biblioteca Comunale Padova - Palazzo Bo Piazzola sul Brenta - Villa Contarini Pieve di Soligo - Villa Brandolini Pordenone - Palazzo Montereale Mantica Santa Giustina in Colle - Sala Teatro Trebaseleghe - Auditorium Biblioteca Comunale Trento-Auditorum Santa Chiara Trento-Regione Trentino Alto Adige, Sala Rosa Udine - Camera di Commercio	Sant' Ambrogio di Valpolicella - Cantine Masi Agr Altavilla Vicentina - Fondazione Cuoa Isera, Rovereto - Casa del Vino della Vallagarina Montecchio Maggiore - Gruppo Trivellato SpA Vicenza-Dainese S.p.A. Villa del Conte - Lago SpA Capriva del Friuli - Villa Russiz Rovereto - Polo Tecnologico Trieste -Hotel Savoia Excelsior Palace Venezia, Isola di Mazzorbo - Venissa	Asolo, Fornace dell'Innovazione Castelfranco Veneto - Capannone Antiruggine Schio - Fabbrica Saccardo Schio - Lanificio Conte Venezia - Spazioporto

In the case of the last edition 2011 of the Festival Città Impresa, *Box 28* shows the large number of locations used to host events of the Festival. They have been divided into macro categories that show the variety of places involved, from very traditional and institutional places (city halls, libraries, villas, theatres, etc.) to more unexpected locations, such as former industrial buildings and companies' headquarters, which range from restaurants to wineries and furniture producers. Among all the places used to host festivals' events, former industrial buildings and business' spaces retain a special role in recover the landscape wounds and offer a renew identity to places that are usually perceived as tied to past industrialism or just as current production sites.

Former industrial sites and empty capannoni represent a twofold wounds in the Veneto region landscape. First of all, even if their original function is over, their buildings still exist and represent unused spaces in the region. Secondly, they have lost their identity with the end of their function but they are still strongly tied to the industrial past that made the region what it is today. Especially for contemporary companies it is difficult through the use of traditional tools of communication to reach out local communities and to show their interest to be more open and inclusive within their local territory.

Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa, through the choice of setting many of their events in those unused locations or contemporary headquarters, are temporary filling those spaces with new contents that are related both to contemporary issues but also to cultural values of the territory tied to their history.

6.3.4 Cultural events for economic development of the region

Cultural events can also contribute to the economic growth of the region. They do it through direct, indirect, induced and secondary impact on the local economy and being of inspiration for further development of the economy.

For direct impact I mean that events can directly contribute to the local economy thanks to all the economic and human resources involved in the organisation of the Festival and they can also influence secondary and induced economic effects on the territory involved by the events.

The second aspect refer to the contents of the Festival that may inspire local companies to open their business to more innovative and knowledge-based production. Moreover, special events can create new synergies and activate collaborations among different sectors and improve the competitiveness of the territory setting the region back on the international map.

Starting from the first aspect, in the last few editions the Estate Opera Festival has applied the Economic Impact Evaluation methodology to investigate the direct, indirect, induced and

secondary economic effects of the Festival on the territory. The data can be found in "Consuntivo 2009", a report by the Opera Estate Festival on the impact of the festival on the local economy. The direct and indirect effects of the Festival, such as the increasing number of salaries for people working in the cultural sector or working as external suppliers for the cultural sector, can be summarised in the figure of 1.300.000,00 euros. The induced economic effect, which is the amount of expenses of visitors of the Festival made in the territory can be estimated of 2 millions of euros. Finally, the secondary effects, which are further impacts on the area because the budget of the festival and visitors' expenses, can be estimated around 5.280.000,00 euros. Summing up the three areas of economic effects, the total economic impact generated by the Festival was 8.580.000,00 euros following 2009 edition. On top of this there are all the fiscal effects of earnings, income taxes, and the taxes related products that go back to the public sector (State and/or local administrations). In times of crisis the amount of economic impact of the Festival on the territory should not be underestimated.

The Festival Città Impresa, through a series of around 80 events, also boosts the local economy of smaller centres that are usually cut-off from the circuit of events and offer the chance to be, for once, on a international stage and to challenge their organisational skills and capability building. For the 2011 edition the estimated budget for the Festival has been 2 millions of euros, with impacts on the local economy in terms of employment, tourism and consumption on the territory of around 4 millions of euros.

The local economy takes advantages from the Festival Città Impresa because itIaso investigates and reflects over hot topics for the economic growth of a territory, such as innovation, sustainability, creativity, etc., that can be stimulating for local businesses. Among the speakers of the past editions, the Festival hosted inspiring international guests like John Micklethwait, director of The Economist; Christopher Isaac Stone, co-funder of Twitter; Richard Florida, urban study theorist; Michael Spence, Nobel 2001 for the economy; Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia; Jeremy Rifkin, economist; and many others.

Festival Città Impresa also promotes, through the cultural element, cities and companies to enhancing the richness of cultural production in each side of economic and social life. Special projects fostered by the Festival, such as Art&Co.2011[38], which was created in collaboration with fondazione march[39], are aimed to connect the contemporary art world to the local culture of territories and factories of the Veneto region. In this context the concept of innovation is investigated and it becomes the promoter of new transversal synergies among actors and places. Art&Co.2011 constituted of three smaller projects: *A Beautiful Day* (eight international artists entered companies to set up workshops with employees); *Car, un nuovo paesaggio* (under the supervision of an artist, artisans worked to transform industrial production into something unique) and *A future love story* (through the reflection over the industrial areas and the use of facilitation and participatory planning, artists worked together with the community to create a

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38 For further information see http://www.fondazionemarch.org/collaborazioni/art-co-2011

39 Foundation for contemporary art based in Padova (Italy). For more info, http://www.fondazionemarch.org

system of "shared service" for industrial districts).

The case of Festival Città Impresa also emphasises the role of the private sector within the promotion of regional development. The bottom-up initiative intends to become 100% self sustained in the next edition as to demonstrate that if all the actors work together for a shared vision even the funding problem can be overcome in times of crisis. The 2011 edition demonstrated that it is almost possible since the 98% of the costs were covered by sponsors and partners with very little support from the public sector.

6.4   Culture-led strategies for the Veneto region

The panorama of cultural projects and cultural events that can be implemented at the regional level is manifold. Following the previous suggestions, the Veneto region should give priority to those cultural activities that can be turned into cultural-led strategies able to achieve multipurpose objectives and involving the plurality of actors existing in the territory.

Besides cultural events, such as the Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa, that can contribute to the development of the region from many perspectives, the Veneto region can count on some culture-led strategies specifically directed to achieve regional development objectives.

Provincia Italiana, together with the InnoVetion Valley project, and European Capital of Culture 2019 differ from the other cultural events, such as the Opera Estate Festival and Festival Città Impresa, as they are thought from the beginning as long term strategies for regional development that make use of culture as their strategic factor.

6.4.1   Culture-led strategic planning: InnoVetion Valley and Provincia Italiana

In 2007 Fuoribiennale published "Please Disturb!" a mapping of best practices of creative containers and creative processes around the area of the Veneto region, from museums, galleries and institutions to studios, companies, industries that work with creativity. The mapping work gave back a territory very rich in terms of innovation and creativity to be defined by Fuoribiennale as "an area which has the world's highest density of innovation and creativity per square meter" (!Innov(e)tion Valley Magazine, 2010: 126). This very strong assumption is at the base of the InnoVetion Valley program, which is a project for the strategic planning of the Veneto region. The aim of InnoVetion Valley is to create a network which connects up companies, public and private institutions, culture and research, tradition and innovation to their social environment. How to do it? The project wants to be a starting device for society, culture, economy and politics able to influence through cultural and innovative projects the society and its business system, with special focus on younger generations.

From a first look of the project InnoVetion Valley, it might seem to be just a territorial branding action aimed at createing a shared corporate image for the region, especially for the business sector, making use of a rhetoric based on creativity, which is very widespread today. The definition of the Veneto region as the territory with the highest degree of creativity is little

supported by scientific researches but still attract and involve society and the economic sector in the same vision: the Veneto region is not just a dull territory with obsolete industries and a spoiled landscape but rather a territory rich of potentials across all the sectors, from quality of life to industrial production. Through the reinforcement of the awareness of belonging to a territory with great potentials, InnoVetion Valley would like to give visibility to culture and creative networks already existing in the territory and connect them to the business sector in order to set the Veneto region within a more contemporary framework of action able to attract and maintain that creative class and to develop the service economy, which are the bases for the further development of the region. Cultural and creative projects should provide the local context with experimental experiences already existing on the global scale.

According InnoVetion Valley, the Veneto region should unlock its cultural and creative potential and spread it over all the sector of human life, from society to the economy and politics. Through this very transversal, but integrated, work, the territory should be able to compete on the global scene with major centres of development because strongly rooted on its cultural identity but at the same time following the forces of the contemporary world. Of course, these words can sound visionary.

To make more concrete this visionary project, Fuoribiennale has promoted a series of events, under the label of Provincia Italiana, aimed at setting in practice the ideas drafted with the InnoVetion Valley project. Provincia Italiana is thought as a permanent laboratory to rethinking the Veneto region starting from its peripheral areas rather than cities' centres. Through the organisation of events, meetings, seminars, etc. Provincia Italiana wants to create a platform in which all the stakeholders, from civil society to business sector, creative community and politics can discuss over some shared contemporary issues.

At its second edition (2011), Provincia Italiana has managed to gather an interested group of stakeholders over the topic of re-use of former industrial buildings or unused architecture as incubators for creativity, innovation and sustainability. International guests are invited to speak about their experiences abroad and are asked to bring international best practices' stories to the periphery of cities and to small towns around the Veneto region. The civil society as much as the business sector and the political class of those remote places are not always ready to accept this very contemporary and global argument of the creative class and the creative industries. At the same time it should not be forgotten that the Veneto region is also the place where some of the most innovative and creative industries have their headquarters, just to think about the fashion sector and global brands like Diesel, Gas, Benetton, Calzedonia, Bottega Veneta, Geox, Dainese, etc. Those industries are used to deal with contemporary issues and in the past decade, thanks to the discussion about territorial corporate responsibility, have started to invest on the improvement of the territory where they are based.

Culture-led strategies should be able to connect traditional knowledge to the contemporary one, in order to create a sustainable system in which the local identity is not overcome by innovative practices rather it is reinforced.

6.4.2 A mega-event: European Capital of Culture 2019

One possible strategy used by a city or a region to start virtuous processes of development, in terms of economy, spatial and territorial organisation, and social cohesion, is to implement a major event, which is well known as an opportunity to bring about new resources and improving the current overall situation. International mega events are opportunities to set a program of cultural events into a strategy that should give life to a process of development. Mega-events fix a common vision, move around resources, involve a variety of actors and deadlines to achieve regional objectives.

The mega-event is an opportunity to propose a new governance of the region in which culture is a strategic factor not only to increase tourists' visits to the region but also to create bonds and identity building among different communities through the exchange of cultural experiences and stimulating the transformation process of the local economy towards the service economy.

Which are the factors that could make the European Capital of Culture a sounded long-term strategy for the development of the Veneto region? Most of the reasons are in line with some of the outcomes already pointed out for cultural events presented in the previous chapter:

- to create a more integrated polycentric region:

  The bid for ECOC 2019, even though it sets Venice as capital city for the title, it goes beyond administrative borders of the Veneto region to include a larger territory. The region/territory considered for the 2019 Italian bid is the Veneto administrative region with the neighbouring autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano (North-West of Veneto) and the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (East of Veneto), that all together make up the so called Nordest region. The title of European Capital of Culture could help to improve the physical connections within the region through the development of the unity of the region and its infrastructure, concentrating the scarce resources available and tight deadlines on some clear priorities, like those of high speed connections and metropolitan system (network of light train, etc.). *Box 29* shows a map of virtual connections among cities and towns within the Veneto and bordering region. Each node, which is a town or a city, also corresponds to a cultural hub while connections represent some of the objectives, or field of works, of the European Capital of Culture program.

Available at http://www.nordest2019.eu
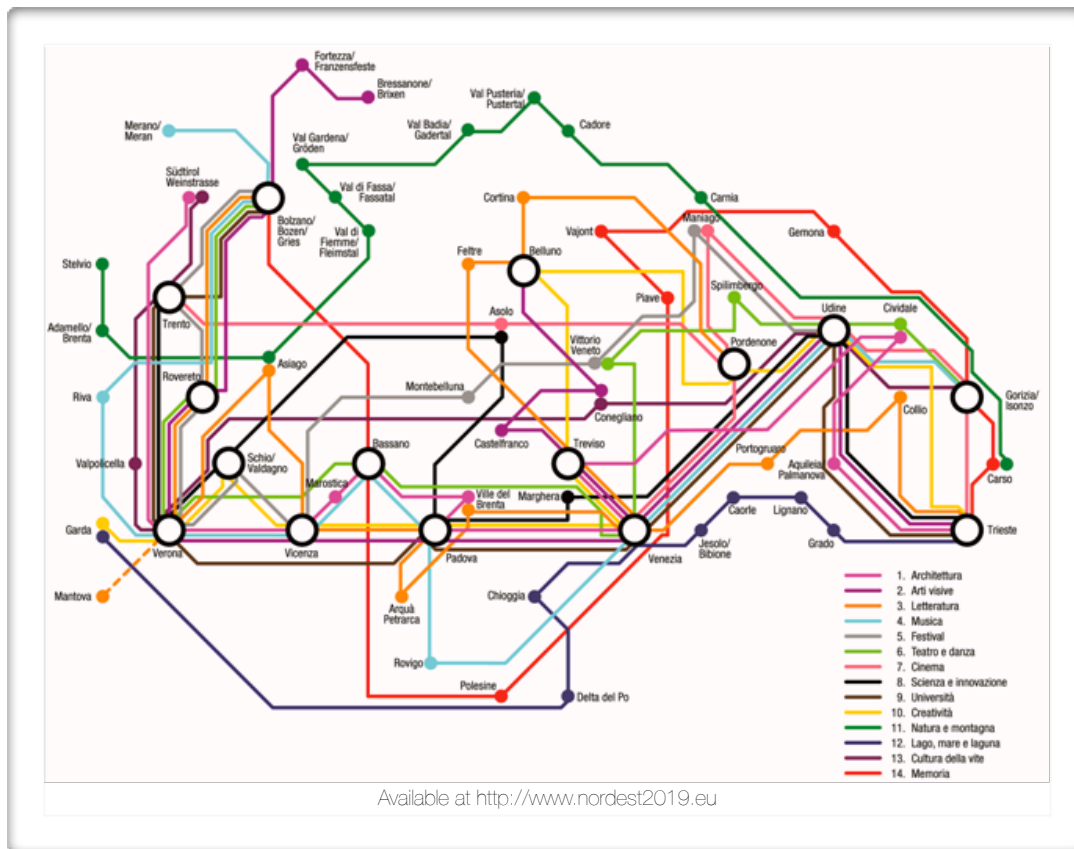
- to test a new governance for a larger territory:

In terms of governance, mega-events are recognised to be able to improve the governance system of the territory they involve. The mega-event connect internal and external stakeholders in a long-term run with tied deadlines. The mega-event of ECOC could become a second phase/step following the Festival Città Impresa to implement this new approach to regional governance based on a polycentric system of relations.

In this context a reviewing of the role of the public sector is needed. The Veneto region needs to strengthen and define better the role of the public sector within its policies and strategies of regional development. Through the analysis of the case study it has been observed how most of the initiatives aimed at proposingo an innovative approach to territorial development of the region are, first of all, promoted by private actors. The institution Regione del Veneto tends to be conservative when approaching the topic of culture and creativity for territorial development and the definition of a new governance for the region. The public sector is asked to open its approach to territorial planning and introduce innovative approaches and alternative topics for implementing transformative practices. The public sector has access to resources, budgets, personnel, authority, and democratic legitimacy that are all essential to

constitute a new way of doing governance at the regional level. Through the design of regional policies, the Region can set targets and directions; it can offer incentives for co-operation; it can create forums for dialogue around actions by multiple agencies and private players; etc. The European Capital of Culture is going to be a good opportunity to set back the role of the public sector within regional policies of territorial development.

- to boost local economy through culture:

The European Capital of Culture year is expected to bring several direct, indirect and induce impact to the local economy.

First of all, it is going to be an important opportunity to change some dynamics regarding tourism in the Veneto region.

At the moment most of the tourism is concentrated in few nodes, especially in Venice, and the risk is the congestion of some few sites, leaving many worthy-wide locations not touched because not so well promoted or connected to main centres. *Box 30* (information taken from Azienda turismo Padova Terme Euganee - Ufficio statistica) shows the distribution of presence of tourists among the provinces of the Veneto region in 2008 and highlights the concentration of tourists in the province of Venice in comparison to the other provinces.

Box 30: Presence of tourists in the Veneto region
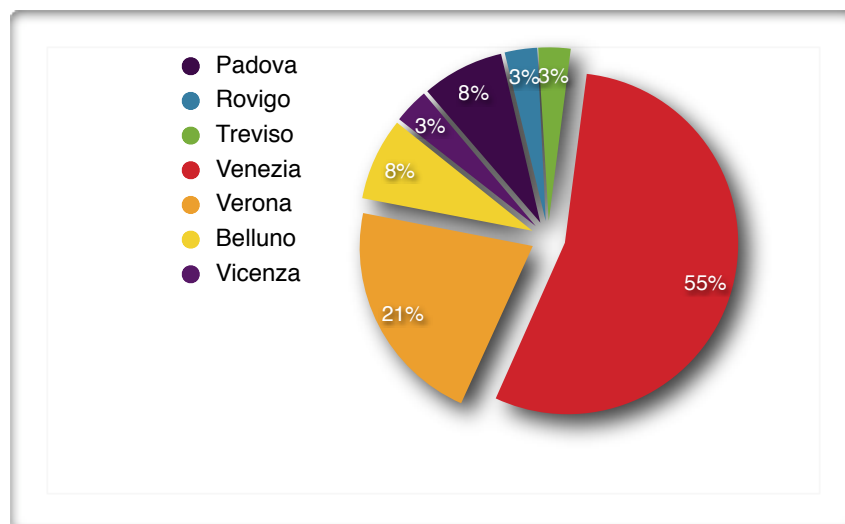
The idea to be promoted by the European Capital of Culture program would be to launch local tourism at the international level, including those places that are usually cut out from the traditional tourist map in order to level the presence of tourists between isolated places

and more congested ones. Tourism is not the only sector related to the production and consume of culture that do not tend to decrease, but it is a sector where to invest in (see the EU report issued in June 2009 "Culture & Innovation"). In the region there is a cultural richness that goes beyond tourism but there is lack of infrastructure for expressing it (publishing houses, film industries, etc.) that could become a sector of investment looking towards ECOC 2019;

The European Capital of Culture could become also, on a major scale, a test of a self-financially way of dealing with regional development of what the Festival Città Impresa has already being experimenting, through the involvement of the private sector for sponsoring most of its activities.

- to face social issues and improve social cohesion in the region:

The territory will take advantage of the mega-event only if it includes the local community as one of the priority of the program. It is fundamental to work on the cultural identity of the place in order to improve the connection of local communities within their own territories. Identifying local culture and valorising it allows the cultural-mega event to be rooted in the territory. Strong connections make easier to work on changes as they constitute a solid background for local communities to accept and understand transformations.

6.4.3 The case of the Pedemontana region within ECOC 2019

In order to see how those aspects listed in the previous paragraph are included in the ECOC program for 2019, the example of the Pedemontana region, as one of the development strands of the program European Capital of Culture 2019, is presented below and analysed to see how culture is used, or not, as strategic factor for local development. It should be remembered that the ECOC bidding text and the projects mentioned on it are still a work in progress to be finished by 2013, deadline for the cities participating to the bid to submit their proposals.

The Pedemontana can be understood as a sub-region of the Veneto region (see *Chapter 5.2.1, Box 13*). By 2019 the Pedemontana region is aimed to become one of the "corridor" on which to localise part of the flows of tourists arriving for the events of the ECOC program. The area is particularly interesting because some transformations, material and immaterial, are taking place in the same territory. There are also a series of opportunities coming up in these years that focus on the Pedemontana region and that should be taken advantage from.

Among those changes, first of all, the construction of the Superstrada Pedemontana, an infrastructure that should connect the eastern part of the Veneto region (Valpolicella) to the western part of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region (Collio), will put the base for a new understanding and use of the territory. The infrastructure, which is to be concluded by 2016,

contributes to the reposition of a geographical area versus the Veneto region, the north of Italy and the Pedemontana itself. The Superstrada Pedemontana is also a reason to think over the landscape and the tracks of urban and economic development, mobility, services, etc. that all together should provide better accessibility but also a new feeling of unity in the Pedemontana territory.

Second, since 2008, the Veneto Region looks at the Pedemontana area as an interesting touristic destination. In fact, the first *tranche* of the funding available for the regional program "Turismo Veneto 2020" has gone to the Pedemontana towns, which have the potential to change from being known and characterised by spread urbanism to a cultural landscape, an innovative example of a territory able to offer a transversal and shared offer for tourists, a tourism that is green and slow. In this context the participation of the local community to the building of a new vision for the Pedemontana comes first, as they have to be the first ones to accept and contribute to the creation of a touristic welcoming system.

A third topic of discussion is represented by contingent factors, like the idea by Giancarlo Galan, Italian minister for Cultural heritage and activities, to candidate the colline del Prosecco (Prosecco hills) for the title of Unesco heritage or events planned to celebrate anniversary of the World War First, which heavily involved the Pedemontana territory.

The three factors of 1) the construction of a physical infrastructure that connects all the nodes (Superstrada Pedemontana), 2) focus on a spread tourism along Pedemenotana, and 3) the Unesco label and historical celebrations, have induced the ECOC 2019 committee to define a strategy based on those paths of development. The result is a map of tourist routes by theme that cross the Pedemontana region and construct sorts of immaterial urban networks of actors and sites connected by the cultural routes, as shown by *Box 31*.

The Pedemontana region is a territory that originally developed following the industrial expansion and that today is still awaiting for proper physical connections. The construction of the Superstrada Pedemontana infrastructure somehow will change the way the territory is organised but also perceived by internal and external people. In fact, people living and working in the area and those coming from outside the area as much as products produced along the Pedemontana and outside it, should become be able to move around the region in a more effective way, increasing the number of exchanges among villages of the Pedemontana and cities set outside the Pedemontana. If the high way of 95/96 kilometres gives the physical direction of a territory that became urbanised without any key infrastructure, a culture-led strategy should indicate the soft areas of intervention for economic, social and cultural development.
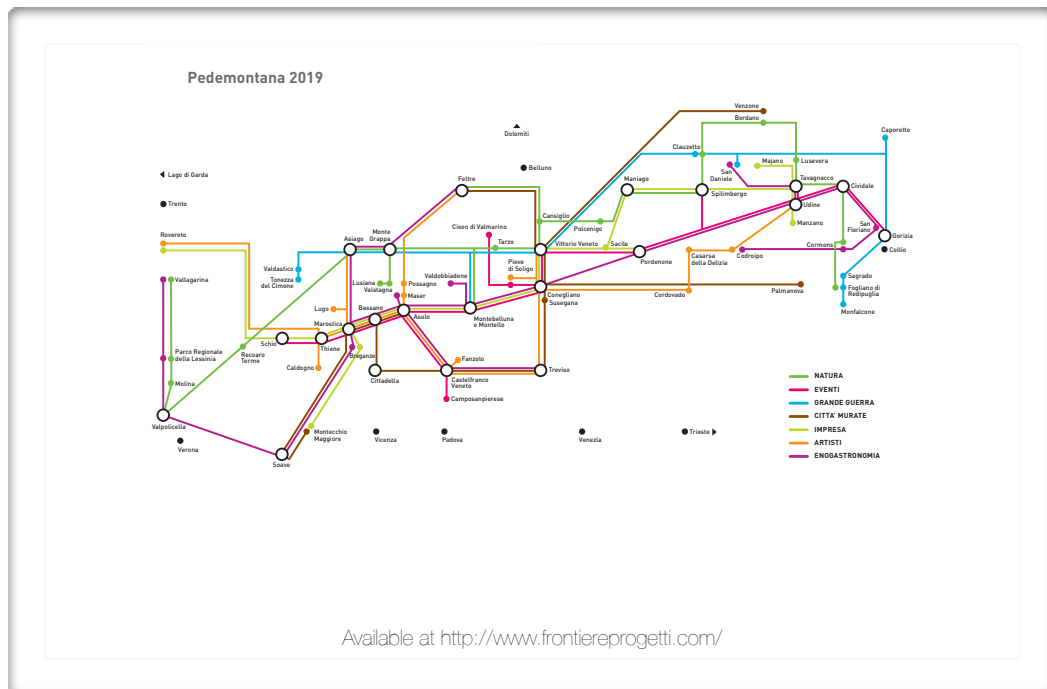
From a first overview of the project of immaterial networks for the Pedemontana area it can be noticed that the approach of creating an integrated system of immaterial networks by themes (history, landscape, arts, wine&food, etc.) along the Pedemontana axis is an interesting way of reviewing that part of the territory from both a functional perspective -the Superstrada Pedemontana- and a strategic and cultural frame of reference -the cultural routes. The limit of this proposal is to focus the immaterial development of the region mainly on tourism as strategic factor rather than on the cultural value of the resources of the territory that could open up new directions. The territory around Pedemontana is characterised by high density of people and activities, a proximity that allows businesses to contaminate with culture and landscape. The important entrepreneurial fabric and the natural, historical, architectural and cultural heritage should all together constitute the bases for a new development path linked to the European Capital of Culture program that could produce new process of innovation and growth. Next to alternative routes for tourism, the culture-led strategy should work on the territory to understand what are the original potentials of the territory and how to integrate this touristic potentials with everyday life of local communities and local economies.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions

The analysis of the case of the Veneto region within the framework of some European regional practices have led towards some reflections over the role of culture-led strategies within regional development. The aim of this chapter is to draw some suggestions from the analysis of the case study (*Chapters 5 and 6*) with reference to three European cases of regions (*Chapter 3*) and the conceptual framework (*Chapter 4*).

At the end, conclusive remarks and some suggestions about some possible directions to continue the research work close the research work.

7.1 Summary of the research work

The reflection about the topic started with an overview of three similar experiences of territories around Europe, i.e. the Ruhr Region in Germany, the Basque Country in Spain and Lille and its métropole in France, which have recently adopted innovative practices for their processes of regional development, including culture-led strategies. The industrial decline and the global crisis of the last decades have led to the identification of an historical "momentum" in which traditional practices of regional development were not effective anymore. The change of internal aspects -shift from the industrial to the service-based economy and a renewed social fabric-came along to external factors, such as challenges imposed by globalisation. The overall crisis and the need to adopt new ways of thinking and to focus on transformative practices have induced those regions to become more selective, because the lack of resources, when defining the strategic lines of development but at the same time more attentive to find a sustainable vision for the future, recognising the importance to root that vision on the cultural and social values already existing in the territory. In order to achieve the desired vision, regions have promoted several short-term actions and long-term strategies with the objective to reach a permanent process of regional development based on specific strategic directives. Among those, culture-led strategies have played a key role for the development of their territories.

The case of the Veneto region, which has been analysed as part of the present research shows that the "momentum" has now evidently also arrived in Italy. In a time in which the whole country is experiencing a moment of economic crisis, the Veneto region seems to be trapped in a transition stage between the successful past that saw its regional development based on industrial proliferation and the uncertainty of these days characterised by a profound change of its economic and social systems. Among all the issues the Veneto region is facing today, some, also called "wounds", have been identified as the most urgent to be tackled: the economic crisis, a dispersed polycentric system, a spoiled landscape and social questions.

Confronted by such a complex scenario of changes, the regional administration -Regione del Veneto- has started to review the policy framework of regional planning and to include more innovative practices to face current challenges. Concepts such as culture and creativity are becoming more prominent in discourses about regional development, even though they are still struggling for dedicated space in official documents ruling regional planning and are left under the exclusive control of the regional department for cultural affairs. If the most recent documents for regional planning, such as the new PTRC (Piano Territoriale Regionale di Coordinamento) and the DPEF (Documento di Pianificazione Economica e Finanziaria) 2012 present culture and creativity as strategic factors for regional development, still the in force PTRC 1992 and the PRS (Piano di Sviluppo Regionale) 2007 approach culture from a very

traditional perspective, limiting its area of intervention to the preservation of cultural heritage and the promotion of high arts. There is a gap between in force documents and the direction that the Veneto region is undertaking for its future development. The willing of the Regione del Veneto to start a new process of regional development is also shown by the fact that it has commissioned few studies to investigate the contemporary landscape of cultural and creative activities within the regional development process.

While the Regione del Veneto is only somewhat trying to include culture and creativity in official regional planning documents, some bottom-up initiatives have indicated culture as a strategic factor for governing large territories and for their all-embracing development. These initiatives taking place around the Veneto region, such as Opera Estate Festival, Festival Città Impresa, Provincia Italiana, InnoVetion Valley, European Capital of Culture 2019, are already or are about to, overcome their status of traditional cultural events to assume a position of informal strategic planning projects. They can be considered as strategic planning projects for regional development because they strategically, through the lens of culture, face issues such as the governance of a polycentric territory, the regeneration of the landscape, the new service economy and the need of a more socially cohesive territory. These bottom-up practices are therefore more in line with what the three selected European regions (Ruhr, Basque, Lille) already experienced in the past decade and are at the same time consistent with the conceptual framework presented at the beginning of the research work, rather than with the in course policy framework of the Regione del Veneto. The mismatch between the content of policies and strategies proposed by the Regione del Veneto and the objectives of bottom up practices already implemented, or in course of implementation in the Veneto region shows that the institutional policy framework for culture, and also for regional development, proposed by the Region del Veneto stands "behind" the practices already happening in the territory. Those practices appear to answer effectively to today challenges and to promote a model of strategic planning that use culture and creativity as strategic factors.

Bottom-up and private-led initiatives that use culture as a strategic factor for regional development are showing a clear attempt to govern the region through culture. In this context culture becomes a tool for governing territories that do not follow the policy orientation given by Regione del Veneto but rather a new understanding of regional governance taken forward by the private sector working together with local administrations.

If the Regione del Veneto would like to follow the trend already taken on board by other comparable European regions, regain its leadership and direct this innovative process of regional development and provide internal efforts with an adequate policy framework, it should take up a series of resolutions. Resolutions like the redefinition of the concept of culture, the adoption of a strategic attitude towards culture within the urban and regional policy framework, and the review of the sectorial governance system of the region could help to deal with the new challenge of combining culture with regional development, which seems to be very relevant today as shown in other European cases, the literature available on the topic and in the already existing series of bottom-up practices in the Veneto region.

7.2　Suggestions for the Veneto region

This chapter provides the Veneto regional government with some suggestions for the use of culture within the regional policy framework and an alternative method for driving processes of regional development. All the suggestions and proposals mention below could be generalise and applied to other European regions undergoing a similar development process and facing the same issues.

• Proposing a new understanding of "culture"

The concept of "culture" lies at the core of this study and is yet perhaps the most controversial of key terminology to define. Terry Eagleton reminds to the reader that "culture is one of the two or three most complex words in the English language" (2000).

The analysis of the case study shows that the institution Regione del Veneto promotes, financially sustains and safeguards cultural events and cultural heritage through its Department for Culture. The definition of the concept of culture, which is provided by the regional Department for Culture, is still very traditional and based on the idea of "culture for consumption". In other fields of action controlled by Regione del Veneto, such as some projects within the EU programs framework and in the DFE (Document for the economic and financial planning of the region), "culture" assumes a more complex meaning where social, economic and urban issues are integrated with the concept of culture as a "process". The same forward-thinking understanding of the concept of culture is used by some innovative practices focusing on creativity and culture that are taking place in the region (*Chapter 6*). The time has arrived for Regione del Veneto to review the policy framework for culture and to give a clear and unique definition of culture able to satisfy the needs of different regional departments, including those not directly committed to cultural activities, in line with practical initiatives already happening on the territory and international trends.

The reviewed definition of culture, and the associated cultural policy, shifts from an understanding based on culture as a whole of material and immaterial goods (culture for consumption) to become an intrinsic character or content of different kind of actions that follow the same vision above sectorial division (culture as a process). This new definition of culture do not exclude a more traditional approach to culture and the arts, it looks at them from a different perspective and as part of a larger whole. Only from this latter prospective it will be possible to have a strategic approach to cultural policies and to work on the economic value of creative industries, the cultural identity of industrial buildings and the social impact of cultural diversity when drafting regional development plans.

- Finding new meanings for managing a polycentric region

In the course of the research work the governance system of the Veneto region has been judged as inadequate to govern a territory characterised by polycentricity in times in which to its polycentric character do not correspond a strong functional identity. The weakness of connections among nodes, in terms of relational connections, is due to the raising of contrasting objectives set by localism and those driven by forces of internationalisation and territorial competition together with a loss of meaning of its driving identity.

The research suggests to the Region del Veneto of setting its institutional power at the heart of this polycentric territory through the implementation and control of a transversal and multi-level governance system, which should be open as much as flexible to be able to give priority to the best combination of levels vs. modality vs. field of action.

In this context culture-led strategies already implemented in the Veneto region can be considered good practices for the implementation of a new way of thinking the relationship among cities and towns within the regional institution and between the regional institutions and cities and towns themselves. The traditional top-down structure that see the Region at the top taking several decisions and devolving power to cities and towns for the rest, leave space to a new structure in which the urban dimension dialogues with the regional one for achieving several outcomes going towards a common vision.

The governance system proposed here is based on a process that is run by the Regione del Veneto together with cities and towns, rather than local or regional administrations having the political control over the physical space. This complex system of relations that are both vertical and horizontal among local and regional administrations is supported by networks of different actors and stakeholders. Urban networks of different stakeholders, such as business sector, civil society and third sector, can be geographically based and functioning following the principle of proximity or can be urban networks by themes or objectives.

In regions that turned their status from being agricultural lands to territories governed by a market-led governance, culture-led strategies can also contribute to the creation of an urban culture. Urban culture, i.e. the awareness of being part of an urban society, is necessary to deal with contemporary challenges where international competitiveness and urban challenges is part of every day life in cities and regions. Through the implementation of cultural events and the involvement of a multi-layered selection of actors, culture-led strategies set cultural values and innovative concepts as shared background for transformative practices. Especially in polycentric regions, culture can reawaken resources and energies of the nodes (cities and critical places) and activate connections and connectors among nodes for the definition of a dynamic system.

- Adopting a strategic attitude towards culture within the urban and regional policy framework

As it was recently pointed out by the EU commissioned Study on the Contribution of Culture to Local and Regional Development (2010), indeed culture-based approaches will increasingly be integrated as a key element in a more general development strategy, as the cultural dimension is

recognised as a critical theme in any comprehensive development strategy. Once taken for granted that culture-led strategies can be an interesting approach to a new understanding of practices for regional development, the definition of a culture-based vision will led to the drawing of a strategy for regional development in which economic issues, social issues, and urban issues, are tackled using culture as strategic component.

For example, culture-led strategies are means to put the region back on the international map, achieving place-marketing objectives, as it happened in Bilbao with the architectural beautification of the region, and in the Ruhr in 2010 and in Lille in 2004 with the cultural-mega event of European Capital of Culture. From an economic perspective, it is widely recognised that economic growth today is mainly based on innovative and soft practices. Innovation is the result of a creative processes. Cultural-led strategies can propose practices able to foster creativity through the experimentation of innovative projects that can be inspiring for diverse sectors and to fuel creative industries. In contexts of industrial decline and spoiled landscape, culture-led strategies can contribute to give life to historical and architectural heritage by using it as the scenario for events and activities. Next to traditional venues for culture, former industrial buildings and disused public spaces can become alternative venues to host cultural events. Former factories and warehouses, which once stood for the industrial identity of those regions, change their content while they continue to carry a specific identity, this time based on cultural values. In those cases in which the content remained tied to production, often aesthetic values can be found in new buildings that become high quality landmarks in the contemporary landscape. Another field in which culture-led strategies can have a role in territorial development of a region is the construction of a social cohesive community. In regions such as the Basque Country and the Veneto in which there is a lack of an urban culture that characterises global cities, regional ideological movements that stress the benefit of an autonomous identity are rooted in the regions. Whilst these ideologies tend to be positive because they support local culture and identity, still they can often be exclusive and they tend to cut out many opportunities for the territory. This narrow-mindedness risks to become an obstacle in times in which the region should be open to external and international relations as much as be able to deal with internal conflicts of a social fabric that keeps changing. Even though it has been shown the importance of having a social cohesive region for a sustainable development of a place, still practices related social cohesion are seldom implemented and only little financially sustained. In the European cases investigated in the research work, it has been shown how those practices are consequent to a first redevelopment phase of physical reconstruction and image creation of the region.

Moreover, the drawing of a regional strategic plan for culture would allow the Veneto region to define sectors and actions in which culture can be strategically used to achieve specific outcomes, such as those listed above. A strategic plan for culture would also help to reconsider the funding system for the cultural sector and allocate resources according to some directives in line with general objectives for regional development. However, the strategic plan for culture alone cannot be the only answer. Regione del Veneto, together with all the stakeholders involved

in regional development processes, should adopt a strategic attitude towards culture within the urban and regional policy framework. The strategic attitude allows to support different actions at the same time, from the drawing of a strategic plan for culture to the definition of trans-sectorial policies and practical activities for the future development of the region.

• Changing the regional system of sectorial departments:

The role of an institution representing a region, such as Regione del Veneto, is, first of all, to provide a policy framework for the sustainable development of the region itself. In the case of the Veneto region, in force regional policies are still very sectorial and tend to provide a framework for actions which is limited to a specific sector, such as transports, education, culture, welfare, etc. It has been shown throughout the research work that it is restrictive to look at a territory from only one sectorial perspective. The proposal for the Regione del Veneto is to open the policy framework to issues rather than objects. Starting a process of regional development from issues allows to hit directly the problem, which could obstruct the progress, through a larger variety of solutions in comparison with the limited range of solutions that would offer a mono-sectorial approach. As it has been experienced in some international cases, the answer to certain problems can be often found in sectors which seem, from a first approach, not directly connected with the issue.

In practical terms, the remodel of regional department system within Regione del Veneto towards a more flexible and open approach would guarantee a structure of governance able to deliver policies and strategies more concerned with today issues rather than field of actions. In order to achieve a governing system based on transversal issues rather than sectors, the regional institution should define a long-term vision and a comprehensive strategy under which all the fields of actions are subjected to. In this perspective, regional policies should framing internal and external strategies and act as the back of all the actions and projects implemented within and for the region.

To conclude, the suggestion is expressed by an innovative way of dealing with regional governance through a system of horizontal networks made up of localities integrated with transversal networks of actors united by the same theme or issue and coordinated by the Regional institution, on the wake of programs such as IPA. In this context, culture-led strategies can help to reflect over contemporary themes through the creation of concerted urban strategic networks that involve a variety of actors to deal over common transversal issues.

7.3   Opening out to future directions

In this long study the focus on culture has been adopted in order to reflect on existing policies for the governance of large territories, such as regions. In line with the neo-liberal perspective and the increasing mobility of capital, privatisation, destatisation, experience economy, introduction of culture and creativity in the regeneration process and planning, cultural tourism, culture has on the one hand been pushed to become an industry and a product. On the other hand, industry and production have respectively included cultural and aesthetic value in their work, such as more attention to brands, soft resources, flexibility, design and communication. In the same context, concepts related to cultural identity and cultural diversity are becoming increasingly crucial when dealing with challenges of a fast changing social fabric. In view of this culture has a twofold role. Whilst culture keeps its core value as "art for the art's sake", it has at the same time lost its intrinsic value to become a means of action for alternative public policies for economic, social and urban development.

The objective of the present research was to investigate the place of cultural projects and culture-led strategies within the framework of urban and regional development policies and strategies.

The study has gone through different cases in which "culture" has been used as a strategic factor in order to further the development of regions. Culture projects and culture-led strategies are often addressed as means able to trigger several aspects of local and regional development, from economic growth of the region to issues related social cohesion and the improvement of the landscape and the urban space. From the investigation of three European examples – the Ruhr metropolitan region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métropole- and in light of the conceptual framework, culture-led strategies are found to be as instrumental to regional development especially in territories undergoing a moment of inertia due to the change of internal and external conditions. The three European examples show how the industrial decline and the global crisis of the last decades have led to the identification of a historical "momentum" in which traditional practices of regional development are not effective anymore. The change of internal conditions, such as the shift from an industrial to a service-based economy and a renewed social fabric, can be added to external factors, such as all the strains imposed by globalisation. The overall crisis and the need to adopt new ways of thinking and to focus on new concepts and transformative practices have induced these in-transition regions to become more selective when defining the strategic lines of development and at the same time more attentive to finding a sustainable vision for the future, recognising the importance to root that vision in the already existing cultural and social values in the territory. In order to achieve the desired vision, regions have promoted several short-term actions and long-term strategies with the objective to reach a long-term process of regional development based on some specific

strategic directives. Among these, cultural events and culture-led strategies have been identified among preferred strategies to promote regional development in times of crisis.

Culture-led strategies are especially interesting in regional development plans as that they are able to involve different actors and distribute resources on a polycentric territory, identifying as common interest "culture". In this perspective culture is a strategic factor and culture-led strategies, also called strategic planning projects, an experimental field of action for regional development. In this context the redefinition of the concept of culture, the adoption of a strategic attitude towards culture within the urban and regional policy framework, the review of traditional practices of doing regional planning and an innovative approach to the governance of a polycentric region are seen as necessary.

The case of the Veneto region shows that a large territory can be read from different perspectives. Among all, this research work makes use of "culture" as a lens to filter, with a transversal approach, a complex regional situation. Through the lens of culture it is possible to think about a new representation of the territory where economic boost, territorial competition, the definition of regional identity, the improvement of the landscape, environmental sustainability, and well-being, are mediated by cultural projects in the short-term and cultural policies in the long run. The achievement of those objectives, which are usually under the responsibility of different regional departments, shows that regional policies that are activated by culture can be used as an innovative way of implementing a regional governance based on a trans-sectorial method.

In the three investigated European regions, the Ruhr metropolitan region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métropole, the existence of some political inclinations directed to "governing a territory through culture" have played a significant part in making this approach more effective. Political inclinations are important, in order to govern a territory through culture, because they bring culture into the broader discourse about regional development and define the role of culture within regional development practices through the inclusion of it in official documents for regional development. The three cases have also shown that is crucial to start this process of regional development with the redefinition of the concept of culture and, in consequence, the definition of cultural policies and culture-led strategies, in order to offer a framework of action in which different regional departments and stakeholders can participate. Secondly, regional institutions should regain their leadership and direct this innovative process of regional development in order to guarantee stability and continuity at the governance level, provide shared guidelines with a cross-departmental perspective and to become the reference point of the new process of regional development.

Combining culture with regional development, which seems to be very relevant today as shown in several European cases, the literature available on the topic and in the already existing series of bottom-up practices in the Veneto region, means to understand the culture of a place and to develop an effective multi-level governance for the integrated development of the regional space according to that culture. In other words it means to embed culture-led strategies into regional-wide policies, finding agreements upon strategic cross-sector priority areas, to facilitate

coalition building through the creation of networks among cities, towns or and stakeholders that use culture as common interest. Plans proposed at the local and/or network level should be tightly coherent between regional development plans at regional level. In this context it is fundamental to respect a tight coherence also between the official definition of culture, the outline and objectives of cultural projects, and the guidelines of cultural policies.

To conclude, the research work have identified some trends in processes of regional development that can be found in both practical experiences and in literature. According to the three examples presented in the study and the conceptual framework, the research work shows that the available literature about new approaches to regional development can be applied only to those cases where either the regional institution adapts its policies and organisational system to the changes happening in the territory or the changes happening at the regional level are ruled by a flexible regional policy framework. In the Ruhr metropolitan region, in the Basque Country and in Lille and its métropole, regional governance has been flexible and has changed in line with inner and external regional changes, while ad hoc agencies and institutional structures have been created to promote regional development processes. Therefore, the research work does not add new knowledge to the literature available on the topic of regional development, rather it compares the case of the Veneto region on one hand with some models of regional development provided by literature and, on the other hand, with three accomplished examples.

Last, the study, through the in-depth examination of the case study, tries to make room in regional planning literature for cultural policies and culture-led strategies, focusing on the key role of regional governance in the promotion and implementation of non traditional practices for regional development.

Further research work could improve and taking up different directions according to the interest of some topics or the priority of some areas of research. I suggest three paths that the scientific investigation could undertake.

The first path is about making a comparative study among case studies. The examples used in the research work, namely the Ruhr metropolitan region, the Basque Country and Lille and its métropole, could become proper case studies to be compared among them and with the case of the Veneto region that has already been exploited during this research work. Of course there are many studies that have already compared the four regions indicated. So far, the available comparisons are based on some specific topics such as the polycentric character, the fast industrialisation and de-industrialisation the regions experienced, the approach to new regionalism, or the implementation of a mega event in the regions under investigation. The analysis of culture-led strategies at the regional level and a clear understanding of the role of those strategies within regional development processes are still lacking in literature. This further investigation would provide literature on the role, and maybe of the impact, of culture-led strategies within regional development around Europe.

The second path is about deepening on some specific questions that still remain without a proper answer in the text. For instance, from a general point of view, it would be interesting to understand how regional institutions, especially in the case of Italian regions, would be able to

regain their leadership and direct innovative processes of regional development. In order to understand that, the research work should continue with the investigation of current processes of "capacity building", such as the creation of governance capacities, looking at structural reforms as well as the strengthening of existing institutions and the reformation of old organisations and institutions, from legal to administrative, economic as well as social ones. In this context it would be useful to see whether culture-led strategies could contribute to the process of regional capacity building, offering a more flexible approach to development processes that avoids the crystallisation of institutions and their activities. In order to construct a new institutional arena within structures of government to be in line with changes and needs of the new post industrial era, there is a twofold need of changing the cultural mindset that governs territories today and to adopt a more creative approach to overcome many of the stops in which governance is trapped today. Within this framework, the Tuscany region case would be an interesting experience to be compared with the Veneto region: both regions went through a similar regional industrial-based development process that caused different repercussions on the way their territories are organised because their different approaches, more or less controlled, of governing a polycentric territory.

The third path that I believe would be interesting to follow regards the investigation of the choice behind the use of a specific strategic factor/lens, rather than a different one, in the implementation of innovative practices of local and regional development. In this research work the lens of culture as a strategic factor has been used. What if the researcher changes the lens, for example from the lens of "culture" to the one of "green" (green economy, environmental sustainability, ecology, slow tourism, etc.)? Would "green" become a strategic factor and promoter of trans-sectorial actions and policies? In addition to "green", what could be other strategic factors able to lead a process of local and regional development? The idea is to investigate whether "culture" works as a powerful strategic factor to activate new processes of local and regional development because its intrinsic value or rather as a means of action for alternative public policies for economic, social and urban development, that could be replaced by any other factor, such as the one of "green", with a shared meaning.

Appendix

Appendix I - Media coverage from national and local press review 2011

AI.1   Selection of articles about the crisis

date	newspaper	author	title
30/03/2011	Giornale di Vicenza	n.a.	"Servono altri sette anni per uscire dalla crisi"
05/04/2011	Corriere della Sera	Nadio Delai	Le tre sfide dell'élite locali: crescita, integrazione e ricambio
26/04/2011	Corriere della Sera	Aldo Bonomi	Fra sviluppo e transizione manca ancora un "ragno" per tessere la tela
27/05/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Cesare de Michelis	Nordest, rivoluzione a metà
25/05/2011	Il Gazzettino	M. CR.	La crisi non è finita, pronti a cambiare marcia
11/06/2011	Corriere della Sera	Franco Grassini	L'industria alla ricerca della svolta
04/07/2011	Il Giornale di Vicenza	n.a.	Aziende e futuro. Per crescere serve innovare.
13/07/2011	Il Gazzettino	Giorgio Brunetti	Ma il modello Nordest ha il fiato corto
04/09/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Lorenzo Tommasin	I giovani e la crisi che non si arrende
04/10/2011	Il Gazzettino	Natascia Porcellato	Disoccupazione, primo problema del Nordest

date	newspaper	author	title
21/10/2011	Il Gazzettino	n.a.	Veneto: ogni giorno chiudono 23 imprese
28/09/2011	Il Gazzettino	Mattia Zanardo	Il Triveneto paga il conto della crisi
07/11/2011	Il Gazzettino	n.a.	«Veneto ad alto rischio»
08/11/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Sandro Mangiaterra	Il Nordest torni modello per l'Italia
06/12/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Gigi Coppiello	Chi può far ripartire la locomotiva del Nordest
14/12/2011	Il Gazzettino	Tullio Cardona	Benessere, il Veneto scivola al 5° posto

AI.2   Selection of articles on the governance system of the Veneto region

date	newspaper	author	title
05/04/2011	Corriere della Sera	Nadio Delai	Le tre sfide dell'élite locali: crescita, integrazione e ricambio
05/06/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Davide Ruzzon	Veneto centrale. La metropoli senza un governo
19/06/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Sergio Noto	La politica che (non) decide
01/09/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Cesare De Michelis	Il Nordest e la nuova sfida di governare «l'anticittà»
05/09/2011	La Repubblica	Ilvo Diamanti	Il paese senza guida
16/09/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore	n.a.	Il Nordest critico: politica inadeguata
01/10/2011	Il Messaggero Veneto	Maurizio Maresca	Se la politica non fa scelte strategiche

AI.3   Selection of articles on Veneto, a metropolitan region

date	news paper	author	title
19/01/2011	Corriere Trentino	Stefano Voltolini	"L'accusa degli architetti: «Poli urbani, c'è casualità»
29/03/2011	Il Giornale di Vicenza	Luca Romano	Governi d'area metropolitana È la sfida centrale
07/04/2011	Il Giornale di Vicenza	Paolo Gurisatti	I dati mondiali: Veneto Metropolis è una necessità
13/04/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Luca Barbieri	La capitale che non c'è
26/04/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore	Franco Farinelli	Niente confini ma scatole cinesi
29/04/2011	Corriere dell'Alto Adige	Gabriele di Luca	Nella rete ogni nodo è decisivo
05/06/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Davide Ruzzon	Veneto centrale la metropoli senza un governo
30/06/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Cesare De Michelis	Il nostro destino metropolitano
02/10/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Cesare De Michelis	La resistenza alla metropoli nella terra dei campanilismi
28/10/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Massimo Scattolin	«Città metropolitana, avanti tutta»
28/10/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Cesare De Michelis	I municipi preindustriali e i loro conflitti Le resistenze alla metropoli veneta
28/10/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Massimo Scattolin	«Città metropolitana, avanti tutta»
28/10/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Cesare De Michelis	I municipi preindustriali e i loro conflitti Le resistenze alla metropoli veneta
29/10/2011	Il Messaggero Veneto	Sandro Fabbro	Una grande opportunità per la Regione
12/11/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Patrizia Messina	Fondi europei e politiche di sviluppo Meno campanili, più sistema tra le città
19/12/2011	Il Piccolo	Gabriella Ziani	La città localista e cosmopolita bloccata dal suo animo doppio

AI.4 Selection of articles on the role of culture & creativity in the Veneto region

date	news paper	author	title
16/03/2011	I Sole 24 Ore-Nordest	n.a.	Con "A beautiful day" l'arte entra in azienda
01/04/ 2011	Corriere del Veneto	Corrado Poli	La nuova forma di ricchezza
21/04/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore	Serena D'Anna	Senza idee non c'è cultura
26/04/2011	Corriere della Sera	Marisa Fumagalli	Crocevia di saperi. La sfida delle nozze tra cultura e capannoni. Così nasce il Nordest prossimo venturo
25/05/2011	Il Gazzettino	Caterina Cisotto	E' tempo di crisi? Io vado al museo
04/09/2011	Il Gazzettino	S.F.	Impresa e cultura, la sfida che può far vincere l'Italia
20/06/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Roberta Brunetti	"Cultura e arte industria della città"
29/06/2011	Corriere Trentino	Claudia Gelmi	"Cultura, traino della comunità"
03/07/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore	n.a.	Dalla cultura la molla per creare sviluppo e nuova occupazione
13/07/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore-Nordest	n.a.	Consumi culturali a prova di crisi. Nel 2010 cresce la domanda anche a Nord-Est
25/09/2011	IL Sole 24 Ore	Aldo Bonomi	Il Nord-Est reagisce all'incertezza con la carta-cultura
30/09/2011	La Nuova Venezia	p.c.	La ricetta: la cultura crea profitto
01/10/2011	Il Giornale di Vicenza	Marino Smiderle	«Cultura e lavoro binomio vincente per il Nord Est»
16/10/2011	Il Gazzettino	Sergio Frigo	Nordest, il nuovo motore ora si chiama Ville Venete
09/11/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Francesco Peghin	Nordest e innovazione. Un'agenda per lo sviluppo
11/11/2011	Alto Adige	n.a.	Nuovo passo per la Capitale europea della cultura 2019
11/11/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Al. A.	Capitale della cultura pronto il manifesto della candidatura

date	news paper	author	title
11/11/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Roberta De Rossi	La cultura grimaldello di sviluppo
11/11/2011	Il Gazzettino	Michele Fullin	Crisi, il Nordest riparte dalla cultura
12/11/2011	Corriere Trentino	UGO MORELLI	IL VALORE DELLA CULTURA E DELL'ARTE
12/11/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Michela Nicolussi Moro	Turismo, è l'anno del record «Presenze già oltre i 50 milioni»
13/11/2011	Europa	Guido Moltedo	Venezia, un brand forte per l'Europa
13/11/2011	Il Piccolo	Marco Ballico	«Cultura, il Nordest può farcela»
15/11/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Stefano Fracasso	Cultura, Venezia e Nordest capitali? Ma se investiamo 8 euro procapite
17/11/2011	Alto Adige	n.a.	Il turismo salva l'economia locale
26/11/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Giovanni Viafora	Il manifesto della Cultura
27/11/2011	Il Gazzettino	Michele Fullin	«Oltre la crisi, con la cultura»
30/11/2011	La Nuova Venezia	Emilio Randon	Capitale d'Europa La gara che non possiamo perdere
30/11/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Alice D'Este	Venezia capitale europea della cultura La Regione chiama fondazioni e imprese
30/11/2011	Il Gazzettino	Paolo Navarro Dina	Venezia "capitale della cultura" una colletta per sostenere l'idea
02/12/2011	Corriere Trentino	Maddalena Vialli	Nordest capitale della cultura 2019. Via alla fase di ascolto sul territorio.
02/12/2011	Corriere dell'Alto Adige	Ilaria Graziosi	Capitale della cultura, intesa per lo sviluppo
03/12/2011	Corriere dell'Alto Adige	n.a.	Capitale della cultura tra Mitteleuropa e Mediterraneo
07/12/2011	La Nuova Venezia	n.a.	Cultura, rete e cooperazione La sfida di Venezia per il 2019
07/12/2011	Il Foglio	n.a.	Cultura e turismo, binomio vincente
15/12/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Giandomenico Cortese	Lobby del Nord per l'economia ma con umanesimo e cultura

AI.5 Selection of articles on the landscape alarm in the Veneto region

date	news paper	author	title
04/05/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore-Nordest	n.a.	Nella cascina trevigiana l'accademia del digitale
08/05/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore	Aldo Bonomi	La metamorfosi del capannone svela il dinamismo del Nord-Est
19/05/2011	Il Gazzettino	M. Mei.	Stella: "Scempi anche in Veneto"
29/06/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Silvia Madiotto	Benetton: "Il paesaggio? Bisogna sapersi fermare"
21/10/2011	Corriere Trentino	Ugo Morelli	La cultura del paesaggio
21/11/2011	La Repubblica-Affari e finanza	p.pos.	Nella vecchia fabbrica delle lane di Villorba i passaggi storici e un laboratorio sul futuro
04/12/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Alessio Antonini	Basta capannoni, incentivi a chi apre nei centri storici

AI.6 Selection of articles on the place of local identity and ideologies In the Veneto region

date	news paper	author	title
27/04/2011	Corriere del Trentino	n.a.	"Più gioco di squadra, meno campanile"
01/06/2011	La Repubblica	Ilvo Diamanti	Se tramonta il mito del Nord padano
19/06/2011	Il Sole 24 Ore	Aldo Bonomi	Microcosmi, 25 anni di Lega
29/06/2011	Corriere Trentino	Claudia Gelmi	"Cultura, traino della comunità"
02/10/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Cesare De Michelis	La resistenza alla metropoli nella terra dei campanilismi
29/09/2011	Corriere del Veneto	Luca Barbieri	Egoisti o solidali? "I nuovi Veneti" e le grandi sfide della civiltà futura
18/12/2011	Corriere della Sera	Marco Cremonesi	Il sindaco leghista Tosi al sit-in degli immigrati «Non siamo xenofobi»

Appendix II - List of seminars and workshops the author took part in and related to the case study

- 18.09.2009 - CUOA, Vicenza
  Meeting delle Nuove classi dirigenti, IV edizione
  Capitale europea della cultura per il 2019

- 14.12.2009 - Laguna Palace, Mestre Venezia
  Il Nord Est nei 10 anni che hanno cambiato l'Europa

- 17.12.2009 - IUAV, Venezia
  I paesaggi della lentezza

- 19.04.2010 - Università di Padova, Padova
  Festival Città Impresa: La cultura ci fa ricchi

- 21.04.2010 - Laguna Palace, Venezia Mestre
  Festival Città Impresa: Verso la candidatura a Capitale Europea della Cultura

- 22.04.2010 - Spazio Lanificio Conte, Schio (Vicenza)
  Festival Città Impresa: Il Nordest che attrae talenti e produce innovazione

- 9.07.2010 - Centro Congressi "A. Luciani", Padova
  Nord Est 2010. Rapporto sulla società e l'economia.

- 1.10.2010 - CUOA, Vicenza
  Meeting delle Nuove classi dirigenti, V edizione
  La rete della conoscenza della Capitale Europea della Cultura 2019

- 1.12.2010 - Museo Civico, Bassano del Grappa (Vicenza)
  Capitale della Cultura 2019: la pedemontana cuore dello sviluppo creativo del Nordest

- 13.12.2010 - Teatro Civico, Vicenza
  Basilica 2012: dialoghi per disegnare con la città il futuro della Basilica Palladiana

- 27.04.2011 - Lanificio Conte - Schio (Vicenza)
  Festival Città Impresa: Cambia la città. Con quali modelli?

- 28.04.2011 - CUOA, Vicenza
  Festival Città Impresa: Turismo in rete

- 29.04.2011 - Auditorium Biblioteca Comunale, Montebelluna (Treviso)
  Festival Città Impresa: Superstrada Pedemontana: opportunità di sviluppo turistico

- 29.04.2011 - Teatro Duse , Asolo (Treviso)
  Festival Città Impresa: "Saremo la Capitale Europea della bellezza e dell'arte o un paesaggio devastato dagli scempi?"

- 29.04.2011 - Municipio , Asolo (Treviso)
  Festival Città Impresa: Brand Nord Est: creare una identità territoriale vincente

- 12.07.2011 - Centro Congressi "A. Luciani", Padova
  Nord Est 2011. Rapporto sulla società e l'economia.

- 23.09.2011 - CUOA, Vicenza
  Meeting delle Nuove classi dirigenti, VI edizione
  Il Brand Venice Region.
  La rete della Pedemontana tra cultura, turismo ed enogastronomia

- 1.10.2011 - CUOA, Vicenza
  Meeting delle Nuove classi dirigenti, VI edizione
  Dopo Torino 2006: Expo 2015, Nordest 2019, Roma 2020. Il ruolo dei grandi eventi per rilanciare i territori, la cultura ed il paese.

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