

THE VOICE OF THE INVISIBLE CITIES

A QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO RURAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT

Master Thesis in Cultural Economics & Entrepreneurship
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Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship Master Thesis
Academic Year 2015 – 2016
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ABSTRACT

Within contemporary debate, there is much dialogue about the revitalization of rural areas and small cities, where larger agglomerations seem to be the magnets for cultural and creative resources. Previous works and reports addressed the difficulties that marginal areas are encountering. The current economic contingency enhances the accumulation of resources and the formation of agglomerative phenomenon. Megalopolises are going to attract more and more capitals to the detriment of small centres and rural areas unable to propose competitive alternatives. It provokes the centralization of institutions, wealth, social capitals, and labour forces, leaving peripheries culturally, socially and economically starving.

A number of academic works within and outside the cultural economic field research the impact of culture on these realities, trying to understand how the cultural sector and the touristic industry can be relevant solutions, especially for those regions with high cultural impact, as in the South of Italy. Despite the relevance of these studies, many of them approach the topic instrumentally. Indeed, most of these areas are trying to apply the right cultural strategy to stabilize the local economy. Culture and creativity seems to be powerful criteria for promoting endogenous processes of economic development and urban revitalization. However, they are often instrumental quantitative approaches, as much as best practices and models, unable to understand local dynamics and valorise local cultural and social qualities. The risk is eroding even more local cultural and social capitals, creating artificial areas instead of a stable creative environment.

This study would like to introduce a qualitative point of view to the topic. Retracing the path marked by philosophers, economists and sociologists as Putnam, Klammer, Aristotle, Nussbaum, and McCloskey. This thesis tries to make the reader aware of the importance of speaking in terms of qualities and values, instead of instrumental goals. This approach is therefore applied to the stabilization of rural areas, explaining the importance of the cultural, social and civic capital into an urban economy, and so investigating those political and bottom-up processes that contribute to establish a creative environment.

The research takes into account the case of Matera, a rural city in southern Italy, which achieved the important European Capital of Culture award.

KEYWORDS

Rural Areas Development; Cultural Capital; Social Capital; Local Development; Creative Environment; Participative Processes; Social Innovation

ACKNOLDGEMENTS

The first acknowledgment goes to my grandmother. She was there the first time; she was with me during the second too. Right now, you should ask me two times if I graduated.

To my mother and my father; you are the reason for my existence and my growth for better and for worse. It is a pleasure to share my path with you.

Gratitude goes to Martina, who has been a sweet friend and partner of my soul.

Thanks to my dear friends and all the people who I had the pleasure of sharing some of this time with Life is beautiful when shared with you.

Last, but far from least, thanks goes to the Life Mentors. Thanks Prof. Klamer to teach me how to strive for my values and thanks to Roberto for teaching me the path of awareness.

Look for Mentors, instead of Teachers.

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COVER IMAGE: PHOTOGRAPHING THE STONES
Source: Carlo Ferretti, Matera, 2017

1 Introduction

“There is a soul in the city of men, that one of the community: an invisible city” (Settis, 2015).

The above quote of Salvatore Settis takes inspiration from the “Invisible Cities”, by Italo Calvino (1972), translating the relationship between soul and body, into a powerful metaphoric disposition, able to activate humanistic considerations about the role of the city. Indeed, the invisible city is the part of the urban context that remains unknown to human eyes. It is immaterial; it goes beyond walls and streets. The invisible city, therefore, is the “soul of the city of men” (Settis, 2015), that part composed by its community, and those values, principles, stories, languages, institutions, memories and projects shared by its members. So, the invisible city is that immaterial part that gives meaning to the city. Indeed, it shapes and modifies the visible part during the time. It means that the community and its immaterial components are responsible for the evolution and development of the urban context.

Cities speak. They communicate through their souls and it happens thanks to each member of its community. The latter can be considered as the active herald of the city’s identity and values; in turn, the community identifies itself into the same values and set of immaterial elements that shape the “soul” of the city. Urban centres communicate through their communities. The latter strive for realizing their values, and doing it, they provoke changes and development of the urban environment.

Cities speak and they are going to communicate in different ways, based on their immaterial structures and needs. London, Milan and Paris, for example, live a complexity and paradigms unknown to peripheral and rural areas. So the choice of the context is fundamental in order to analyse its message.

We decided to introduce this work with some concepts, which we will encounter during the reading. Actually, we aim to approach the urban economy and politics differently, in a qualitative way. It means taking into consideration some cultural and social concepts that the classical economic paradigm and the neoliberal approach are often unable to embed. Starting with the quote of Salvatore Settis, it is therefore

functional to reevaluate the role of the community and the decisive importance of the social and civic capital for every kind of urban conversation, from policies to regeneration projects.

Nowadays, the globalized world is going to centralise capitals into huge creative agglomerations, to the retirement of peripheral urban centres and areas of the world. Most of these marginal areas are trying to find the right formula for boosting their environments and stabilising their economies. They have serious difficulties to stem the drain of human, cultural and social capitals, risking the loss of their invisible cities. Using this time the latter term literally, they are “the invisible cities” of the world far from where creativity and innovation happen. Several studies have highlighted the social quality of creativity and innovation, and the causality of some factors that contribute to establish a creative environment. At the same time, these qualities that bear creative processes are not related to the dimension and quantity of the latter, but rather with the social and cultural peculiarities of the context. That’s why every area has the potentiality for establishing a creative environment.

A creative environment is the base for a qualitative development of the urban context. It is a consequence rather than a condition. Indeed, although creativity and innovation can be considered as precursors of a dynamic virtuous environment, there is an extended academic literature about the social peculiarity of creative processes, so that creativity requires qualitative approaches able to involve social and cultural capitals (Czicksentmihalyi, 1996). In this way the economic stabilization of a rural area can require a different point of view able to “hear” the voice of the city. Despite the impossibility of tracing all the elements that contribute to make this condition alive, we need to approach economic processes qualitatively, so taking into account social and cultural peculiarities.

The thesis aims to foster the debate around the revitalization of small rural cities approaching their problems qualitatively, meaning that valuing which kind of strategies local stakeholders activate in order to boost local cultural and social qualities and asking to what extent they contribute to the development of the creative innovative environment. The problem will be approached employing one case study, precisely the city of Matera, in the south of Italy. Indeed, the southern part of the Italian peninsula has often been the symbol of economic inadequacy and rurality. In this work, therefore,

we would like to ask, *what hope is there for rural areas and peripheral towns, in order to stabilise their economies and be attractive for internal and external stakeholders?*

The case has been selected because of its rural dimension, the history of resilience and the current process of development through the award of European Capital of Culture 2019. The contingent situation is a decisive opportunity for local stakeholders in order to fasten processes and experiment qualitative solutions. Indeed, the policy adopted by the municipality seems oriented to the empowerment of the local cultural and social capitals, and the establishment of solid bases for a stable future. At the same time, the current situation works perfect for valuing **how rural small cities can be economically stabilized taking care of the local cultural and social qualities**. We do not pretend to obtain any model or best practice; we rather observe and test local processes, their qualitative or instrumental inclination and how they contribute to a sustainable endogenous growth. Observing this case, we aim to generate a complete overview of the way local stakeholders activate endogenous resources in order to contribute to the development of a creative environment, investigating both the institutional approach and the bottom-up initiatives.

The topic is further relevant during the current period of cultural and urban transformation. The city acts as a symbol showing the way our society evolves. Its transformation goes hand in hand with the economic contingency. Several studies analyse the weight of the creative economy into a complex system as an urban economy. They have the credit for emerging a different point of view about the role of culture and creativity for the economic systems. Others have developed more inclusive and qualitative approaches, considering the economy as part of the cultural conversation. In light of the current necessities of applying more inclusive approaches, able to be aware of local cultural and social qualities, we would like to understand how we could analyse concretely a process of urban development in a substantive way.

We need to weight the processes that are occurring, in order to comprehend how they happen and which kind of message they want to communicate. To achieve this goal, we should be ready to abandon the old dogmatic structures and explore together a new path, able to switch our instrumental language into a substantive one.

The structure of the study is as follows: chapter two presents a review of the existent literature, examining the problems of rural areas and small cities, understanding the meaning of social and cultural qualities, why they are so important and which kind of approach we can use in order to take them into consideration. The following chapter describes the research design, explaining the qualitative method employed. The fourth chapter moves concretely the theoretical conversation using the case study of Matera. In this chapter we will understand what Matera is, which kind of strategy the municipality has adopted during the European Capital of Culture, which kind of goals it would like to achieve and how they manifest local values and needs. At the same time it would be likewise important analysing upward initiatives and local processes. The study ends with a conclusion that summarise the findings and presents the implications of the work. It furthermore suggests areas for future relevant research developed during the data collection and analysis.

2 Literature Review: The Research Of Qualities

2.1 Positioning the debate: Rural economies decay and urbanization trend

The contemporary globalized world has radically change humans' way of living and working. National borders are less relevant in the economic and political scenario, while cities are establishing their leading roles in human life. Nowadays, the tendency emphasizes the agglomeration of human, cultural and financial resources, to the detriment of those urban centres unable to be globally attractive. The portion of people that lives in urban agglomerations varies from country to country; in the western society the percentage fluctuates between 60% and 90% (UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014). This data will even rise, according to "the Economist (2012): "It is predicted that by 2050 about 64% of the developing world and 86% of the developed world will be urbanized". These percentages indisputably highlight the weight of urban centres in the contemporary society. Studying cities in this moment means understanding the evolution of our current society, even its cultural and economic transformations. In this work we are principally interested in small towns and rural areas. Indeed, actual trends seem oriented to mega agglomerations that are magnets for resources. They are the mirror of a long period of economic development and evolution, which can be ascribed to the industrial revolution, started one hundred years ago. In this scenario little and medium cities risk to be compressed in the grip of massive urban agglomerations, unable to attract social, economical and cultural capitals as metropolitan areas do. Here we would like to frame the problem, understanding what a city is and the process of urban agglomeration.

2.1.1 The agglomeration phenomena

Cities represent both a demographic phenomena and a human's adaptive response to external changes. In the contemporary world, we deal with a high urbanized and globalized society. The latter scenario is the result of a long process of human evolution. Actually, first of all cities can be considered a reaction to human necessities. Protection and sharing are ancestral human needs; they drove our race to create communities, give

meanings, organize spaces to optimize the usage of resources and feel protect by external dangerous. An anthropological perspective of the city emphasizes its importance in the human process of evolution. Its rise and complexity moves alongside the evolution of human race and its needs. Lewis Mumford (1961) traced the development of human settlements from Palaeolithic era to world cities in the contemporary ages. The portrait of the human evolution can be depicted through the observation of how men organize their needs and activities into physical networks and structures. In this way, we can recognize the organic characteristic of urban agglomerations: they are pliable adaptive systems created by human to facilitate their activities and structure the environment.

The development of the urban organism went hand in hand with the rise of human's organization complexity. If prehistoric settlements describe the necessity of surviving and being protected, with the evolution of our race, the urban organism embeds the structure of the society it hosts. Urban agglomerations can be understood as a functional answer to human activities (economic, political, social and cultural) (Hall et al., 1973). The latter shape urban structures basing on contingent necessities. Indeed, "the city provided a focus for political and social organisation; for the development and expression of cultural identity; for the organised division of labour; and perhaps above all for the development of trade and the accumulation of wealth" (Watson, 1993). Watson underscores the role of economic facilitator cities fulfils: they have always been the place where different agents perform transactions and deals; they facilitate the market, agglomerating and physically funnelling resources.

The agglomeration phenomena became more intense during the last century. Indeed, the 1900s has been characterized by the process of urbanization, which is the key concept for figuring out the actual urban framework. With the development of the new capitalistic paradigm, the accumulation of resources and the maximization of profits reside directly in the peculiarities of the current production system.

The process of urbanization has definitely consecrated the role of the city as economical, social and cultural centre. The term indicates principally the massive flows of population from rural to urban areas. Indeed, before the industrial revolution, the principal economic activity was agriculture, so that the majority of people lived in rural areas. The economic transformation after the introduction of new technologies, during the last century, has attracted farmers and families from the countryside, looking for a job and better condition of living. Due to the industrialization of agriculture and the

reduced necessity human effort due to the introduction of the machine, rural exodus consolidates patterns of urban development.

Moreover, the colonial expansion enlarges the large-scale urbanization, taken over with the industrial revolution; it provokes both indigenous urban civilizations in the “Third World” and flux of immigrations in the old continent. Cities become the fulcrums of the new economic order, based on industry, and a new social contract among classes.

In that period, cities like Manchester or Liverpool experience a consistent rise of human capital, having positive industrial and commercial outcomes. After the period of the industrial revolution, the city became the image of a new economic class, and the research of opportunities for people without a salary. So rural societies moved to cities massively, expanding the urban population until 70% of total amount in United Kingdom around 1925.

Urbanization trend rapidly spreads all over the world. At the turn of the new century, just 15% of the world population lived in a city. In 2007, according to United Nations (Watson, 2010), for the first time in the human history, more than half of the world population was living in cities. This trend is going to be improved.

Urbanization continues with an obsessive pace. Actually, Scott (2011) refers to three “waves” of urbanization: the first one can be identified with the industrial and manufacturing system introduced in Great Britain during the climax of the first industrial revolution; the second coincides with the Fordist mass production system that reach its highest expression during the middle of 20th century in large metropolitan areas of the American scenario; the third urban wave that emerges after the crisis of Fordism in 1970, has branched out until contemporary ages. The latter is usually characterized by reference with recent terms like “knowledge economy”, “creative economy”, “cognitive capitalism” (Moulier Boutang, 2007), or even “cognitive-cultural capitalism”, as used by Scott (2008). The last wave is even associated with the rise of a global perspective of the city-regions, spread not just in the North but also in developing countries, as the East and the South of the world (Scott, 2011). The latter classification could not be applied strictly, since these processes are obviously influenced by local variables. Rather, it may be valuable for assuming an economic perspective of the urbanization phenomena.

As a matter of fact, it is unthinkable separating the urbanization process from the economic discussion. It has been an economic phenomenon, before being a social and cultural matter. All the forms of urbanization coincide with different phases of the

capitalistic paradigm, since the city played the role of capitals accumulator, before being the space for social and cultural relations. The place agglomeration phenomenon is typical of the capitalistic system, and has radically contributed to urban growth, especially in Western countries. The accumulation of resources gives power and energy to the capitalistic machine and feeds the process of attraction toward the centre. Especially in North America, where huge urban agglomerations arose during the 20th century, the urban structure usually responded to productive necessities, more than social guidelines.

Actually, the agglomeration as a capitalistic phenomena, comes out of three main lines of force, which are: dense network of specialized complementary producers forming functional complexes of interrelated firms (cluster); large specialized local labour markets; process of learning and innovation-creation, based on the grids of socio-economic interactions that characterize these kinds of systems (Scott, 2011). These elements empower expanded urban agglomerations and demonstrate the necessity of combining these lines of force in order to spring up capitalistic paradigms. It is not a case that, after the Fordism crisis, fallen during 1970s, that spread stagnation and decline in many industrial and manufacturing cities, a new process of urban agglomeration arose over the years, until contemporary ages. Indeed, subsequently, over the 1980s and 1990s, trends to locational re-agglomeration have re-asserted themselves as a more cognitively and culturally inflected form of capitalism, coming to prominence. The last hike of urbanization and re-agglomeration is commonly attributed to the upsurge of the creative economy or knowledge economy. All the major segments of the so called cognitive-cultural economy, by Scott (2011) – high technology production, business and financial services, and the cultural industries – are nowadays intrinsically rooted in urban fabrics, creating fully fledged production systems. So, the process of re-agglomerations has been even facilitated by the “knowledge or cognitive-cultural economy” since it embodies, with varying degree, these lines of forces. The creative economy, which is recognized as the star element of the knowledge economy (Pratt, 2011), has definitely intensified the process of agglomeration, since it needs a dynamic creative environment in order to be alive. Clusters of people and industries are the most evident characteristics of the current cognitive economic system (Lavanga, 2009), and recur with some regularity from one city to another. These patterns of social and economic interaction seem privileging massive urban agglomerations, where dense and complex forms of socio-economic concentrations engender value-adding activities.

In the globalized arena, these developments brought to an ever-escalating global competition among cities. The research of the competitive advantage fluctuates among the agglomeration effect and the attempt of being attractive on global markets. For these reasons, policy makers all over the globe, start to repetitively embed concepts as the “creative city” or the “creative milieu” in their agendas, trying to capitalize on local peculiarities, such as skills, traditions, design, ideology, heritage, know-how, and so rebranding the city. In this way, alongside the most famous creative regions or cities, like, for example, the Silicon Valley, Hollywood, or Barcelona, London and New York, new attempts spring up in the globe, like Taipei (Lin, 2009), Bangkok (Scott, 2011), Buenos Aires or Turin (Porrello, 2006).

High competition seems to be more and more exclusive to huge agglomerations, so that human, economic and cultural resources converge in these centres. On the opposite side of the river, there are small towns and rural/marginal areas, which encounters serious difficulties in their competitiveness and position. Indeed, they keep losing capitals, corroding their identities. In a globalized world, where city-regions monopolize and agglomerate resources, where the unique economic solution seems to be contained by these urban structures, which kind of possibilities does small towns have?

2.1.2 Downward spirals in rural economies

The contemporary urban geography appears to be fundamentally asymmetric. Global cities and city-regions concentrate resources, talents and investments, benefitting, therefore, from economies of agglomeration; the upsurge of the tertiary economic segment has even intensified the effects: in fact, specialized industries, as the creative and cultural ones, tend to locate in agglomeration areas, not just to lower costs, but as a necessity to share information and know-how, to find sufficient customers, and to build a qualitative creative environment. Bigger agglomerations tend to grow fast, creating virtuous cycles of development. It seems that the ‘winners’ inherited a bundle of assets that helped them thrive in the knowledge-based economy (van Winden, 2008, cited by Anttiroiko, 2014).

On the opposite side, out-dated economic structure and small cities in rural areas lose out, eroding their capitals. Globalisation significantly increased the spread among

big agglomerations and small-mid cities. This led to a heavily researched phenomenon, called urban decline, sometimes trout out by the debate on “shrinking cities” too (ESPON Final Report SMESTO, 2006). Small cities, therefore, are forced to face several different challenges. According to Erickcek (2004), the latter could be out-date infrastructures, obsolete human capital base, dependence on traditional industry, declining regional competitiveness, weakened civic infrastructure and capacity as well as limited access to resources (ESPON Final Report SMESTO, 2006).

A mix of exogenous contingencies and structural deficiencies has provoked these common difficulties. Without any doubt, globalization and the so-called third wave of capitalistic development (Scott, 2011) have considerably oppressed marginal areas, on behalf of the “metropolitan fever” (Kunzmann, 2011). It is overall accepted that, medium and small sized towns in the periphery of Europe are the relative losers of globalisation. Indeed, the latter provoked across-the-board implications to these urban subjects, affecting economic development, social inclusion, political cohesion and cultural identities. For Kunzmann (2011), it is possible to categorize the structural implications of globalisation on small-mid cities, into five orders of changes: demographic change and aging of the local population with considerable consequences on social and welfare infrastructures; concentration of the economic power in the metropolitan areas, provoking high specialized networks of knowledge, creativity, firms and financial resources; changing of values, attitudes and preferences of individuals, that, in accordance to firms and enterprises, slowly turn their locational preferences; neo-liberal influence on political strategy, that increasingly exacerbates market-oriented planning; cultural exchanges and cosmopolitanism, that fade out borders and local cultural identities, mingling different values and attitudes.

Some of these implications are less evident and slow-release, while some others have drastic consequences on rural areas. In general, the economic and social destabilization, provoked by globalization changes and the effect of the cognitive-cultural economy (Scott 2011), extremely impact lesser-scale centres, also because of their structural peculiarities, as the moderate economic diversification and resilience. In many cases, for example, the migration of international companies, that centralized local urban environments, towards cheaper and more efficient locations, cause in many cases high rates of unemployment across labour forces, difficult to be successively placed in other industries and sectors. Another common consequence of the current economic

turn on small-mid cities is the loss of educated and creative people (Florida, 2002) that prefer to migrate toward bigger agglomerations, looking for the right environment for valorising their skills, looking for a creative environment and high-specialized educational institutions. After all, massive dynamic cities have always been seen as “cauldrons of diversity and difference, fonts for creativity and innovation” (Jacobs, 1984), but the inflexibility demonstrated by small centres in many cases, has been the amplifier of general trends, contributing, therefore, to the economic downturn. It reinforces social disadvantages, negative demographic and social trends and stagnation.

These structural proclivities threaten the cultural and social fabric of several communities, unable to find the right answer to the pressing stagnation and marginality of their urban centre and their economy. These mechanisms often set in motion downward spirals. Indeed, without a rapid reaction, problems tend to structure, making harder their resolution, with the consequence of possible vicious circle. Usually, circular dynamics cannot be identified with a single unique core, rather with hybrid systems of determinants that could lead to shrinkages and downturns. The shrinkages of sales market and loss of know-how can feed economic stagnation, which in turn, fosters unemployment and depopulation. In addition, deficiency of transport infrastructures and geographical disadvantages do anything else but drying up downward spirals.

Of course such a view is too simplistic and deterministic, since it just gives us an overall description of the problem. We should investigate each case in order to be more appropriate in our inquiry on the problem and dynamics of the decline of small-mid urban centres. In truth, there are even substantial differences among realities: their geographical position is a relevant factor for the intensity with which economic decline occurs. Kunzmann (2011), for example, differentiate three kinds of small-mid urban categories. So, the effect of the cognitive-cultural economy and globalisation on small towns in metropolitan regions will be inevitably contrastive, or at least not identical, from urban centres in between of metropolitan regions or in peripheral and rural areas. Actually, while, as a rule, small and medium sized towns within metropolitan regions in Europe clearly benefit from the growing economy, those beyond the geographically disadvantaged hinterland of thriving metropolitan regions, seem to loose out. This is the case in Western, Central and Southeast Europe, though even more so in Eastern Europe, where most economic development is concentrated in few capital city regions only.

The research of adaptive strategies starts from the comprehension of the problems that affects the case. Our research on the condition of rural areas and possible solutions for their revival should criticise the common approaches generally used by national and local governments and policy makers. Indeed, classical Economics, dating back to Adam Smith (1776), assumes that a vicious circle is activated when all the determinants of a complex system are not in a state of equilibrium. When this happens, it may start and cause economic downturn. According to this assumption, the negative spiral will be in motion until an exogenous factor intervenes and stop the cycle. It substantially means that, in the case of small-mid centres' decline, the downturn spirals can be broken recurring to external interventions and top-down applications. This school of thought led the economic and political debate during the years, justifying a multitude of downward policies and public investment. It creates an alarming increase of reliance on state budget transfers, which often provoked corruption and stagnation of the local urban fabric. With the exacerbation of neo-liberal policies, and the consequent contraction of welfare strategies, public inward subsidies are always more frequently subordinate to flagship events and enormous investment. Such investments are often incentivized by mainstream policies in time of globalisation and regional competitiveness, often unable to catch local needs and peculiarities.

Classical economic approaches are limited by the usage of quantitative indicators and performance evaluation, which made such interventions often unglued with the local, social and cultural texture. Moreover, these goals and indicators seem to be out-fielding in a cognitive-cultural economic discussion. Indeed, the economic tendency valorises the importance of creativity for the development of economic systems. Now, this point is quite crucial, as confirmed by Scott (2011), Klammer (2017) or Csikszentmihalyi (1996), since much of the contemporary literature on creative cities and environments tends to abstract creativity away from contingent economic, social and cultural circumstances. Rather, creativity and learning processes need a social environment and are mobilized in concrete ways in such dynamic contexts. This is the reason why, cultural and creative industries, as well as qualified and educated people, need to cluster. Such a perspective turns radically our conversation on small centres revival. Indeed, in a cognitive-cultural economy, the importance of a creative environment to boost the local system is quite overall accepted. At the same time, we should be aware about the difficulties of establishing or implementing vertically a

creative environment: indeed it mainly grows on the basis of small-scale informal practices, often imperceptible on an individual base, but that could result cumulatively in quite significant system (Scott, 2011).

So, here we would like to meditate on how a rural areas or small cities can be boosted. As mentioned before classical economics do not offer significant possibilities, more than strategies already used. We should start from reconsidering the current economic conversation, before giving an answer to the previous assertion. Neoliberal apparatus seems to be too instrumental to favour valuable approaches. As mentioned by Klammer (2017), we need to move from an instrumental reasoning to a substantive approach. In the case of local rural economies it means: 1) rethinking critically which kinds of goals a strategic intervention should achieve, in order to benefit the local community; 2) building endogenous strategies of development, based on the “territorial capital”, which is the “asset or talent of a region” (Kunzmann, 2011); 3) in accordance to the cognitive or creative economy, valuing which kinds of qualitative elements, as social and cultural dynamics, participative practices and social networking, contribute to the development of the creative environment.

The analysis will avail itself of the knowledge of prestigious theories and works to support the theoretical discussion. We will try to funnel them in order to have two kinds of conversation: a matter conversation and a method one. The first aims to orient the research to the right conversation, so understanding which kind of approach suits better for the development of a qualitative analysis. The matter conversation will explain why we need to turn policies goals and how rural areas can revive their economies. In the second conversation, it will be elaborated the inquiry on how practically the local economy can be boosted. So we will understand how government should support the local economy, and how a creative environment can rise and contribute to small-mid cities.

2.2 Going into the problem: The erosion of the cultural and social capital

In order to find the right strategy to revive and support small towns and rural areas, we need to be aware of their ills. In the previous paragraph we set a general perspective up of rural areas diseases and current challenges. In the diagnosis, policy-makers and legitimated personnel, have often under-estimated the erosion of social and cultural capital. When considering the effect of economic reconversions and transformations on urban fabrics, we must weigh the risk of destroying social capital and fading cultural capital.

The defacement of these capitals, in several local communities could be caused by several different situations and possibilities. The economic and social isolation experienced by rural cities and peripheral areas is the dramatic consequence of the era of massive urban agglomerations. Indeed, the exodus of young people, middle class and working class from small-mid cities, for the economic diseases presented in the previous paragraph, have eroded the social capital available to those left behind and fragmented the cultural capital of the local community. The agglomeration of financial, cultural and human resources from megalopolis has left peripheral cities starving, socially and economically speaking. Lack of connections, in the most literal sense, limited the access to job opportunities and entrepreneurial possibilities, as well as, to the communion of values and the stimulation of personal creativity.

Cities are agglomerations of individuals before being a set of physical and financial resources. They are represented by their communities, which are both heralds of values and container of networks and connections. As remembered by Putnam (1993b), working together is easier in a community blessed by a substantial stock of social capital. The latter, therefore, enhances benefits of investment in physical and human capital. Its slow and continuative erosion is a degenerative condition for peripheral areas. Without any interventions to stem its drain, rural areas keep collapsing. Furthermore, the degradation of the social capital has serious consequence on the cultural capital too, weakening the social awareness of values, beliefs and social memories. These immaterial cultural resources are essential in sustaining a community, its relationships and activities.

We would like to make the reader aware about the problem of the erosion of social and cultural capital in rural communities. This thesis supports the way of thinking that highlights the importance of social and cultural capital in the economic discussion. Every insight here as been borrowed and elaborated from numerous texts and works that humanists, philosophers, economists, scientists, anthropologists and architects have left to us, calling into a question the standard approach to economics, politics and culture.

We would like to catch the attention of the reader around the importance of social and cultural capital into an urban economy, so that their downgrade is the primary issue that should take into account developing a strategy of support to small cities and rural areas.

2.2.1 What is the meaning of cultural capital and social capital?

Economists conventionally approve the existence of three forms of capitals: physical capital, human capital and natural capital (Throsby, 1999). They have been traditionally identified respectively as the stock of real goods, human know-how and knowledge, and natural resources, involved in the creation of wealth and human progress. Moving away from conventional knowledge and doctrines, several scientists have argued the relevance of other kinds of capitals, important likewise those previously mentioned. The research of new paradigms of capital, to integrate the classical approaches to economics, politics and all the branches of human matters, translates the necessity of explaining phenomena organically. It means that, over the years several authors have stressed the instrumental role of the sciences, looking for more inclusive and organic ways of interpreting the reality. The integration of social and cultural capital in the economic conversation answers to this need. Actually, terms as cultural capital and social capital remain still far from an adequate horizontal integration: their usage prevails in sociology, anthropology and cultural studies.

The term cultural capital has been used, with grater or lesser degree of rigour, by a number of writers. Bourdieu (1986) probably provided the most relevant definition, distinguishing it in three states of existence. According to the French sociologist, the cultural capital exists in three forms: in an embodied state, in an objectified state and in an institutionalised state. The first one refers to that knowledge consciously acquired

and passively inherited by the individual, through socialization (the process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs, values and ideologies (Clausen, 1968)). It is acquired over time, shaping the Habitus of each person (Bourdieu, 1986), which is the inner and most personal part of the individual (successively it will be clear how this approach to cultural capital strictly interweaves with that one of social capital). The second one refers to the identification of values and norms into cultural material goods (heritage site, a work of art), objectifying the abstract cultural property. The third one refers to the institutional formalization of the personal cultural capital, as academic credentials or professionals qualifications. In truth, the latter interpretation usually facilitates the economic conversion and social identification of the cultural capital.

Much of the empirical testing on this concept has focused on its impact on economic outcomes. Usually, it happens with the institutionalized meaning of cultural capital, creating an explicit connection with the human capital. Indeed, in the economic milieu, the latter capital has often included culture as one of its component, principally referring to the stock of knowledge, education, skills and culture stored in the personal ability (Costanza & Daly, 1992). Some economists have even enlarged the definition of human capital in order to give explanations to various phenomena, from wage differences among immigrants (Chiswick, 1983), to the economic contribution of creativity.

In other cases, cultural capital has been used in relation to the human adaptability to the external environment or to a different economic system. Still, with the increasing diffusion of the creative or cultural economy, the previously mentioned capital, regarding its objectified meaning, highlights the economic relevance of culture and creativity. This approach usually emphasizes the instrumental contribution of culture to economic systems.

In this work, we would like to principally refer our attention to what Bourdieu named, the embodied cultural capital and the objectified cultural capital. We would like to spotlight the importance of cultural capital indicating how inner cultural values and inherited beliefs drive economic and social outcomes. In the sociological literature, the definition of cultural capital and its relevance is enriched with the concept of social capital, so that the complex personal system of values become strictly entwined with the net of value systems that compose the sphere of social interactions of the individuals. It means that, at the base of social interactions, there is a complex system of values and

beliefs shared by numerous individuals, so that it allows the creation of a shared capital of values, norms and practices. In this sense, the formation of social capitals is extremely linked with the cultural capital and subordinated to it. As mentioned by Putnam (1993b), social capital refers to those features of social organizations, such as trust, values, norms and networks, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. Social capital is what the social philosopher Albert O. Hirschman (1985) calls a “moral resource”. This “resource” tends to be a by-product of other social activities, which allow processes of moral resources accumulation. As demonstrated by Lin (2009), for example, cultural resources can foster aggregation and mobilization processes, able to revitalize social and cultural meanings. Endogenous cultural resources and sharing of cultural values are essential precondition for the creation of a strong social capital. Physical rooms for associative processes, social and cultural infrastructures, encourage the formation of social capital. The latter tends to be self-reinforcing and cumulative through its usage; it means that processes of civic engagement and “production” of stocks of social capital, such as trust, norms, values, generate virtuous processes of social sharing and collaboration.

The description of the peculiarities of those kinds of capitals is functional for our analysis in relation to the decay of rural areas and small cities and their renovation. Classical economics still ignore the relevance of these conditions in relation to economic development and more precisely, to the economic stabilization of these urban centres. Actually, in our point of view, the importance of social and cultural capital leaves us spaces for reflections and elaborations. Indeed, we should start thinking differently about economics, so that the achievement of economic development, for a real economy, should be subordinate to other fundamental conditions, instead of being the driving force of political, social, and cultural choices. The necessity of civic engagement, sharing of values among members of the same community, cultural identification, foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity, that seems to be the precondition for political compactness and economic development, instead of being the opposite.

So we need to be aware of the peculiarities of cultural and social capital, in order to recognize their role into a local community, and so understanding how to remedy their erosion in local economies.

2.2.2 The importance of cultural and social capital in urban economies

The paradox of memory is that it needs mutation, as well as, it needs to repeat itself in order to be preserved. In this way cities need to be transformed and repeat themselves, in order to keep alive their souls and identities (Settis, 2015). Taking inspiration from the “Invisible cities” of Italo Calvino (1972), this statement lights up the intrinsic quality of urban organism, which is the ability/necessity to evolve in order to maintain its status and qualities. The evolution – again another paradox – takes place through its community, which renovate and share those values that identify the city itself. The city preserves its soul and its continuity as long as its community feels to be the heir of itself (Settis, 2015).

The notion of evolution and development could appear misrepresented today, by the economic doctrine. Indeed, the economic metaphor of Schumpeter (1942), the “creative disruption”, instils a terrible misunderstanding: new and old should be compared on profitability and economic benefit. With the “creative disruption”, the economist designs the essential quality of capitalism as a process of internal transformation that perpetually revolutionise the economic structure, destroying the oldest and creating a new one. The principle cannot be applied mechanically and indiscriminately to urban transformation and evolution. In truth, it is quite risky and ambiguous using an economic metaphor to urban development and cultural matters. We should at least be critical to the disruptive and production process, wondering what we intend to build in place of the musty, eroded structure. How do we intend to develop the socio-economic fabric of our city? The economic metaphor seems to be limited and abused in the socio-cultural scenario.

Our cities need to “move” in order to be alive, to preserve their identities, to feed their communities, but at the same time, they need community in order to keep “moving”. This movement regards the genetic code of its city, favouring a harmonic growth instead of a “disruptive destruction”. In other words, urban development needs to produce something, which could not be measure in terms of profit maximization and balance sheet, but rather in terms of values. “The sharing of values among members of a community allows transmitting these beliefs and values in order to make it real and actual, and so being part of the cultural capital of a particular community. The idea of learning brings us back to what is socially transmitted, what it is received by tradition” (Kroeber, 1983). The creative disruption, therefore, has no sense in the socio-cultural panorama if it is not able to produce what Settis (2015) named, “civic capital”. This

term, proposed for the first time by Luigi Guiso, Paola Sapienza and Luigi Zingales (2010), indicates the set of values, memories and beliefs shared by a social group, which helps the group itself to pursue socially advantageous activities. In other words, the civic capital concerns what matters for a community, striving for “doing the right thing” for themselves and for their community (Klamer, 2017). Rethinking sociologically an urban economy, as a net of social and economical interactions among individuals, compels us to weight the collective role of the community and what animates its actions, and how resources are integrated for accomplishing socially useful objectives.

The definition of civic capital conciliates the previously mentioned social and cultural capital in the urban conversation.

Economic transformation/development of an urban context, therefore, cannot overlook the importance of the social capital in order to accomplish a stable economy. It stimulates individual creativity and transfers product and abilities into the social network. The problem is that, speaking about a community, so an agglomeration of human capitals (using an economical language), we should be aware about what animate this community, what is important for it. Settis (2015) answers to these questions referring to the civic capital, or, using another nomenclature, the embodied cultural capital shared by members of the same community and aimed to sustain socially useful activities and goals.

The civic capital, understood as history, experience, identity and social useful activities of a social group, hinges on the local urban culture, institutions and economy. Actually it coincides with the urban cultural identity and makes the community more important than the single. All these ingredients are not economically measurable, and forces economists to do somersaults in order to find quantitative scales.

In this work, we would like to propose a cultural approach to the urban discussion. The economic development or stabilization of small areas cannot leave the social, cultural and civic capital out from its discussion, and so from the research of the right strategy to boost them. We cannot work with a quantitative-economic approach, since it will likely drive the conversation toward an instrumental reasoning. Indeed, we would like to speak about economic development in term of values and substantive reasons instead of numeric indicators.

2.3 From instrumentalism to substantivism: a qualitative integration of the scientific approach in the realm of politics and economics

In the previous paragraph, we explain the importance of building a qualitative strategy to sustain the development of a small city. Considering the risk of the erosion of social and cultural capital and their importance, contributes to frame the aim of this work. Indeed, the fact that actual strategies for local development and economic indicators do not take into account cultural values and collective resources do not mean they are not useful or even real. Here we ask to the reader a little effort, in order to set temporarily aside the conversation around rural areas. Indeed, we would like to offer a critical conversation around economy and politics, restoring a long tradition of thinkers that generate significant contributions for rethinking qualitatively human knowledge. The aim is supporting the previous conversation around cultural and social capital, so explaining which kind of approach we retain adoptable to boost small rural areas.

2.3.1 Qualitative approaches: values as particles of significances

In the psychology milieu, there is a clear separation among values and behaviours. People usually identify the second ones with the first ones; values are difficult to grasp and quantify, while behaviours are undeniable. Values are, therefore, indistinct, philosophical. They regard ideas, a separate world of immaterial elements. That's why humans match values with behaviours, in order to make them concrete and quantifiable. The difference is essential. Behaviours are just the physical expressions of our ideal realm of senses. If we try to ask to someone: "what is respect for you?" Not surprisingly, he will answer indicating a particular behaviour that he relates to that specific value. Of course he will do, since it is quite hard to drive behaviours away from a practical conversation. We are aware of the importance of values, but we feel perplexed when we have to discuss about them, especially when we have to quantify them: "how important is respect and love in your life?" The answer will probably be generic, since we don't have likely tools.

In psychology, it is all about values and their interpretation and application. Values are what drive people's actions and choices. We strive for realizing our values: it happens during social interactions, economic transactions, and choices. Every human activity corresponds, in some way, to the necessity of accomplishing our values. This

happens when we go to the supermarket, when we deal with a determinant choice of our personal path of growth, and even when we vote. Everything regards our net of significances.

Psychology attempts to explain our relation with values teaching that there is a solid triangulation among values, elaborations and behaviours so that, an irrational immaterial concept is transformed into an evident action, in order to be recognized by others. So, the recognition of our values is a social process: since values are immaterial concepts, difficult to be grasped by human minds (humans are signifying people), we need to materialize them in practical milieux. It happens through the process of elaboration that reformulates information received from the external environment, filtering them based on our value system. In concrete, the process aims to fill up our “containers of significance” with meanings, which are elaboration of information gathered from the external context. Consequently, basing on this system, we operate in the social environment throughout behaviours and practices, in order to realize our values. Sociology and anthropology, therefore, explain us the importance of the social network and the social environment for the recognition of our values. The latter is a social process, of sharing and acceptance, so that it requires interpretable behaviours. They are the social and practical expressions of our value system and allow us to communicate with others.

The realization of values is a cultural practice too (Klamer, 2017). As mentioned before, values are particles of meanings, suspended into “webs of significances” (Geertz, 1973). This concept is as important as complicated to explain linearly. Actually, we should start thinking that, as mentioned before there is a duplex relationship between the concept of value and the external environment; in order to make it clear, we referred to the psychological doctrine, explaining the elaboration and the behavioural processes. It means that values are not independent essences, but rather particles suspended into webs of significances. They absorb information from the network and produce behaviours that strengthen the network itself. Those webs mentioned by Clifford Geertz (1973) make us aware of the interdependence among factors, so that the realization of values cannot be recognized without its relevant cultural context. Thus far, cultural anthropology has defined culture “as the particular human way of organizing its behaviour and thought, based on the context, inasmuch part of a community” (Fabietti, Malighetti, Matera, 2000), as well as Geertz (1973) that, in “The interpretation of Cultures”, considered Culture “to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one, in search of

meaning” (Geertz, 1973).

The realization of values and the research of meanings are different sides of the same coin. Indeed, the research of meaning could be considered the reverse process of value realization. Let’s make this example: two different persons recognize love as an important value of their lives. The first one realizes it, marrying with just one girl and being faithful during its entire life, the other one realizes his value buying one present for his wife everyday of his relationship. Despite the example misses any kind of sophistication, it is functional to highlight the variability of reaction to realize the same value. It is the result of the elaboration of its own cultural context, process that we described before. Every action, no matter how instrumental, reflexive, or coerced vis-à-vis its external environment, is embedded to some extent in a horizon of affect and meaning (Alexander, 2003). The research of meaning is that reverse process which, starting from the particular practice or action, climb up again to value, in order to map and trace the set of meanings that compose the web of significances, or culture, of the subject.

The hermeneutic approach to Culture, brought in by Clifford Geertz, proposes a substantive paradigm in social sciences. In fact, the importance of its contribution mostly lies in the research of meaning, investigating what moves people’s behaviours, actions and practices and how they are related. The act of reverse translation is oriented to code the web of significance we mentioned before. This approach rises up some considerations. Indeed, Geertz tries to apply those factors we introduced before, about values and their realization, in the academic milieu. It means attributing the research of meanings to economic, social and political behaviours, to human values. “We humans are signifying people: we attribute meanings to what we do and need a cultural context in order to make sense of what we and what others do” (Klamer, 2017). Since we already explain the connection among values, culture and social context, we can state that these behaviours are embedded in a culture and makes sense only in its cultural context. The embadeness conversations, which include thinkers from all kinds of knowledge, like Geertz, Putnam, Polanyi, Settis, Nussbaum, Aristotle or Klamer, stress the meaningfulness and value-laden character of human actions, and will tend to put them in the cultural context (Klamer, 2017).

Despite the cultural turn, during 70’s, which indicates the moment when culture and substantive approaches begin to take part of the academic conversation, quality-oriented approaches to sciences, politics and economies remain marginal. The unquantifiable and vague peculiarity of values makes them a rare determinant of the

academic or even scientific discussion. As mentioned before, it usually regards philosophy, psychology and cultural matters, even if, during the last century, cultural anthropology and sociology have contributed to enhance the academic discussion about values. Nevertheless, the interdependence among values and behaviours force us to take the first into account when we meditate on human matters, from economy to law. That's why, the instrumental character of (neo)classical approaches to economics and politics arises doubt on their ability of understanding and explaining every realistic situation that involves humans. Standard approaches to economic and political sciences propose instrumental reasons. The neoliberal perspective refers to the application of market rules to political practices. It stresses result-oriented logics, highlighting the importance of free-choice and competition, in terms of product, demand, supply and efficiency achievements. These approaches do not obviously take into consideration the substantive reasoning we allude to previously. Should a political action strive for the realization of its community's values or customers' needs? Should economics be instrumental for the realization of values such as knowledge, freedom, equality and love, instead of being monetary result-oriented?

We are involved in the development of a qualitative approach, making the reader aware of the **embadeness of economy, as well as politics, into culture, referring to the web of meanings and values important for members of a community.** Economic behaviours intend to realize values, as well as, an urban community needs to realize its values, in order to survive. It does not make any sense to speak about urban development or strategies to boost an urban economy, without taking into consideration the cultural and social capital, which respectively represents the set of values of a community and the web of connections among its members that strive for the same values.

2.3.2 The pursuit of the right approach

When we consider urban development and strategies for the stabilization of a rural economy, the temptation is articulating a clear and detailed program, based on economic growth, rate of employment and GDP growth rate. Listening politicians and civil servants speaking today about more profit and more economic growth, leaves citizens at least confused, forced to deal daily with number and quantitative indicators, instead of values and goods. Charles Taylor (1991), Canadian philosopher, identifies

three malaises of modern life, among which the prevalence of the instrumental reasoning and the technocracy of politics affect people's participation to political discussion and political life and renders them therefore instruments for instrumental life (Klamer, 2017).

In the perspective that we used to call Neo-Liberalism, politicians and civil servants apply market rules to politics, forcing people to accept systems that are imposed upon them for reasons of efficiency, maximization of growth and controllability. In this way, citizens seems to be customers in search of market solutions for their problems, and governments play the role of big market-oriented organizations. Civil servants focus their strategy on achieving quantifiable results and procedures, organizing competitive market processes for accomplishing customers' needs. Everything is monitored in order to seek better efficiency, lower costs and more economic growth. But what if the pursuit of those indicators distract from the qualitative objectives? Goals previously mentioned, such as economic growth or addition job, are mainly instrumental. There is a general assumption that good financial outcomes signify qualitative improvements, but those goals are no values per se. What does economic growth mean in terms of quality of life and happiness? What do additional jobs say about qualitative improvement of jobs available? What does quantitative indicators explain in terms of improvement of rural areas conditions or local development? These questions inevitably bring us wondering critically "what is what are you doing good for?" (Taylor, 1991)

The instrumental reasoning inverts the real perspective of life. It means that it is all about economic development and growth, since the achievement of these goals will help a local economy, as well as an entire nation, to increase their quality of life and well-being. Values like freedom, happiness, and knowledge are consequences of an admirable growth rate, instead of being the causes for what organizations strive for.

This is the result of the standard approach to economics, politics and social sciences that exclude any kind of unquantifiable and qualitative factors, such as cultural and social capitals, from their models. Still today, economists tend to be reluctant to adopt such a kinds of capitals for the explanation of various phenomena. Instead, other scholars have applied economic tools to any kind of phenomenon. In this case, standard economic tools and concepts, like market, rational choice, elasticity, contingent valuation, externalities, are suitable in order to give a quantifiable and quantitative meaning to art, religion and science.

Instrumental reasoning seems to be even more evident when we speak about the relevance of culture for economic processes. The cognitive-cultural economy, or creative economy, has risen public awareness on the role of creativity and arts play for economic success and development. Several models aims to demonstrate that some economies grow better and faster than others due to the presence of artists, a creative class (Florida, 2002) and a creative milieu, that badly functioning cities flourish because of the arts, rebranding their image and their cultural sector, and that creative industries come to thrive in certain cities and not in others and that culture attract tourists (Klamer, 2017). Famous theorists of this position are, for example, Florida (2002), Howkins (2001), Scott (2000). Actually, this position seems to be the harder antagonist of substantive reasoning, especially in the area of local development and urban regeneration (the literature of creative city remarks this concept), since it elevates culture and arts to be the star elements of a new economic system, de facto raising people awareness of their importance. The problem is that this approach appears to be fairly instrumental, since arts and culture are just the maiden to obtain economic growth.

Nowadays, several urban and rural economies are using culture and cultural strategies in order to attract tourists and creative talents, in order to achieve economic growth and visibility. These theories and doctrines are assumed and applied in urban environments, sometimes untidily and without valid planning. There is a shared view that considers the cultural economy as the star element of the knowledge economy, and as such, the highest point of economic development, in a typical modernization perspective. For this reason, cities, regions and nations, are encouraged to be more creative and cultural (Pratt, 2010). In fact, different contexts have already adopted a shared terminology, usually that one of creative city, de facto working in different ways, on targeted applications, aimed at encouraging their peculiarities.

In the course of time, culture has been used to face and manage different urban dynamics and problems. In North America and Western Europe, it has been a real panacea for “multilevel urban socioeconomic problems, such as declining urban centres and economic restructuring” (Lin, 2009). Indeed, since the beginning of the 70s, the relationship between culture, politics and economics has been enriched by new theoretical tools, so that policy-makers were able to integrate culture in a broader

intervention of economic and social growth. Thus, both decentralization of national governments, which took place in many European countries at that time and the increased awareness on post-socialist regimes and governments on the importance of the role of culture in a given social-economic environment, slowly provided to various municipalities some tools to implement decisive cultural intervention policies in the territory. Thus, cultural policies have been the object of various development strategies over the years, depending on economic and social needs, and political leanings of the period. In fact, during the last forty years, culture was first used as political glue by various socialist governments of the 70s. Later, in the 80s, the transition to neo-liberalism by the major national governments of Western Europe was accompanied by a reduction of local government finances and, consequently, by a reduction in expenses. In the field of cultural policies, pressures to reduce expenditures of local governments led to strategic shifts from social to economic objectives. In this context, some cities began to realize that the urban economic restructuring that followed the recession provided opportunities to forge new positive arguments to increase expenditures on culture. The emphasis of the 70s on the individual and community development, on participation, egalitarianism, democratization of urban areas and on the revitalization of public social life, was replaced by words aimed to highlight the potential contributions of cultural policies with respect to the urban economic and physical regeneration. The word "subsidy" was gradually replaced with "investment." Access to the community, people creativity and popular participation became less important arguments compared to the role of prestigious cultural projects, in order to promote a positive image of the city and to develop targeted sectors as, for example, local cultural industries (Porello, 2006).

Cultural policies, therefore, have played a covering role of socio-economic dynamics, and contingent problems, considering culture a sort of "carnival mask" (Harvey, 1989). This term was used by Harvey, in order to indicate the employment of great cultural and artistic projects, as well as investments in these areas by municipalities and governments, to cover the traumatic social consequences of the economic restructuring of the 80s. At the same time, urban policies became important tools to improve classic economic sectors related to culture, such as tourism, entertainment or mass media; moreover, since the 80s, cultural policies have been more and more inclined to absorb the regeneration of urban spaces strategies and the creation of a dynamic image of the city. In this way, there was space for the development of certain economic sectors, the investment in the creation of a strong cultural and artistic

circuit, the attraction of foreign investments and the creation of an international image of the city.

The usage of cultural approaches and strategies could distort the point we are trying to develop in this thesis. We previously focused on cultural approaches to local development and economic growth in order to clarify the way of intending culture, since even the latter could assume instrumental position if included in instrumental approaches. Before, we referred to the term “culture” in order to indicate a system of values, which has a particular meaning for a particular context. Contrary, theories as the creative city, remark the economic instrumentalism of culture and arts, including in quantitative scenario. Indeed, arts and culture will be valued based on the number of working positions they will generate or the increase in number of tourists. In this case, therefore, the question will remain the same: “what is a creative class, or a cluster of creative industries good for?” Unfortunately, the answer will be always the same: “more profit”, “more economic growth” or “more personal growth”.

This passage teaches us the importance of the approach and their goals, instead of the tools we could use to obtain them. In order to build a substantive approach to boost rural areas and small economies, civil servants and policy makers should be aware of what is good for its own community, and for what they strive for. The usage of the cultural paradigm does not assure a substantive approach, if this is not oriented toward the right goals. That’s why a qualitative strategy calls for the clear articulation of social and cultural goals, able to sustain the qualities of the rural area. In the next part we will describe how a qualitative approach should be in order to support the development and stabilization of small cities and marginal areas.

2.4 A call for qualities: the elaboration of a qualitative approach to sustain rural economies

2.4.1 The environment: a vague, essential resource

In the first paragraph of this chapter we practically highlight the obstacles that several marginal cities are facing in order to survive. Most of them have been completely compressed by the magnetism of national agglomerates. Luckiest cities, thanks to their

strategic proximity to the Metropolis, benefit from the transit of human and physical resources. Others still need to find their position in the new globalized arena. In many cases, these towns can promote regional and territorial development, creating stable clusters and networks of substantial resources. Understanding how to boost these realities, therefore, represents a significant opportunity to animate domino effects.

Every area, every region and every community has its own set of peculiarities that make it unique and inimitable. These characteristics could be physical or tangible, including the geographical location, size, factors of production, natural resources, climate and buildings. On the other side, other elements may be untraced, unlikely recognizable and so difficult to be included in any strategic decision or planning. These are traditions, costumes, informal institutions, values, and social practices. The totality of physical and immaterial resources shapes that intangible factor we used to call environment, which may be “the outcome of a combination of institutions, rules, practices, producers, researchers and policy makers, that make a certain creativity and innovation possible” (Kunzmann, 2011). Creativity and innovation, therefore, are human practices that need social acceptances and the subsistence of a combination of elements, many of them untraceable. Referring to a long tradition of thinkers, Czicksentmihalyi in particular, Kunzmann quotes the communal and relative characteristic of human practice, so that one single action is relative to the web of meaning we previously remarked as culture, and need to be “supported” and received by its own environment.

This set of resources, that Kunzmann (2011) also named “territorial capital”, should be considered as the asset of a region or a city, which shape its economical, political, social and cultural milieu. This concept is quite important since it opens the doors to several elements that usually are discriminated from regional planning and development strategies. Actually, the territorial capital spreads the amount of references owned by a community, so that local identity, tacit knowledge of the community, as well as informal institutions become relevant resources equally to natural resources, industrial fabric and human capital. These elements are unlikely quantifiable and their identification calls for another economy, a picture that shows something more than market and institutional forces, as in standard approaches (Klamer, 2017).

Government interventions tend to neglect the importance of social infrastructures and local identity. Some governments programs have even heedlessly ravaged existing social networks and system of values, provoking traumas that go beyond economic effect. The fact that these costs are not well measured by accounting and financial schemes does not mean that they are not real. Rather, many scholars have tested the beneficial effects of social and cultural dynamics on local development. What we call the environment is exactly the harmonious agglomeration of those conditions that make the specific context economically stable, attractive and creative. The “environment” particularly influences single action and behaviours, as we already stated in the previous paragraph. In that case, therefore, we refer to the cultural context, as the agglomeration of significant meanings that make indeed meaningful the action itself. The context, therefore, is the place where things happen, where people recognize and realize their values, where actions assumes meanings; it is the place where people interact, socialize, entertain relationship and work together, producing social capital.

Within the environment, people interact in all kinds of ways, do things together, and share contributions without the intervention of monetary transactions and governmental procedures. Indeed, social interactions contribute to sustain creative practices, which, as remembered by Czicksentmihalyi (1996) who has studied creative processes extensively, are not the outcome of individual efforts; rather creative behaviours, as any kind of human reaction, are the reflection of the context and its peculiarities.

Social acceptance and participative processes contribute to build up civic awareness, grassroots competences and valuable products. Scores of studies of rural development have shown that a vigorous network of indigenous grassroots associations can be as essential to growth as physical investment, appropriate technology and “getting the right price”. These networks are the outcomes of durable participative processes we refer as commons. The latter are shared practices and participative processes where people and organizations contribute, participate and benefit. These processes are by-products of social processes oriented to cumulate and feed acceptance and recognition. It means that, as we already claimed, social capital needs social activities and behaviours able to transmit norms, share values and accept practices. All these matters highlight the immaterial role and the importance of the environment, since processes, as social acceptance and sharing are relevant for the development of grassroots networks and the production of shared goods.

Commons are therefore shared goods, so that contribution is a relevant part of the practice, as without it the common will be depleted. Benefits are equally important. They should be able to support each participant. The benefits usually will be such that others are willing to pay for the goods thus providing the means that are necessary to sustain the commons. These cumulative processes promote virtuous cycles of support and production. Their social and cultural characteristics make them invisible to civil servants and economists responsible for the plan of local development. Whereas, especially in rural and ancestral areas, these procedures are important assets and continue to have a key role in the local economy, since they are strongly rooted in the local economic history. These inner qualities would not encourage parochial attitudes or hinder innovation processes, but rather, making the reader aware of the importance of such elements, usually set aside from urban development planning.

When we try to describe the environment we should be aware that it is impossible to define clearly all the peculiarities that are part of it. No one can manage all of them, in order to achieve quantifiable relevant goals. The environment is the combination of all those peculiarities that render goods and actions meaningful. Knowledge, competences, skills, cultural traditions, and institutions are important assets embedded in the local context, which are good base for local strategies that aim at forming up new fields of local competence. Valuable planning should take into consideration the importance of participative processes for the creation of capitals and the preservation of values. These elements call for another way of approaching the topic, so that civil servants and governors need to go beyond standard approaches and mere quantitative tools. It is not enough to have a government with a program and a budget; it is necessary to strive for a substantive approach that takes into account all the untraced qualities important for realizing community values.

2.4.2 The realization of community's values: goals and strategies for development

In this part we will discuss about some directions and strategies governments and civil servants should implement in order to take into consideration those principles and directives we stated before. The elaboration, here, is, once again supported by scholars,

thinkers and researchers that already have given their contribution to the topic. We aim to provide enough tools to the reader in order to be critical toward the way of managing communities and agglomerations. At the same time, we exclude the possibility of providing formulas and dogmas: our effort is oriented to furnish tools for observing differently the reality and positioning a little brick on the wall of knowledge. Every situation requires in-depth analysis and so general assertion can just point directions out.

In light of the general discussion we set before about human pursuit of the right thing to do, and taking into consideration the importance of social and cultural capital, as well as all those untraceable elements part of the environment, the research of solutions for rural economies' decay takes different perspectives on.

Thanks to the support of researchers as Pratt, Lin, Mommas, Zukin, Porrelli, Bianchini, we can accede to stocks of relevant information about urban development, governmental strategies and rural economies regeneration. Evidences from the reality depict the abundance of instrumental programs and goals, assumed by civil servants and policy makers around the globe. Managers set their strategies basing on quantifiable and numerical goals, so that they will opt for public decisions oriented to economic growth, attractiveness, wages-rate growth and marginal outcomes. Being more specific, local governments are implementing strategies in order to attract investments and specific socio-economic classes, as tourists and creative talents, and to compete in the creative globalized economy. These objectives are the premise for enhancing local livability and operating on socio-economic problems. Usually, the erosion of social and cultural capital is treated as a marginal consequence of economic stagnation, so that its place in strategic planning is equally marginal.

In many cases, culture has been assumed as efficient economic strategy of local development. Indeed, without the economic contribution, provided in previous periods, by manufacturing firms and industrial clusters, culture seems to attract the attention of policy makers and civil servants. In fact, global emphasis on the economic contribution of culture and creativity as well as appealing label as creative or cultural cities, are leaving spaces for urban competitions played on number of tourists and sustainable "smart" projects. Right now, there are several academic contribution about the financial contribution of the cultural sector; little bit that one of the creative class instead

(Florida, 2002). However, this contribution could be overestimated. Indeed, “with respect to cultural regeneration strategies, a local government’s overemphasis on the economic contributions of culture may fail to recognize the fact that only some global cities are able to become major cultural or creative hubs. Meanwhile, a local government, which has overwhelmingly highlighted the economic importance of culture in its urban regeneration policy, may be narrowing the impact of culture on urban regeneration” (Bassett, 1993). Following the global trend, several governors draft cultural strategies of urban development, in order to achieve those economic goals already mentioned. Especially in rural areas, these strategies have been shaped on local qualities, such as food, crafts, arts and landscape or natural resources. Their valorisation has been really functional in increasing touristic flows and national or international visibility. In some cases, these strategies brought to cooperative efforts and regional movements, as in Tuscany or Puglia, two virtuous Italian regions, in terms of touristic industry. In many others, wicked managements have generated speculative motions and have contributed to erode local cultural and social capitals.

An exaggerated estimation of economical outcomes of culture does not mean that it is useless, but rather that politics needs to orient urban plans towards different goals, as for example local community cultural development, social inclusion, integration, local resources valorisation, using a different system of analysis of the processes and the outcomes.

A qualitative approach to urban development particularly emphasizes the social and cultural particularities of localities as more important than simply measuring the economic effects. Governments need to realize its community values, which means, “strive to improve social and cultural qualities of rural areas” (Klamer, 2017), building communities on local qualities. It means recognizing those qualities that the majority of locals share as such, identifying also those ones that need to be improved. There is no other way to stabilise and develop a medium-sized town located beyond a metropolitan region than to rely on the endogenous territorial capital (Kunzmann, 2011). The more a town succeeds in using endogenous potential, that is, local merchants, crafts and firms or regional competence and tacit knowledge, the more it sharpens the local identity and its urban profile. It means implementing strategies of community-based cultural planning (Lin, 2009; Bianchini, 1993; Porrelli, 2006), where endogenous resources and local cultural peculiarities are mapped and equipped into governmental plans. The aim is the creation of a sustainable strategy, accepted and recognized by the local community, without introducing external practices of unknown results, and

simultaneously emphasizing the efficiency of local cultural resources and the feeling of belonging by the population.

The accomplishment of these goals requires a careful management, so that these qualities are researched and evaluated. The success of the policy depends on the attention policy makers place to local needs, their comprehension of the cultural context and its informal institutions, and a clear definition of the objectives that the government would achieve through the policy itself. Most of the time, political interventions on urban development are state dominant, indicating the tendency of being imposed vertically, instead of using communitarian methods of co-decision and construction of the urban policy. This trend has devastating effects, since without engaging local civic society, it is quite impossible being aware of local qualities, especially regarding immaterial and untraceable resources, such as tacit knowledge. Moreover, “hierarchical structures and systems of control hamper the development of creative environments” (Klamer, 2017).

Hence it is indispensable to engage local communities in strategic planning and development, not as consumers of public services, but as actors in local efforts to improve livability in the town. Local governments cannot achieve qualitative goals all by themselves. They need to involve and collaborate with the local community, promoting processes of communication and learning, co-decision and co-working. The approach needs to be inclusive, since it has to be able to hear the needs of the local community, being oriented to local stakeholders, collaborating with them. Collaborative governance scholars, such as Innes & Booher (1999), confirmed that collaborative processes among institutional forces and social forces help to stimulate stakeholders’ commitment, trust building, willingness to work together to shape goals and common agenda, as well as to take action. These processes, therefore, are definitely healthy and contribute to social capital development.

It does not mean avoiding any external influence, but rather orienting creative and entrepreneurial outsiders toward the stabilization of the local environment, with its networks, rituals and institutions. It is important, indeed, avoiding any kind of social exclusion or forms of elitism. Actually, these strategies of local development often risk being invasive or wicked, without taking into account local needs and peculiarities. These policies, therefore, are not able to integrate local resources, but rather they tend to musealize them for touristic consumption. These applications provoke alienation and homogenization. Urban development has to produce civic capitals instead, feeding and sustain local values and peculiarities, in order to help the community to do the right

thing, to succeed socially advantageous activities.

We would like to explore the relevance of these concepts and the validity of the theory, using a concrete case study. The aim is observing how a local government designs development strategies in the rural context, if it approaches problems and needs qualitatively and which kinds of dynamics evolve in concrete. Are there evidences that the theory ignores?

The selected case study is Matera, a rural city in the South of Italy. The reason why I supposed Matera to be an interesting case to study, regards principally the European Capital of Culture award for 2019, achieved by the oriented commitment of the local population. These kinds of events spring up interesting opportunities in local development: they provide visibility, huge investments, and the opportunity of turning the path of an entire area. Actually, the nomination and the consequently award obtained by this small rural beautiful city; is quite surprising; it is a source of interest for southern Italians and student of cultural economics. My aim is discovering how this opportunity is oriented to improve and emphasize local cultural and social qualities.

3 The Research Design: methodology and tools useful for the empirical analysis

3.1 Research Questions and Analysis overview

This section is an intermediate passage between the theoretical apparatus of the previous chapter and the next empirical analysis. Here, we would like to make the reader aware about which questions will help us to delve into the study of the concrete case and so which kind of results we would like to develop with the thesis. Moreover, the current chapter will provide a clear overview of the research tools elected to conduct the analysis.

The research aims to elaborate the case bringing in the questions generated in the theoretical discussion. The case study, Matera, has been elected following different criteria: the rural condition, the history of resilience, the economic stagnation, the opportunity of the European Capital of Culture, the attractiveness of the Dossier of Candidacy and the humble origin. Moreover, my affinity with its culture provides me enough tools for exploring the field anthropologically.

In the theoretical discussion, we established the conversation about the revitalization of small cities and rural areas. Spotlighting their struggles, especially considering the magnetism of big agglomerations, we had the possibility of debating about which kind of economic solutions and strategies are suitable for these contexts. Since we are cultural economists, we aim to move qualitatively the economic perspective in order to give a different point of view about the problem. We learnt the importance of speaking in terms of values, instead of numerical indicators. It allows us to change our perspective about what matters for a community and which kind of resources, socially and culturally speaking, should be taken into account designing qualitative strategies of local stabilization and reviving. They contribute to make certain creativity possible. Practically, it means taking into account the importance of local social and cultural capital when considering possible economic solutions for the revitalization of the area. Their importance has been widely discussed into the previous part: indeed social and cultural qualities are relevant for stimulating civic and social capital, and so making creativity and innovation possible.

In order to enhance the theoretical discussion, we intend to bring some questions into a practical conversation, using the case of Matera. One case is useful for valorising the previous conversation and understanding how some dynamics work in a concrete environment, so that the case can give us some insight for understanding if and how concretely the qualitative discussion can be relevant for the stabilization of rural economies. Indeed, taking into account the difficulty of reviving these rural economies, where big agglomerations seem the magnets for all kinds of resources.

What hope is there for rural areas and provincial towns, in order to stabilize their economies and be attractive for internal and external stakeholders?

So, how can rural small cities be economically stabilized taking care of the local cultural and social qualities?

These questions drive our research. In the actual economic contingency peripheral urban centres seem to be unable to find any strategic solutions to their cultural and social marginalization. Whereas, we wonder which kind of tools and resources these areas can mobilize, and how they can valorise their endogenous assets. However, as mentioned previously, we would like to understand which kind of strategies and processes can support the local economic stabilization, being culturally and socially inclusive, so involving wittingly local social and cultural qualities, moving from instrumentalism to substantivism.

The purpose is challenging and probably will not achieve a definitive answer. We do not pretend to obtain a direct solution. At the same time, the case can provide interesting observations about the innovation of processes and how creative practices can stimulate a rural economy, and so obtaining, in the long-term, different practical solutions. Unfortunately, one case is not enough to find a definitive answer to the main question, even if we are not looking for “best practices” adoptable somewhere else, but comprehending better how a qualitative approach can work in a real context, which kind of qualitative and creative processes can innovate the ancient political and economic structure of these contexts, who could be responsible for processes and what the theory does not cover.

Understanding how a rural area like Matera can find qualitative strategies of economic stabilization calls for valuing those processes that the community and the institutions activate for achieving a communal objective. Matera is not a best practice, so that we will observe processes understanding interesting elements that could confirm the theory or call for a different perspective to the problem. The case allows us to bring the research into the field, so valuing practically how local stakeholders move for obtaining relevant economic results. It calls for these two subordinate questions:

How does local government activate endogenous resources in order to make certain creativity and innovation possible?

How do bottom-up initiatives activate endogenous resources in order to contribute to the development of a creative environment?

Creative processes and commons are responsible for the establishment of a creative and innovative environment. It is fundamental for stimulating local capitals and getting together to obtain common goods. Theoretically, both side of interests, local government and local communities, should be involved in the activation of these processes. Studying their behaviours and strategies in concrete will give us several insight about how these stakeholders can be responsible for moving to a substantive economy, so which kind of processes they activate for cooperating, which kind of goals they established and to what extent they look for innovating processes and establishing spaces for creative commons. It will also be interesting the comprehension of the latter effects into a rural area and so.

To what extent can creative practices contribute to local qualities?

The ECOC helps the analysis since it “forces” the context to find social, cultural and economic solutions, attracts innovators and investors, and requires a planning effort by the municipality. At the same time it is not a reproducible factor and it inevitably alters the processes of development. It would be interesting understand if this situation will be really an engine for social and economic innovations, calling for the last question.

Is the European Capital of Culture a real opportunity for experimenting substantive political and economic approaches?

Actually we should be aware that a complete answer to the latter question would be inevitably partial, since we should wait some years after the finish of the event, in 2019, to fully respond it.

To conduct the analysis, we opt for a qualitative approach. Actually it is an intrinsic request of the research since it would be impossible testing the validity of a qualitative approach with quantitative indicators. The method we chose, allows greater flexibility and space for personalizing the analysis. Indeed, the research questions needed an open and flexible approach from the author, since most of the information gathered from the community and institutions were informal and confidential. Despite the clear direction we intend to achieve developing the case study, the research of cultural and social qualities, the mapping of creative practices and participative processes and the institutional outcomes required a qualitative and sometimes ethnographical effort, which quantitative methods are unable to provide. The majority of the results we obtained is the consequence of a period of research in the area, without which informal insights would be unlikely achievable.

The qualitative analysis has been conducted throughout three research tools: qualitative content analysis, in-depth interviews and participants observations. The first one is useful for studying formal documents, extracting general information about the economic and social background of the case study. Moreover the content analysis is useful for tracing current development of local communities, policies documents about Matera 2019 and institutional plans, so preparing the author to the field research. In-depth interviews, instead, allow targeting the research to a particular category that seems to be relevant in the social and cultural context, in order to understand their dynamics. This research was mostly oriented to creative industries and cultural organizations. In the case of Matera, it is impossible referring to a well-defined category, so that speaking about creative industries gets together different hybrid form of deeply-rooted organizations able to activate creative processes and commons in the local context. Precisely, interviews were conducted with cultural organizations, creative workers, territorial associations and exponent of the local creative class; they help us to design a clear frame of local needs, social and institutional dynamics, participative processes and their economic relevance. Moreover, in-depth interviews were used with public officers too, in order to obtain additional information concerning the political address. Finally, the ethnographical approach supported previous research tools, to deeply understand the local environment, local traditions, practices and informal

institutions.

In the next paragraphs these concepts will be deepened, furnishing explanations and clarifications on the elected ways of analysis.

3.2 The Study Design: a qualitative approach

The qualitative approach is wisely described by Siedel (1998), which delineates it like a continuous process of human elaboration, composed by three parts: noticing, collecting and thinking. The study needs this kind of approaching the problem in order to dedicate the right time to analyse peculiarities, giving a flexible structure.

During the empirical analysis, it has been definitely important keeping a flexible approach, in order to smoothly understand which kind of qualitative processes are moving among local actors. The research required a rolling attitude, elaborating information from time to time acquired. The investigation has been structured around few pivotal points: the research questions, the principal stakeholders, public officers, creative industries and territorial organizations, the comprehension of local qualities, the research of qualitative and participative dynamics aimed to stabilize the local environment. It allows us to be aware of which target we were looking for, leaving space for going into processes and local qualities, thanks to the information gathered during interviews.

Moreover, the time spent on field gave us the possibility of striking up confidential relationships with locals. The ethnographic approach is beneficial to the study since it contributes to trace local qualities and those components we used to refer as part of the environment; these elements provide a inductive turn to the elaboration. So, thanks to the ethnographical research, it is possible to recognize the diversity of the case study, and, at the same time, it allows to find particular meanings to bottom-up evidences.

The elaboration of the study combines inductive and deductive elements. The latter drive the analysis, structuring the in-depth interviews; whereas inductive information find basis into the empirical research, rising up from practical experiences and local conversation.

3.2.1 Units of Analysis

First of all, the qualitative consultation identifies the role that creative entrepreneurs, cultural and territorial organizations are playing in the local context, to what extent they contribute to the development of the creative environment and which kind of dynamics they activate. They have been traced using different available sources: the map of the city, creative industries guide map, social networks and local networking.

Second of all, the research needs to screen institutional actions aimed to concretize those goals claimed in the project of local development Matera 2019. Public officers have been selected on the base of their role and weight on political decisions.

Finally, before the empirical research, a cultural planning specialist, Prof. Lia Ghilardi, has been consulted, to increase the depth and validity of the research.

By contrast, the ethnographical approach rarely considers a unit of analysis. Indeed, it is usually a flow process, based on observations and field notes, able to provide day-by-day information and evidences. Most of the time ethnography is subjective; it depends on the ability of the ethnographer and on what he feels important for the aim of the study. As representations, field note texts are inevitably selective. The ethnographer writes about certain things that seem ‘significant’, ignoring and hence ‘leaving out’ other matters that do not seem significant. In this sense, field notes never provide a ‘complete’ record (Atkinson, 1992). But field notes are also selective in what they include, since they inevitably *present or frame* the events and objects written about in particular ways, hence ‘missing’ other ways that events might have been presented or framed (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2007).

3.2.2 Sampling

Samples have been constructed using secondary data sources: the “local resources” report made by the Fitzcarraldo Foundation, the Matera 2019 dossier, online websites, local touristic guides, social networks’ suggestions. Indeed there is still not a map that precisely reports all the agents of this sector in the city. Part of the tracing has been concluded during the time spent there, thanks to the information gathered during the interviews, the observations and the support of the citizens. So at the end, few cultural agents still remain unknown, due to the difficulty of reaching some cultural associations

and crafts, which preferred to keep their marginality and discretion. In the Appendix A, it has been framed all the people and organizations contacted, with their contacts. They have been contacted via e-mail or telephone number. In Matera, the majority of micro economic organizations in the cultural sector still keep the not-for-profit configuration.

The “local resources” report, written by the Fitzcarraldo Foundation, pointed out the presence of 69 cultural operators on the territory of Matera. Unfortunately, it is not possible to valuate which are these operators, leaving us in doubt. During the research, 53 cultural agents have been noticed, divided among the categories above reported. The qualitative sampling process has been critical and driven by the discretion of the author, in term of representation and significance to the study’s aims. So, after contacting them by e-mail, I tried to create an inclusive and varied sample. This sampling method is defined purposively, because participants are not sampled randomly, but in a strategic way, in order to ensure heterogeneity in the sample (Bryman, 2012). After that, the process has been developed underway, since both the information gathered by respondents on new contacts and those refusals received, provided new boundaries to adjust again the sample structure. Therefore, in this second step of the sampling process, a snowball technique was applied. Indeed, a snowball sampling occurs when some participants provide contacts and useful information on other people potentially relevant to the research. As noticed by Bryman (2012), a snowball sampling is frequently preceded by another technique, such as a purposive sampling.

So, the final sample counts twenty interviews, divided by cultural industries, incubators, cultural associations and foundations, and scholars, as the professor Emmanuele Curti. Moreover, due to the complexity of the topic, and in order to fulfil the range of information required in the part, some relevant characters of the political milieus have been interviewed. In this case, the significance of their role in the process of candidacy to European Capital of Culture and the contribution to the setting up of the cultural and local development policies has been the distinctive quality for their selection. So, for this reason, during the time spent there, the Matera Mayor Nicola De Ruggeri and the Director of the Foundation Matera-Basilicata 2019 Paolo Verri have been interviewed, which is the responsible committee for the development of the cultural project, in accordance with political forces.

3.3 Data Collection

Qualitative data has been collected between April and July 2016, four times: the first time in April, an occasion to know the city and interview the Mayor of Matera, spending two days there. The second period has been structured in order to provide the right time to the ethnographic research, gathering contacts, deepening the analysis of the cultural panorama and carrying on interviews. For this reason, the study has been conducted on field for two weeks without interruption. The following fieldworks, of shorter durations, have been functional for collecting other meaningful data, making the study sufficiently rich. So, in total, I spent in Matera 18 days.

The most structured form of data collection used in the study is the interview. In truth, it remains a flexible tool of data collection, useful to adjust, during the time, the way of approaching the direction of the data collection phase, basing on the information gathered until that moment. This flexibility, has been fundamental in order to adapt the approach to the interlocutor, since, as mentioned before, there are different classes of interests, as well as, different kind of interlocutors, with dissimilar ages, educations, backgrounds and social classes.

The semi-structured interview, therefore, allows being comprehensive and adjusting the purpose on the object. Due to the aim of the study, this qualitative tool is the most inherent to achieve it. Indeed, a semi-structured approach avoids the collection of virtually closed responses that could prevent interviewees from providing unexpected, important information (Bryman, 2008). Moreover, it furnishes the base for rolling processes, where previous information can open new path of analysis and the necessity of different directions.

Every participant has been contacted per e-mail or telephone message, explaining the reason why he or she would be important for the construction of the research. In the Appendix B it could be possible to consult the guide used to inform the interviewee about the research and the necessity of being interviewed. Each of them has been recorded, asking if this was acceptable at the beginning of their interview. The majority of interviews have been conducted directly by the author in the physical presence of the participant, while just three of them, required a Skype interview, due to their absence from Matera during the period. Meeting them physically has been fundamental both to adapt the analysis on local dynamics and to establish a good relation with the interlocutor, in order to understand deeper the structure of the place. This method is particularly suitable for the cultural network, since, as it has been demonstrated by the

research, it usually prefers an informal approach. It has been principally appropriate for crafts and cultural associations and not-for-profit organizations. Public officers and relevant public figures have required a more formal approach and a longer time of scheduling, despite almost everyone provided an important contribution to the research.

The complete qualitative data was collected in twenty interviews. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 13 minutes, with the average time of 44 minutes. This resulted in 14 hours and 40 minutes of audio data. The interviews were led in Italian with semi-structured open-ended questions. The benefit of this format is gaining in-depth details, allowing for more information than quantitative formats (Leech, 2002; Bryman, 2008).

The ethnographical approach assumes a completely different shape of data collection. Unfortunately the amount of data gathered is unlikely quantifiable, since the methodology is mostly based on observations and field notes, transcribed during the time. Spending a long period in the city, gives me the possibility of talking daily with citizens, and attempting to be aware of the elements that surrounded me. There is not structured method for participant observation, since everyone could approach it differently. Rather, it is important to take care of details, as well as, looking for meaning and connections, behind words, gestures, behaviours as well as inanimate things. For example, in the case of Matera it is quite easy to be astounded in front of the heritage (as in many other Italian cases), but, a careful observer, should wonder the connection among people and that heritage, the meaning it has, how they live it, the story connected to that place and so on. The participant observation is an exercise to break the wall of appearances and looking for answers to “why” and “how” questions. This has been my approach. It is quite important also, keeping an explorative attitude, with open mind from every kind of pre knowledge developed during the time. It means that the ethnographer should be willing to unlearn and should be tolerance in relation to the studied culture. A good ethnographic work needs empathy, curiosity, sensibility, tolerance and good ability of observation, psychological and anthropological understanding and willingness to unlearn.

Participant observation involves not only gaining access to and immersing oneself in new social worlds, but also producing written accounts and descriptions that bring versions of these worlds to others ((Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2007). The written production is also known as field note. It has been the most important tool of data collection in Matera, regarding the ethnographical part. Several thought and evidence regards the observation conducted, have been noted down. In the first place,

ethnographers often have different forms of written records in mind when they refer to 'field notes'. Sanjek (1990) found that ethnographers talked about field notes in many different ways, including 'headnotes', 'scratch notes', 'field- notes proper', 'field note records', 'texts', 'journals and diaries', and 'letters, reports, papers'. Since there is no uniformity, it is important they are functional to contribute to the development of the research, producing "the field" or the account. Not all of the field notes are incorporated into the finished text; many of them remain a corpus of possibly usable materials. For this study, everyday spent in Matera, has been useful for taking notes about remarks, observations and considerations. Taking notes assumes a duplex function: writing down evidence and elaborating on it, creating new written materials, useful for other observations, in order to create a rolling process.

In this study the ethnographical approach is functional and support the other part of the analysis. It means that it does not aim to perceive the creation of a cultural account, end in itself; moreover it aims to support the research of answers and meaning able to create valid connection for the study.

Finally the qualitative data analysis mostly focused on three governmental documents: the *Dossier Matera candidate city to European Capital of Culture 2019*, the *Political Planning Document of 2015-2020*, and the *Strategic Plan of 2014*. They have been critical for structuring the analysis of the urban regeneration plan, so starting from formal institutions. Their analysis is fundamental for achieving a complete overview of the case, compering them with empirical evidences.

3.4 Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA)

Qualitative data analysis has to provide tools for the analytical interpretation of data gathered through qualitative methods. In spite of the quantitative approach that furnishes easily interpretable evidences, the qualitative methodology mostly require and "intermediate phase" of interpreting, organizing data, in order to structure data as analytical as possible, preparing for the elaboration.

Qualitative data analysis, therefore, mostly concerns three stages: interpreting, organizing, coding. The interpretation usually works already in the collection phase, automatically summing up information in a descriptive way. Consequently, during the organizational stage, the information previously gathered, start to be classified and connected critically, in order to answer to the research questions. In this work, the

organization of information has been actualized manually. Indeed, using qualitative data analysis software (CADQAS) as for example, Atlas.ti, mostly required specific skills in order to take advantage of it. Moreover, before to employ the manual strategy, the software analysis has been considered not too convenient for the way it would be used. Indeed, I personally felt the manual method more suitable, since it allowed me to be perfectly aware of the organizational process; it has been especially useful for ethnographical inductive coding, impossible to be targeted by the software.

Coding is the most relevant phase of the QDA. It mostly concerns the combination of data, in order to makes ideas, themes and keywords, and the identification of potentially significant information from a theoretical point of view (Bryman, 2012). Coding aims to move the study from a descriptive to analytical elaboration. In this study, coding has been conducted in order to obtain deductive codes and inductive ones. The firsts are directly obtained by the literature and the theory, while inductive codes derive from interviews, observations and documents' analysis.

The process of coding presupposes three steps: the first step consisted of an *open coding*, during which interviews has been broken down, identified relevant sentences and paragraphs, attributing them a code; consequently, during the selective coding, the large amount of codes found has to be reviewed and searched for relationship among them, in order to reduce them to a manageable number; finally, through a process of conceptualization, they are grouped in categories according to relevant themes (Bryman, 2012).

The coding process helps to support the final discourse, the presentation of evidences and the demonstration of its elaboration.

3.5 Limitations

In this part of the chapter we will discuss about some barriers this study could present. Since a qualitative analysis has been employed to conduct the research, there are some general limitations regards this method important to underline. First, usually qualitative researches are inclined to be extremely subjective, especially comparing it with quantitative studies. Despite of the researcher's attempt of keeping as objectivity as possible, the qualitative method is widely subject to interpretations. Indeed, it relies too much on the researcher, as well as on interviewees' point of view. Secondly, usually qualitative research are unlikely generalizable, since it is often unable to gather enough

data to share evidences.

Most of the time, these problems could be contained using together different methods of analysis. This way of working is called Triangulation. This technique consists of applying different data sources, theories and methods and searching for convergence among them. In this research, triangulation was applied both for data sources, collecting the point of view of different actors (governmental exponents, local organizations and relevant local spokespersons), and different methods, implementing the interviews with field observations and secondary data.

Unfortunately, the usage of just one case limits the possibility of making assertions and providing reproducible results. One case is enough to test the validity of the theory and elaborates evidences in order to create a profitable discussion. We will try to be objective and clear in our analysis in order to make the reader aware about possible solutions. Every kind of result we will obtain from the analysis of Matera, which should be tested in other contexts, so taking into account the huge differences among each situation.

Moreover, there is a “time” problem. Indeed, since Matera will be the capital of culture in 2019, most of the policies and processes refer to that date and so they could be completely valuated at the end of the manifestation, or even some years after the event. This process is partly solved by excluding the temporal element and considering future development on the base of actual data and information. Moreover, since this work tries to understand how local stakeholders activate qualitative processes of local stabilization, considerations are relevant despite of the temporary problem, and so bypassing it.

Finally, limitations to the qualitative analysis include the time consuming nature of the collection and analysis stages (Boyce & Neale, 2006). This problem has been even more awkward, due to the time spent for the ethnographical approach.

4 The Case Study: Matera and the opportunity of development through the European Capital of Culture

This chapter aims to evaluate the validity of the theoretical conversation, using Matera as counter example. Matera is a small rural city in the south of Italy, precisely in Basilicata, a rural southern region that overlooks the Ionic sea. Historically, the Italian south stands out for its rural dimension, opposing to the economically developed North. Several scholars and thinkers have been intrigued by the duality of the Italian peninsula, as a source of scientific and poetic inspiration. Banfield (1958) and Putnam (1993a) have been curious sociologists about the causes that provoked the clear contrast between North and South. Whereas poets and writers as Carlo Levi, dedicated their work to the description of rural societies, fascinated by the spontaneity and the spirituality of those so-close worlds.

The Italian Economy is still characterized by two speeds. It is the result of the historical institutional framework, since most of the Mezzogiorno (the Southern part of mainland Italy) underwent the domination of the House of Bourbon, which kept a prevalent feudal economy until the Italian Unification. At the end of the nineteenth century, therefore, in the new united country, several different economies and cultures co-existed asymmetrically. Indeed, the social, economical, political and cultural context in which they were implemented differed dramatically, ranging from the developed northwest area to the extremely poor Calabrian, Lucanian and Sicilian hinterlands.

Overall, there is no doubt that the economic situation of the Mezzogiorno increased during last seventy years, even if, relatively speaking, the gap with Northern regions is even more rigid than the past. Even now, several infrastructural problems obstruct any possibility of economic development: infrastructural deficiencies, administrative inefficiency, youth emigration and criminal infiltration, weaken the southern awakening. Moreover, representative governments here are less effective than in more civic societies. Indeed, civic engagement in social and cultural associations is inadequate (Putnam, 1993a).

Today, the majority of the South of Italy remains rural or semi-rural. Generally, with different intensity, each area is subjected to those problems we mentioned before. However, several communities are trying economic solutions in order to produce

opportunities and long-term possibilities for their members. The emigration of young people towards more economically stable and creative contexts is going to bring many communities to their knees, so feeding downward spirals. In Basilicata, for example, as well as, in Calabria, there are entire cities, so cultural patrimonies, completely abandoned. In a cognitive-cultural economy, some of these communities, led by a mix of entrepreneurial climate and political decision, experiment new economic paradigms based on, cultural production, experiences, technologies and touristic consumption. Indeed, many small cities and peripheral areas are trying to valorise their endogenous resources, such skills, know-how and traditions, rebranding themselves and so capitalizing on the same resources. The capitalization of local idiosyncrasies frequently takes place through touristic production or high-specialized industry.

In Italy, the restricted dimension and the abundance of small-mid cities (the 66% of the Italian population lives in towns that do not exceed 50,000 inhabitants) have favoured the growth of small-mid firms, highly integrated in the local contexts, and industrial districts. This peculiarity is a natural precondition for the development of clustering of high-specialized industries that stand out, for their natural idiosyncrasy, to interrelation and local integration. Consequently, the remarkable dimension and quality of the Italian cultural and artistic heritage (the latter is strictly interconnected with the urban fabrics (Lavanga, 2009)) and the above cited industrial peculiarity, has driven several communities to undertake the path of valorisation of its own cultural capital, in order to remedy to their economic difficulties. The absence of real endogenous models of cultural management encourages civil servants and policy-makers to adopt foreign models and best practices, as well as, reiterated models of instrumental management. In this way, several rural Italian cities attempt to establish strategy of local development using local resources for touristic consumption, engaging an ever-escalating competition with one another in order to grab up as many tourists and investment as possible. Despite the possibility of involving the endogenous territorial capital differently, seeing the speculative and instrumental intrinsic characteristic of the touristic industry, we should ask how these industries and strategies contribute to emphasize local social and cultural qualities, in light of the theoretical conversation.

We found an interesting case to test these questions and the validity of the previous conversation. It is Matera. Indeed, the city is a rural city of 60 thousand people, with a significant history of resilience and humble beginnings. It has always been considered the capital of the rural society, since part of the city, an entire village built in the stone and stratified during thousands of years, was inhabited by a rural

community until the 50's, when more than 16,000 people were evicted from their houses and moved in new popular buildings, in peripheral areas. The reason for the eviction was the awful hygienic conditions in the caves, where these people lived in, so that Palmiro Togliatti and then Alcide De Gasperi, important figures of the Italian political scenario of the second post-war, visiting Matera, described that living conditions in the caves as 'Italian shame' (Tafari, 1986). Successively the effort of several local organizations contributed to reevaluate the entire area, to the extent that the Stones (the rural village is called in this way in the Italian language, due to its conformity and structure) were inscribed in the Unesco Heritage List in 1993. Its huge and beautiful heritage has saved the urban economy from collapsing. Indeed, the crisis of the agricultural sector, the lack of transportation and connection with closer bigger cities, the breakdown of the couch industrial district and the exodus of the young generation, drastically weakened its moderate rural economy. So, during the time, a new class of entrepreneurs sprout up, with the aim of seizing the opportunities related to the valorisation of the cultural heritage and territorial capital. The lot is connected with the appropriation, from the city itself, of their own cultural identity (Lavanga, 2009). These upward movements found their celebration with the award of European Capital of Culture 2019 that the city achieved. The prestigious qualification is a strong gravitational pull for talents, investments and tourists. Moreover, it is even more important since it is the first time a Southern Italian city obtains this meritorious title. According to official documents, Matera obtains this opportunity, thanks to the cooperation among territorial organizations and local institutions. The project calls for the effort of the entire community and recognize the importance of the cultural sector as well as of the touristic industry for the local development and valorisation of endogenous resources. Apart from the results obtainable by this strategy, we are interested in understanding how important it is establishing a cluster of cultural infrastructures and creative industries for the town, and how this strategy contributes to local social and cultural qualities.

FIG.1: VIEW OF THE OLD CITY, UNESCO HERITAGE SITE



Source: Martina Strisciullo, Old City of Matera, May 2016

4.1 The city of Stones

“It is not possible talking about a plan of urban development, without taking into consideration the history of the city and what models the actual identity of this place: the hard work in fields, the emigrations of Materans during the last century, the rural village” (Kron Morelli, translated from Italian 2012).

Matera has a story of resilience, from "national shame" to European Capital of Culture. Matera is an interesting case of rural area transformation. Every kind of analysis conducted on Matera, requires an inevitable attention toward the city's history over the past 70 years.

The origins of Matera are very remote and it is proved by the discovery of some settlements uninterruptedly since the Palaeolithic Age, in the surrounding area. The architectural structure of Matera, in fact, is a slow stratification of epochs and different

eras, dating as far back as ten thousand years ago, to the most modern buildings of the '70s. This architectural and natural miracle is expressed visually, with unprecedented force, in that the stone city, now called the Sassi of Matera. Specifically we are talking of a tangle of houses, streets, squares and neighbourhoods, cisterns, cellars and churches, partly excavated and partly built, into the rock of the “Gravina di Matera”, a deep gorge that divides the territory in two.

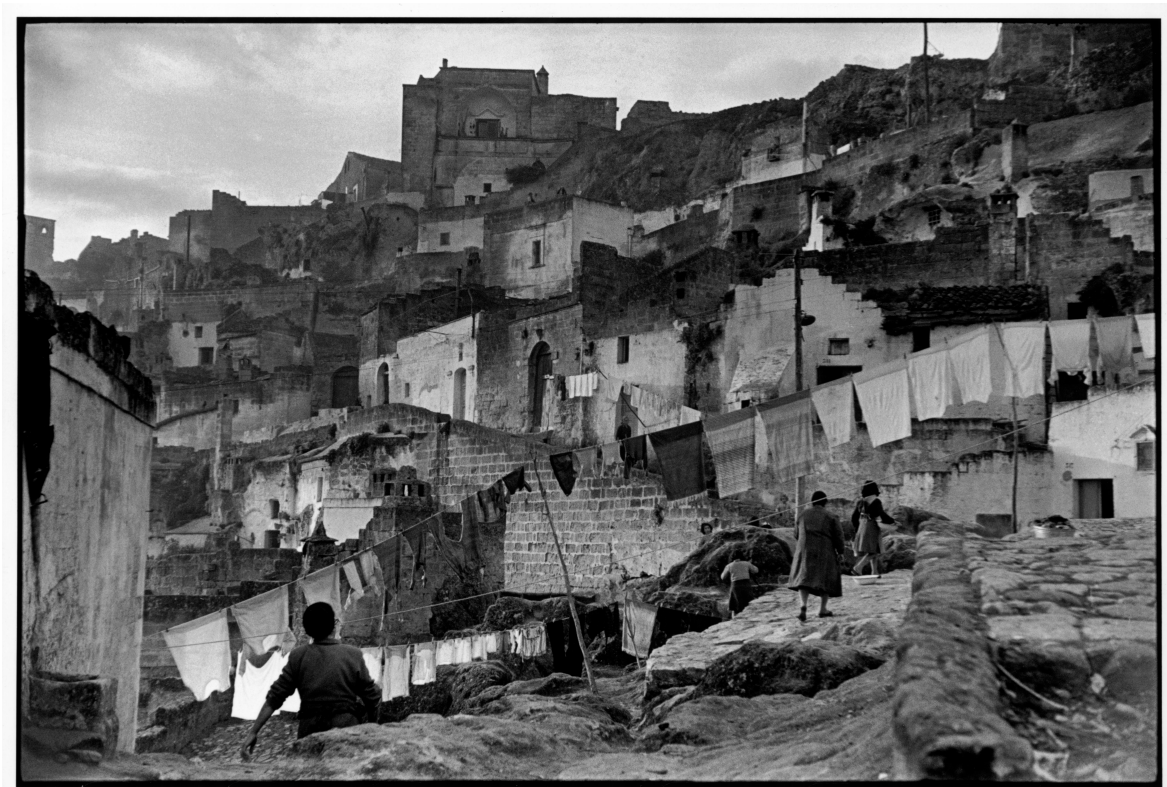
"I arrived in Matera around eleven in the morning. I read in the guide, that it is a picturesque town, which should be visited; there is a museum of ancient art and some curious cave dwellings [that are carved into the rock]. [...] Moving a bit from the station, I came to a road lined by old houses on one side, and skirted by a precipice on the other. In that precipice there was Matera. The form of that ravine was strange; like that of two adjacent half-funnels, separated by a small outcrop and gathered below in a common apex, where you could see, above, a white church, Santa Maria de Idris, which seemed stuck in the ground. These inverted cones, these funnels, are called Stones. They have the shape that, during school, we had imagined Dante's hell; roads pass through the narrow space between the facades and the downward slope, and have been both floors for who comes from houses and roofs for those below. Looking up I finally saw, appearing as an oblique wall, the city of Matera. It is really a beautiful city, picturesque and impressive" (Levi, 1945).

Since the beginning of 1800 until the Second World War, a long period of decline marked the city of stones. The sharp drop of the economic conditions led its inhabitants to use the Stones as dwellings; in 1950 about 16,000 people lived in the old neighbourhood. The inhabitants had increased exponentially and pastoralism was in decline: “on houses in the rock had been raised several floors, pensile and vegetables gardens disappeared, and tanks had been converted into apartment where entire families were living with mules and sheep, in extremely unhygienic conditions” (Lavanga, translated from Italian, 2009).

This moment inextricably marks a pivot point in the history of this city. In 1952, Togliatti signed the Special Law no. 619 of May 17, 1952, by which, the displacement of the Sassi was disposed. Bad hygienic and living conditions were unsustainable (the infant mortality rate was four times higher than the Italian average) and about fourteen thousand people were gradually accompanied in new districts that, from time to time, were built around the old town. In fact, that event was a key moment for Matera: in the

years immediately following the evacuation of the ancient districts, the city became a real laboratory; it was instituted the Commission for the study of the city and the rural area of Matera, promoted by the UNRRA-CASAS (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration - Rescued Administrative Committee Homeless Persons) and established by Adriano Olivetti, president of the National Institute of Urban Planning, and by the sociologist Frederick Friedmann. The committee was assisted by experts in different disciplines, such as history, demography, economics, paleethnology, sociology and urban planning, to design and create neighbourhoods that resumed as much as possible the social and cultural qualities of the Stones. “The displacement phase finally ended in the 80's; what it left behind, was a ghost town, abandoned and degraded” (Tafari cited by Lavanga, translated from Italian 1986).

FIG. 2 THE OLD CITY BEFORE THE DISPLACEMENT



Source: Henri Cartier-Bresson, Matera, 1951

The identity of the same city has been deeply influenced by the process of evacuation. An entire part of its population, the poorest one, was completely moved to

new modernist neighbourhood, built far from the old town. Despite of the brutal conditions of living and the possibility of improving them, several inhabitants preferred to keep living in the Stones, with their houses and their habits. Why did some citizens of the stones deny the evacuation?

We should think about that community as a limited social system, unlikely reachable. Public officers and local government were too far from that value system to establish a constructive bridging capital (“bridging capital pertains to the linkages between people in different communities, groups of actors or organisations, and allows for greater access to resources and information beyond those of the community and group” (Kim, 2015)). The evacuation of the old city centre has lived as an undeserved appropriation of its own cultural capital from an unacknowledged institution. The neighbourhoods created ad hoc to transfer the community of the Stones have been unable to recreate the particularities of the old district, increasing the feeling of alienation of its members.

Cities need to be lived in order to keep alive their unique identities. The paradox of our society is the frenzied research of preserving in order to transmit values and ideas to future generations, instead of researching ways to feed and valorise it. In the case of Matera, its heritage represents a brutal separation among “soul” and “body” (paraphrasing Greek philosophy). The city soul has been evacuated, keeping its body empty and abandoned. The evacuation in new neighbourhoods coincides with a slow memory loss and generational separation from its own cultural identity. Walking nowadays into the Stones, there is a clear perception of emptiness and loneliness. The problem is that the open empty museum we can admire today, at the foot of the recent modernist buildings, was the Matera of 60 years ago; and those houses have been occupied by people for several centuries, with uses, traditions and costumes. It means that what we observe today in this modern Italian little town, with a huge cultural heritage, has been a “rapid” transition from a context to another, with its consequences. Those set of values and traditions risked to be faded in the memory of older people, provoking a feeling of alienation and separation from of its own identity. Matera could be described as a city that is still looking for its place in the world, trying to reconcile its past with the present. In fact, during those years, some cultural organizations arose with the intent of recovering the cultural-urban heritage. This practice attempts to create social discussion and mobilization around the evacuation theme, and its social and cultural implication. Some cultural associations of the city, such as "La Scaletta",

encourage economically the repopulation of Sassi, for both residential and commercial aims, in order to obtain a dynamic and constructive valorisation. Other organizations, as Malve cooperative, try to physically populate the homonymous neighbourhood in the old part. These practices provoked social and political discussions, catching local and national attention. The Stones started to be considered a source of economic, cultural and social mobilization from the local community. Despite the political attempt of keeping hidden those popular initiatives, people started to understand the importance of that part of the city, not only economically, but also socially and culturally.

The Recovery Plan implemented by the local administration (following a special injunction of the second half of the 80's, that defined the recovery of the area "of national importance") identified the assignment of cultural and economical function to the ancient city as a real opportunity for the development of the Stones, introducing, therefore, a way of handling the heritage as a 'resource' to take advantage from, rather than a 'thing' to preserve and protect. The preservation and valorisation of its historic centre has effectively monopolized the social, economic and political discussion of last 50 years, gathering around it its own people, as well as prominent figures of the political and entrepreneurial Italian sphere. The huge media centralization of the Sassi has slowly led the awareness that it could be the first economic engine of the city.

The awareness of the importance of rethinking the role of its heritage, and so that its culture and tradition, increased thanks to the contribution of continuative popular initiatives aimed at stimulating an active debate among citizens, institutions and territorial organizations about which kind of path the city would like to traverse, and which kind of instruments it would like to use during this trip. The developmental path of Matera, therefore, employs a hybrid shape, that reveals the necessity of rethinking how to use territorial resources for both giving an economical identity and defining its civic capital.

In this way, the necessity of rethinking its cultural development, through the revival of its own set of cultural and social resources, is not enough. Indeed, Matera requires rethinking its own production system too. This awareness gradually increased after the obsolescence of the couch district, as well as, the decline of the chemical industry and the reshaping of the pasta factory. In many cases, rethinking the production system of an urban centre is not immediate and easy, as demonstrated by the amount of disruptive cases. It needs time, and a full cohesion among producers,

workers, social forces, institutions and the community in general, in order to funnel its own cultural, social and human capitals into the right developmental circuits.

Actually, the valorisation and reutilization of the Stones reply to this necessity. In truth, Matera has been unable to develop efficient economic strategies, as demonstrated by the high percentage of emigrated people, especially in the young bracket of the population. However, the necessity of finding new economic segments and the revived awareness of the importance of its own territorial capital, culturally and economically, caused the birth of a vast panorama of associations involved in the restoration and preservation of the old quarters (Zétema Foundation, the cultural circle 'La Scaletta', and so on.), as well as the emergence of a new generation, even entrepreneurial, able to catch the opportunities linked to the development of the cultural heritage (Basilicata Cinema, South Heritage Foundation, etc.); all connected to a gradual rediscovery and re-appropriation of its own historical and cultural identity, by the city itself.

Matera needs to find different strategies in order to provoke a shock in the collective identity, in the civic engagement, in the political direction and so in the economic development too. After the evacuation of the Stones, the latter serve as consciousness activator, gathering many of the political, social and cultural discussions of the last 50 years. The economic circumstance Matera, as many other rural areas, has been forced to deal with, highlights the necessity to find new paths of development able to stimulate the community on different sides. The cultural heritage, therefore, is a great economical and cultural resource for Matera and its inhabitants.

This path brought the city fighting for being awarded European Capital of Culture in 2019. Indeed, in 2008, a group of local citizens decided to originate an action of social and institutional involvement to the possibility of candidate the city to the cultural contest, “in order to give emphasis to our cultural and social capital (Vito Epifani, president of the Association Matera 2019, translated from Italian, May 2019). The prize given to Matera, occurred in 2014, consecrated both the coordinated work of administration, citizens and the Committee for the nomination, and the usage of a community based cultural planning aimed at stimulating a local cultural development, before of an economical regeneration.

It is a great opportunity of the entire area, if funnelled in the right circuits.

4.2 Rural development through the European Capital of Culture

The opportunity of placing the European event during 2019 makes Matera a suitable case for our analysis. Indeed, in this way we can first evaluate how local institutions strive to boost the area through the flagship event, which kind of goals public officers would like to achieve and how the strategy stimulates local social and cultural qualities. Undoubtedly, “the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) action of the European Union is a powerful tool for cultural development that operates on a scale that offers unprecedented opportunities for acting as a catalyst for city change” (Palmer/Rae Associates, 2004). This action is obviously an unprecedented opportunity of development for a modest rural economy like Matera. It can definitely boost local resources and stabilize the local environment.

The European Capital of Culture was designed several years ago with the aim of sharing European values and giving visibility to cultural marginal areas. Honestly, the concept of ECOC rarely refers to a unique mission or a major objective. It could vary from city to city, basing on needs expressed locally. Anyway, the event represents an economic occasion for boosting the local network, and incentivizing virtuous profitable behaviours. The ECOC guarantees international visibility, attracts visitors, sustains improvement to local cultural infrastructures and promotes creativity and innovation. In this way, many ruined areas have the opportunity to valorise local capitals and make the people aware of the qualities of the area itself. Most of the time, place-making strategies attempt to attract the flow of global and regional tourists, to enhance their sites for mobile high skilled labour and to benefit from the trade of locals product to global tourists.

As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, setting the right goal is determinant to obtain long-term effects. Every ECOC project should be evaluated on the base of those objectives predetermined by local governments. Without taking care of social and cultural local qualities it is definitely hard achieving long-term and horizontal development in the rural context. As stated by Palmer (2004), several predecessors of Matera failed to propose forward-looking projects and so activating cultural development processes and collaborative dynamics among members of the community in the long term. The ECOC impact and sustainability is greater when cultural initiatives are integrated with other facets of urban development and a part of a sustained vision for the city. As Lin (2009) wrote, citing Mommas (2009), the planning of cultural

flagship projects may be beneficial to local economic development in the short term, but may produce undermining effects that dilute the cultural meanings of localities in the long term because of cultural and economic contradiction. Most of this project fails to bring substantive goals into focus, due to the necessity of quick responses and economic results. Palmer (2004) himself indicated some key factors of success that governors should include in their ECOC project in order to achieve long-term benefits. These include:

- 1) *Context*: the city must develop a program that is right for that city at that time. Each city is at a different phase of its historical, cultural, social and economic development, and this context must be taken into consideration.
- 2) *Local involvement*: the engagement and ownership by the local population is crucial.
- 3) *Long-term planning*: both advance planning and post-ECOC planning are essential.
- 4) *Political will*: the project needs political support especially if it wants to have a sustainable impact.

These points practically remark once again the importance of establishing clear qualitative goals, able to stimulate local cultural and social qualities, instead of quantitative numeric objectives, and new practice of social involvement, able to understand local needs and qualities, traducing them into practical actions. Now, we are going to take into account the ECOC policy of Matera, understanding which kind of goals the local government intends to achieve and which kind of strategy is going to be adopted. In this way we will have the possibility of testing in concrete the strategy of local development of the rural area, trying to understand how local qualities are activated. We are going to discover those invisible grassroots processes that contribute to build up a creative, profitable environment able to stabilise the local economy, produce civic capital and realize local values. Of course the ECOC is a great economical and strategic opportunity for a city of 60,000 inhabitants, even if we already call in the political difficulty of going beyond instrumental reasoning and the imperceptible qualities of the environment.

As we already cited Vito Epifani, vice president of the association Matera 2019, the candidacy was born from the civic awareness of giving significance to the local cultural capital, to realize communal values. Matera 2019 is a civic necessity that part of the community drafts in order to imagine together a possible future for the city of Matera. The realization of a shared value, through a communal goal, gathers the majority of the

population around the project of giving a precise identity to the territorial capital, and rethinking local problems. The process of candidacy has been unanimous: people felt to be part of the urban change and in power of realizing their values. The importance of the grassroots initiative lies in the indirect creation of social capitals among members of the same community. Everybody strove to achieve the award of European Capital of Culture of 2019, since in that moment everyone strove to realize civic values and shared goals. In this case, therefore, the opportunity of being Capital of Culture funnels social effort to a communal direction. This is not to say that these kinds of events can mobilize the entire population, seeing that in the majority of the cases are downward applied; at the same time, it is a fact that in the case of Matera, the possibility of accomplishing this goal, agglomerates the entire population, producing civic and social capital, and demonstrates the importance of supporting local qualities and necessities.

As remembered in the theory, cumulative processes promote virtuous cycles of support and production. The sharing of values and objectives allows the creation of these processes. Unfortunately, it is not enough. In a rural context like Matera, where several infrastructural deficiencies grip the stabilization of the local economy and the origin of a creative context, the institutional action is often fundamental. It can provide those tools that can support the community to realize its values. It is definitely important that any top-down tool or strategy should be integrated in the context, shared by locals and the outcome of an aware qualitative strategy.

Unfortunately, political logic is always really different from grassroots one. Interviewing local operators and territorial organizations enhances the evidence that grassroots goals differ from institutional ones. It is easier getting into value conversation with locals than institutions. The candidacy itself “was born in 2008, with the aim to spotlight the necessity of giving emphasis to local cultural identity and strength to the historical, artistic and value capitals” (Vito Epifani, personal interview, translated from Italian). Even the Dossier of candidacy, designed by the local officers, seems strive for specific values, as the horizontality of culture, the importance of social inclusion and the valorisation of the local cultural capital. However it is important to understand how Matera benefits from these goals/values, otherwise they are useless.

4.2.1 The critical analysis of goals and strategies

FIG.3: MATERA CAPITAL OF CULTURE: THE CELEBRATION



Source: Giovanni Marino, Matera, October 17th 2017

The project of economic development in the area of Matera, guided by the local government, is articulated in three strategic documents: the *Dossier Matera candidate city to European Capital of Culture 2019*, the *Political Planning Document of 2015-2020*, and the *Strategic Plan of 2014*. The analysis of the goals, as well as, the strategies adopted by local civil servants, requires an accurate evaluation of these papers, with a specific attention to the dossier of candidacy. The Dossier of candidacy claims that the award of European Capital of Culture will be functional for activating processes of urban restructuring, improvement of the international image of the city, valorisation of its cultural heritage, attracting tourism and creative talents, and cultural development. It will be achieved through the mobilization of cultural activities and facilities. These goals deserve to be at least discussed. In fact, nowadays, as remembered in the previous theory chapter, cultural production and touristic consumption seem worthy allies of

place makers and public officers. Rural and cultural tourism seem now overall accepted methods to boost rural economies. Of course, we are not here able to confute numerically this thesis, but at least it raises qualitative doubts. It means that it is often unclear why public officers decide to opt for that particular strategy in order to foster local upward spirals. Culture and tourism could be interesting economic solutions for most of these areas, but they are often strategies implemented without any kind of cultural and social consideration. At the same time, we doubt the ability of structuring inclusive approaches to the territorial policy. It means that social and cultural capital are often marginalized and so excluded from any political and strategic decision. So why are the improvement of the international image of the city, the attraction of tourists and creative talents, the valorisation of the cultural heritage important goals for Matera and its territorial development? How can these goals activate long-term processes of local economic stabilization and qualitative development? How can local community realize their values through these activities? The local community has robustly supported the process of candidacy, with the clear intent of taking advantage from the opportunity and finding the right economic and cultural path for the city. How do the above-mentioned goals express the local request? These questions swing between provocation and the base of a critical analysis of our case.

Reading the formal document of the candidacy, the scientific committee and local authorities established some goals that Matera 2019 should pursue in order to reinvigorate the local context. We will report them here in order to structure our analysis.

First of all, the project Matera 2019 spotlights the participative behaviour of the initiative and the importance of accomplishing shared initiatives, giving the possibility to each citizen to realize his values. The name of the project itself, which is “Together” (“Insieme” in the Italian language), opts for hinging the entire strategy on co-production and participation. As mentioned in the theoretical part, participation and collaboration are fundamental requirement to achieve a creative environment (Czicksentmihalyi, 1996), reinforcing social capital and boosting creative commons and behaviours. Of course, during the history, the rural community of Matera has already demonstrated the ability of participating and being focused on communal goals. The ECOC is just the last example of participative behaviours of the community. This civic capital should be canalized in order to produce material and immaterial goods for the entire community. Local governments can stimulate participative behaviours and creative practices, providing the right tools and support to the community. One of the most important tool

civil servants can provide to the community is the participative process of co-decision. It means establishing spaces of horizontal interaction where needs and values are debating together, inducing collaboration and co-decision processes. As we already cited in the previous part, it fosters social and civic capitals that in turn, sustain a creative and stable environment. The project Matera 2019 aims to strengthen the participative nature among members of the urban community. With reference to the participative goal, the dossier often uses the term “social inclusion”, in order to indicate the process of physically and culturally including local stakeholders into processes and local economies. This term usually refers to top-down practices, since it usually indicates political strategies of minorities’ engagement. Clarifying this term is definitely important. Social inclusion is quite different from a participative process, since the first one suggests vertical processes while the second one presumes horizontal methods of decision. The latter means innovating social, political and civic processes in order to obtain local economic, cultural and social results, stimulating a creative environment and so boosting the local economy. Social inclusion strategies do not innovate processes instead; they contribute to improve vertically social and economic condition of particular segments of the population. Consulting the documents of the project, it is not clear which kind of those strategies local government would like to achieve and why. It will be clearer from empirical evidences.

Participative processes are able to involve local cultural and social qualities better. The Dossier remarks their centrality for the project Matera 2019. They should be the cores of a different model of development, based on **active citizenship in the political, urban, economic and cultural life** of Matera. We know the importance of participation and value involvement for an economy: it is a solid precondition for a creative environment. Of course it is not possible to find the right formula for activating such conditions, which vary from context to context. The participative quality of the project Matera 2019, if maintained, is an interesting prerequisite for stimulating creative practices. Of course Matera can unlikely become an international creative hub, but at least it can lay the foundations for the stabilization of its rural economy and allow that its citizens realize their values. The horizontality of the decision and creation is really important since it allows widespread actions on the territory, so definitely involving local qualities. Unfortunately, most of the time these flagship projects use attractive labels and meet external requirement that twists the analysis. As already mentioned, political decision often respond to instrumental reasons, unable to support qualitative

dynamics. That's why it is so important that objectives and methods are measured in the reality, through empirical observations.

“Matera introduced the candidacy to European Capital of Culture, illustrating the existence of an established network of local organizations, so much so that the European Commission evaluated positively this ability of extending locally the path of candidacy. The institutional cooperation for the policy writing process has been awarded as one of the determinants of the Dossier. I am only saying that the days after the election of Matera, there was a clear agreement: **local organizations would become the operative branch of the foundation and the local administration.** All of us already know that in this moment Matera 2019 is still idle, to the detriment of local operators and the community” (Andrea Santantonio, personal interview, translated from Italian).

Despite the inclusiveness of the actual project of regeneration and governance built up, the perception of the contemporary scene (confirmed by data and evidences) is the **fragmentation between politics and urban network**, as well as, unfortunately, among addresses and intentions. The scheme of participation and cooperation has assumed an already known structure: “the foundation launches an initiative, as for example the ‘urban garden’, so that some characters join the project, making a voluntary venture activity; however everything remains in the range of initiatives, activities and projects originated by the Foundation” (Vito Epifani, Vice President Matera 2019 Association, personal interview, translated from Italian). We need to get to the heart of the matter, considering that this is not the model of cooperation we hope for. Maybe we should evaluate not only the shape, but also the content of the inclusive process. A strong institution that involves different subject based on necessity is not the desirable participation structure. So, despite of the platforms of direct involvement (as for example the “web team”) **few initiatives were really launched and elaborated by citizens; rather the majority is foundation/political dominant.** In this way, it is definitely hard of being aware of local needs and wishes. How could this method be inclusive? The inclusive process needs regularity and method for understanding social needs, dynamics and informal institutions, and, after that, creating spaces and structures for co-creation, co-activation and co-decision. Despite the innovative approach, it re-marks vertical “state dominant” programs, exclusive and culturally unprofitable.

What kinds of needs, therefore, are civil servants trying to accomplish with this (in)appropriate method of participation? Matera 2019 has been built for finding

economic solutions able to reinvigorate the rural economy and giving the right tools for long-term development. Public officers indicate three socio-economic goals: containing the exodus of young people, boosting employment and developing skills and competences locally. The urban context is drastically suffering the emigration of creative people and young citizens, it is a general condition in the south of Italy. It happens in the absence of perspectives and qualified educational structures. Who remains in the area, often lacks of competences and skills for understanding the current globalized creative economy. The idea of civil servants is operating on **specific segments** as **cultural tourism**, **urban design**, **territorial marketing**, **cultural mediation** and **new digital languages**, in order to provide new perspectives to young generations. At the same time, it is equally important giving emphasis to local traditional sectors, as craftsmanship and agriculture. Finally, local development passes through the reinforcement of local networks and associative fabrics. It is unclear how the first two dynamics are connected with the empowerment of the participative nature, and so if they are important for local inhabitants. Rather, they meet the necessity of maximizing local resources in order to revitalize the local economy. This approach could be efficient if it is able to take into consideration local cultural and social qualities, even if unfortunately it usually reacts to instrumental reasoning and external requirement. That's why the reinforcement of local network of territorial organizations is so important: they can provide an indisputable collaboration to the realization of the project, playing as intermediaries among the community and the political part. The risk, therefore, is **applying standard instrumental model of development**, without taking into account local needs and qualities. Involving local cultural resources means designing policies and projects on contingent configuration. Therefore, the scheme needs qualified people working with local politicians, stakeholders and communities map those local cultural resources useful to be the base of the following development and urban regeneration project. "The risk is losing the local cultural identity. If I change the word 'Matera' with that one of 'Bergamo' every time I met it in the Dossier, the document will work in the same way. The Dossier was planned looking ahead, without recovering local material and immaterial resources. Which kind of cultural differences are there, among a co-working space of social innovators and a group of pensioned people that try to involve neighbourhood and locals, playing musical instruments and making local entertainment?" (Vito Epifani, Vice President Matera 2019 Association, personal interview, translated from Italian).

Unfortunately, Matera 2019 seems to be another example of contemporary place-making policy, where city branding and urban marketing are the remarkable part of the

strategy of local development. Local resources and even the same community are partly subordinated to these instrumental economic solutions. Beyond the success of the strategy (quantifiable), easy economic solutions, as city branding and urban marketing, are not directly involved neither in the generation of a creative environment, or in the production of qualitative solution able to generate a stable economic environment where people can realize their values. These strategies can generate short-term results and additional economies, but their validity and efficiency for local qualities depend on the way they are managed.

The main issue of these “cultural” policies lies in the exacerbation of speculative behaviours. Indeed, urban marketing uses local peculiarities and cultural resources as amazing sources of diversification and local celebration. Local arts, heritage, landscape, folklore, costumes, food and crafts are part of the strategy, as products. There is anything cultural or qualitative in these kinds of applications, if they are instrumental for “selling” the place to external profitable stakeholders, as tourists. Reading the institutional document, it is not clear how they could benefit to social and cultural local qualities.

Strategic valorisation adopted by local authorities leaves some doubts. The touristic valorisation of the local capital, as well as its usage as dominant economic activity, leave us space to test the qualitative orientation of the project. Of course, Matera has a wide variety of possible resources for touristic consumption, but the absence of a clear community orientation can bring to speculation and instrumental reasoning. The creation of new economies, as it is going to happen especially in the Stones, with the creation of several beautiful private touristic structures and accommodations, are superficial and even dangerous for the preservation of the local identity, with the risk of provoking alienation and musefication (as often happened in Italian old cities). Touristic economies, therefore, should be always marginal to a complex system of economic incentives, promoted equally by all the local stakeholders, in order to create creative commons and opportunities.

Luca Acito, video producer, who decided to start his economic activity in the old town, so being a concrete alternative to the myriad of touristic-oriented activities rose in the Stones, told me: “Government must stop these kinds of touristic activities, otherwise Matera will be a ‘Disneyland’”. There are still several spaces in the old town, but they

need political awareness” (Luca Acito, personal interview, translated from Italian, May 2016). In Matera, the majority of the spaces in the old town are public properties. It means that, government has the possibility to manage the process of valorisation of the Stones. The cultural policy should prospect a smart administration of tourism, “trying to stimulate a cultural tourism, able to give something to the community and vice versa” (Rebecca Riches, touristic expert, personal interview, translated from Italian, May 2016).

Those spaces in the old part should be valorised, stimulating community initiatives, able to create new economies and social inclusion. “Politics should reserve public properties spaces, valuing the project, and so establishing a clear criteria of selection and concession” (Luca Acito, personal interview, translated from Italian, May 2016). Touristic industry could be highly dangerous for cultural capital destruction, since it is intensively speculative, without a clear and aware guide of touristic risks for community, cultural patrimony and values transmission. So it is definitely important that public leaders keep community-orientation and rigid criteria of quality selection (Rebecca Riches, personal interview, May 2016).

In the last 50 years, that part of the city has moved from being populated by 17 thousand people, to being the ghost of itself, and now a place for others. As we mentioned, several cultural associations have tried to stimulate public debate around the future of that part of the city. The problem is still open. “There was a time, more or less ten or fifteen years ago, when it was possible establishing a better balance between the repopulation of the Stones and the flows of tourists. Unfortunately things happened differently. Sure, restoration and maintenance works have been completed, even if the main question remains the same: how will this enormous historical, cultural and artistic patrimony be used? I fear that it will simply be left to consumers and to invasive tourism” (Vitelli, cited by Leogrande, 2015).

Now, tourism is not a problem in itself, many individuals live off the “economy of the Stones”. Rather, it is an appropriate opportunity for us in order to make some consideration about the project of Matera 2019 and how it takes into account local social and cultural qualities in the creation of a creative environment, able to sustain local development. The touristic strategy, which seems the most under-way economic one, despite of what the Dossier claims, seems it does not contribute significantly to locals and grassroots economies, but rather it fosters a sort of dualistic reality among the

centres of cultural and touristic consumptions and peripheral areas. Moreover, many of these tourists are too fast, too rapid: visitors stop in the city around 1,65 days average in 2015 (Carlini, 2016). This kind of cultural consumption is too old and reiterated in its ambiguous approach. How can this so-fast economy valorise local social and cultural qualities?

Being careful of external stakeholders, as creative talents or tourists, or even the European Community is not problematic; it become an obstacle if there is not a focus-oriented management able to drive these processes, giving emphasis to social dynamics and helping the cohesion and involvement inside the city, introducing external interests as surrounded strategy. The development of Matera should firstly take into account endogenous resources and their empowerment, and consequently canalise external resources and interlocutors toward the support of the territorial capital.

The local government is demonstrating its incapacity of understanding and supporting holistic approaches of co-decision and co-creation. It is mostly related to old economic systems, based on way of measuring processes on inaccurate economic indicators, insufficient to be culturally embracing. (Emmanuele Curti, personal interview, May 2016). Leaders and political culture is archaic. Contemporary societies and problems are definitely more complex and they require qualified management able to drive changes. The European Capital of Culture award is a great opportunity of development for Matera: the impact could even reach the entire region. Political archaism is not the only reason we can link with the instrumental limitations of the project. These huge manifestations are often under strict observations by external institutions and have to respect certain instrumental indicators. The development of a creative environment is a slow continuative process and it is impossible to trace all the elements that feed it. Then again, an instrumental strategy or a model of development is not able to valorise the territorial capital, nor stimulate the civic and social capital. It is a consistent limit for a project of local development and it is destined to fail. Moreover, the same community does not accept it and feel frustrated and alienated, so feeding revolting behaviours, as demonstrated during the administrative election happened one year after the award of Capital of Culture. In that moment citizens decided to opt for another candidate respect of the Major that drove the process of candidacy.

Apart from the governmental responsibilities and the institutional outcome, the analysis of the case of Matera should take into account local initiatives and how they could contribute to stimulate a creative environment.

4.3 The research of a creative environment in Matera.

There is no determinate criterion to define a creative environment. As well as, it is quite hard, for researchers, finding quantitative evidences that the existence of a creative environment into a particular area has caused the economic development of the same place. Of course we are not here interested to test the validity of certain actions, but rather observe processes. We are driven by the idea of understanding how rural or marginal areas can find their path of local economic stabilization, freezing the erosion of local cultural, social and territorial capital. We would like to avoid any kind of ready-made formulas or model, but rather keep working and observing the importance of local qualities in order to achieve an adequate stabilization. In the previous part we largely debated about the inadequacy of applying certain schemes of development. The ECOC is a great opportunity for a city of 60,000 people, but top-down strategies as well as standard economic applications are unsuccessful, without taking care of local needs and qualities. A different approach to economy and culture, as discussed in the theoretical chapter, is essential for being aware of those peculiarities that too often are left behind by responsible organisms.

The research of a creative environment is a provocative title, since it is quite complicated tracing exactly creative peculiarities and distinctive signs. However, we can be aware about some processes, their causes and consequences, and their importance for the stabilization of a local economy. The narrowness of taking into exam just one case leaves us no space for generalisation. **This work can bring into the analysis theoretical assertions and try to make relevant considerations and observations.** Of course it could be important making comparisons with other cases and finding excellent examples of social innovations, participative economies and processes design, in order to understand how they can be beneficial for local economies and how long they can be implemented in rural contexts and how they can affect the economic stabilization.

It is quite important clarifying the final goal. Matera, as many other small cities, cannot compete with global agglomerates and big urban centres. Using the term economic development, in order to indicate an improvement of general conditions of living, is adequate if compared conscientiously with the local reality, so that every urban centre should look for the stabilisation of its own condition. It means creating spaces for aggregation, participation and creation; it means supporting the local environment of

being autonomous and self-reinforcing; it means valorising local qualities, so that citizens can be part of an organism and have the opportunities to create and live, without being forced to escape to other creative urban centres; it means taking care of local values and it means trying to innovate processes.

Of course, it is not just a political responsibility: a creative environment is the sum of several conditions, some of them completely casual. Moreover, sometimes, where the political action is idle, important initiative can rise from the ground. Again there are no formulas, but we can make some considerations on what the case shows to us.

So, what is going on in the city? Which kind of creative practices are recognizable from the ground?

The examination of the local environment should take into account some clues. First of all, the ECOC is a great opportunity and a driver to attract at least national and European attention. Some local entrepreneurs, as C-FARA or the Studio Antani, have been engaged by the opportunity of the capital of culture. However, the majority of them are citizens that fulfil their educational and working path outside the region. It seems, therefore, that some of these creative entrepreneurs took advantage of the opportunity to come back to home and start their projects. Everyone has already his/her own working network, and it is easily achievable, so that it can sustain his/her entrepreneurial initiatives in town. Beyond the political action and the efficiency of the local policy, the label European Capital of Culture is a natural attractor for creative and cultural entrepreneurs, as confirmed by them during interviews. The ECOC, therefore, is an extraordinary element of creative people's attraction, even if of course unlikely reproducible. Another important theme connected with the award of European Capital of Culture is the experimentation. After all, the European visibility guaranteed by the cultural manifestation, and the sustainability of living in a small town, enable economic and cultural experiments, less sustainable in bigger contexts. So, creative entrepreneurs who decided to start their ideas in Matera were partly driven by the visibility of the ECOC, partly aware of the possibility of experimenting in that context. It is a consequence of different elements: the economic sustainability of living in a rural city, instead of big urban centres, the research of a place where experimenting innovative projects and approaches, and the visibility that the European competition guarantee. These economies seem to be most of the time sustainable thanks to the network gathered by the creative entrepreneur during his/her own career. Indeed, due to the

downward economic situation and the economic and social backwardness, the urban context lacks of the right competences and skills in order to create strong and valuable connections among agents. Actually the latter condition seems to own a duplex aspect: of course it is extremely difficult interacting with people who hardly speak your “language”, but it is the precondition for experimenting different approaches on the local community through creative practices.

The lack of competences is one of the hugest problems that creative entrepreneurs and cultural innovators are going to practise in Matera. Its obstacles are both the creation of creative clusters and the development of broad-spectrum initiatives. Indeed, creative people and creative organizations tend to cluster physically, because the social and cultural spheres are so important for the emergence and functioning of a creative economy (Klamer, 2017). As confirmed by Andrea Paoletti (personal interview, May 2016), social innovator and director of one of the most interesting entities in the city, Casa Netural, these entrepreneurial realities are trying to network in order to overcome political stagnation and make new economic models alive. Unfortunately, the ability of creating solid clusters and social capital of these social and cultural entrepreneurs is still limited by the lack of proficiencies and adequate competences, as well as, by financial dependency from public institutions. Many of these entities are still not economically independent, and without political support, are destined to fail. There is a vicious cycle of financial dependence that limits the bargaining power of these cases and the strength of alternatives network to public control. Some of them are able to be economically sustainable, thanks to their large network, beyond the local context. Unfortunately, today, the majority of the social class in the city works in the public apparatus; others, especially in the cultural sector, are totally financially dependent to public grants. This is a huge problem, especially in the south of Italy, where alternative networks to state dominant structures are quite hard, and economically unsustainable.

It does not mean that creative innovators and cultural operators are not clustering, but we doubt, unfortunately, their incisiveness and strength to stimulate new economies and a creative environment, at least in the short period. There are, therefore, many structural conditions for maintaining durable creative practices and commons. So local innovators should work in a complicated environment with few favourable conditions, deficiencies and structural problems.

Are the latter enough to wear out pop-up initiatives? We are not in condition to give a complete answer, but at least we can show how these entrepreneurial initiatives are working and why they are so important for the local network.

Indeed, the absolute political distance to local needs have indirectly bolstered territorial initiatives and associative impulses. Actually, we cannot refer to the latter reaction as a generalizable rule, but at least it can leave us space for investigating. Indeed, in the case of Matera, the mishmash of identity eradication and political indifference has favoured a certain civic and institutional autonomy. So first of all, the cultural identity debate, as already demonstrated, has shaped a generational group of local entrepreneurs with the aim to sensitise the local population about the re-appropriation of the cultural identity and the opportunities of development connected with the local heritage. This group of local activists and entrepreneurs started to be local aggregators and bottom operators, able to catch local feelings and necessities better than public institutions, as well as, promoting cooperation. Not least, the European Capital of culture has been attempting to make people aware about the opportunity of reinvigorating its own cultural capital and designing a future for the city, by some local organizations (especially the association Matera 2019). The process of candidacy has involved the totality of the local population, moved by the possibility of being part of the communal effort for changing the future of the city. That moment, that unfortunately evaporated after the election of Matera as European Capital of Culture 2019, for the political inadequacy of keeping this participative process alive, represented a rare contingency, where citizens, territorial organizations and public institutions were aligned for achieving a shared goal. The temporary juncture was not used for reinforcing the civic and social capital, but rather the network of local organizations kept working alone. Their presence on the territory is definitely important since they are able to catch local needs and feelings, involving people in participative processes of creation and elaboration. The capital these organizations can provide to public institutions is extraordinary, and can definitely contribute to co-design inclusive projects and policies.

The local meaning of these territorial organizations is definitely important. They are deeply-rooted into the cultural and social context and can gather, better than top-down tools, local qualities and needs. It seems that, in the case of Matera, they have been indirectly generated by political absence, to the extent that their work has been often substituted one of the municipality: they have compensated political absence in the peripheries, as the organization “Malve”, they have protected and imaged a different

future for the Stones and the usage of the cultural heritage during last 30 years as the organizations “Zetema” and “La Scaletta”, they have promoted art and culture where educational institutions have been defected, they worked on the social inclusiveness of the evacuated population and they promoted popular initiatives. So cultural organizations are, in the case of Matera, a relevant subject in the public conversation, able to develop social and civic capital, cultural awareness and so cultural capital. The cyclic political distance has surely reinforced their presence in the urban context, as well as, stimulated clustering, in order to reinforce an intermediary organism among citizens and the municipality. It is happening, once again, during the path of Matera 2019, where several local cultural organizations get together and kick off network of local associations, as “Cresco Basilicata”, in order to overcome the political immobility, to stimulate the public debate, and being active part of the project Matera 2019. This point is quite important and it should be evaluated in other similar context too. The project of Matera 2019 and the political immobility are encouraging clustering and networking, and it is extremely positive for the creative environment of the city, as well as, for stimulating local cultural and social qualities. The diminished political presence in the social urban fabric, as well as, its inability of understanding what people need and how they can be involved, seems favoured as social inclination to associate and get together, with the aim of taking local qualities into consideration. It could be an interesting element to be tested somewhere else, since these associative fabrics represent a cultural and social asset for the stabilisation of the local economy. Of course it is quite impossible a direct correlation among clustering and political immobility. As in the case of Matera, several drivers have influenced this process, as previously claimed. At the same time these organizations often occupy an important tile in participative processes, so that their contribution can help inclusive dynamics. That’s why they should be at least taken into consideration during the process of design, creation and implementation of relevant urban policies as the Project Matera 2019, that, at least in theory, should facilitate the realization of local qualities and citizens’ values (according to the meaning discussed in the theory).

However, these entities still appear to be too limited for being both decisive in the support of a creative environment and bringing participative processes up to a decisional level. Their limitations are principally economical. Indeed, most of these territorial organizations are not financially independent: they keep a no-profit juridical form, so that their income is partly subsidized by the public. It limits their action and their incisiveness in the local context, so that the institutional debate and the local

experimentation risk is faded. Actually, it is a quite problematic condition in context like Matera, where the majority of the population is still financed by public entities. The possibility of establishing profitable creative practices diminishes.

In addition to these associations, there are several creative and social entrepreneurs that have decided to invest in the context of Matera. Their activities (they often opt for the juridical form of associations too) reinvigorate the local fabric and bring in competences and different ways of working. As mentioned, the majority of them are able to sustain their activities, thanks to parallel businesses. These entrepreneurs are often natives that decided to start an enterprise after completed their educational and working growth outside the town, in order to contribute to local development, to benefit from the economic sustainability of living in a rural area, to benefit from the visibility of the ECOC and to experiment new economies and projects, often unsustainable in bigger agglomerations.

Indeed, due to the difficulty of creating new economies and opportunities, especially for young people, most of these entrepreneurs found the right place for experimenting aggregative economies as co-working spaces and entrepreneurial incubators, creative labs, cultural and creative industries and hi-tech spaces. The conditions that brought them to start their activities are unlikely applicable to other contexts, while some others are even casual. However, it could be relevant taking into consideration their role for the local context. Organizations like “Casa Netural”, “Matera Hub”, “Studio Antani”, “Lucania Living”, “Open Lab”, “Colletivo Fara”, “Arteria”, represent an important economic and cultural alternative in the local context. They involve actively the local population, establish new economies, work on peripheries, engage foreign capitals and apply social innovations.

Their role for the local context is definitely important: in the case of Matera they occupy an important tile that has been left vacuous by civic officers and local agents during the project Matera 2019, and even before. Indeed these hybrid forms of creative industries have assumed an important role for the stimulation of creative practices and commons, working with the community and involving them in their creative productions. Upward processes need people able to understand local needs and transform them into actions. Differently from those organizations we mentioned before, these creative entrepreneurs seem able to involve local necessities into their creative practices, through cooperative and participative processes. “Casa Netural”, for example,

moved from the centre to one of the peripheral area of the town, in order to actively work on those areas where **social exclusion is a real problem** (Andrea Paoletti, Co-founder Casa Netural, personal interview, translated from Italian, May 2016). Here, this entrepreneurial operation established a physical space where entrepreneurs, researchers and citizens work daily together, participate, create projects and try to involve all the neighbourhood basing on local needs. It is possible since these **entrepreneurs already know processes of social innovation and involvement**, so that they can physically understand what the neighbourhood needs and create space of participation and common creation to find solutions. Actually this strategy is not the only one available, since other physical spaces like “Fab Lab Matera” or “Colletivo Fara”, provide other knowledge and tools like digital craftsmanship and architecture to promote participative processes of creation in order to resolve local problems, involve people into creative processes and create social capital.

Even if the approach proposed by these creative entrepreneurs differs lightly, they apply a similar dynamic. It is quite important that it is recognized and analysed. Indeed, local needs are identified and absorbed into creative practices. It happens thanks to the ability of the creative entrepreneurs and the active involvement, so the participation of local inhabitants that are step by step included into these processes. Participation and cooperation are so funnelled toward the creation of goods useful for the entire communities. **These processes are able to create social and civic capitals**, which, as we know, are important prerequisites for creativity and a creative environment. These entrepreneurs are definitely important for the community: they built up physical spaces where people can participate and collaborate actively in the practices that make up the commons. These places therefore become **spaces, where creative processes happen**. The latter statement is even more important since the rarity of participative processes in the town, especially in public spaces. **These entrepreneurs have been able to bring innovation in, spotlighting the importance of participation for creativity, business, social and cultural capital.** **So they occupy a precise tile in creative processes, facilitating, physically and culturally, collaboration and co-decision, driving them into creative participative productions.** In this way, they substituted the empty space where civic officers should operate, in order to create the right infrastructures for **translating necessities into creative practices.**

These entrepreneurial initiatives seem to be relevant for a bare rural economy as Matera. It leaves space for some consideration. Indeed, **these kind of creative industries are demonstrating their importance for the local economy operating as hybrid forms of**

social, cultural and profit organizations. They are able to go into the local network, promoting collaboration and innovation, through creative practices. They are acting as the real innovators of Matera 2019, instead of the local government. It is quite an interesting element for the analysis. Despite their reduced number, these creative enterprises are operating where something is missing in the social and economic fabric of Matera. Actually we cannot prove there is a connection among the hybrid form of these creative industries, and the necessities of the local economy. Anyway we can positively embrace the role creative industries can play in the local context, as facilitator of cooperation and participation, and so creative processes. It means overcoming the typical idea of creative industries as just producers of creative and cultural goods, or the limited role cultural organizations can work in the local context in terms of economical facilitations. These creative industries, therefore assume a hybrid form, maybe thanks to the peculiarities of the local context. Of course they should be tested and valued in other similar rural environments, where several deficiencies affect the local economic stabilisation. In truth, in the case of Matera we cannot speak about a creative environment properly: these organizations are still too few to represent a worthy case, despite their attempt of clustering and multiplying their local relevance. Moreover, there are no relevant infrastructures that facilitate the rise of a creative environment and collaborative practices, as for example institutions of higher education and art schools. At the same time, in this moment Matera 2019 is a good opportunity at least for developing its own project. It could be a place to be for young entrepreneurs and cultural/social innovators. The local government should support their local work in order to produce sustainable long-term cycles. Otherwise, these interesting initiatives will probably lose their intensity. These entities should be understood and supported so that all the stakeholders can jointly make alive something close to a creative environment. The creative industries previously mentioned are still hybrid, so that even their financial structures are mixed up. When formal institutions will recognize their importance, these hybrid forms of creative industries-social innovators, will assume a more standardise configuration. They are physical spaces where participative and creative processes happen, so contributing to local stabilisation.

4.4 How can rural small cities be economically stabilized taking care of the local cultural and social qualities?

The case of Matera shows the difficulty of tracing all the components that compose the creative environment and the impossibility of achieving local stabilisation with top-down practices. Rural areas have several deficiencies that make their stabilization harder. The absence of infrastructures and relevant educational institution depresses the creative environment. Moreover, several creative entrepreneurs have claimed the difficulty of networking with local organizations, since the absence of important skills among their members. At the same time, the case can provide some interesting insights:

1. Civic officers need to reformulate their economic approaches and take into consideration several cultural and social qualities that are usually set aside, as demonstrated in the case of Matera.
2. Participation and collaboration are key elements for the establishment of a healthy environment, where creativity can find its own dimension. That's why it is important that political participation, business models, creative practices and social and cultural processes are innovated, in order to start from local necessities.
3. Most of the time the establishment of a creative environment is the result of casual dynamics. However, collaboration among local stakeholders is essential to obtain long-term stabilisation and amplified effects.
4. Most of the time creative entrepreneurs have the right knowledge to transform participative processes in creative commons. These industries should be reevaluated, reinforcing their social and cultural value and finding a right juridical and economic structure. These entities can be definitely important to activate asleep dynamics in peripheral and rural contexts.
5. Instrumental or quantitative approaches are often pointless for the stabilisation of rural economies. They are unable to get in touch with local qualities and cannot sustain valid initiatives as those ones presented in the case of Matera.

The case of Matera illustrates the difficulty of finding complex solutions for the decay of these peripheral areas. We are definitely facilitated by the European Capital of Culture that boosted those few initiatives and centralized the attention on the city of Stones. The rest of the region is even more rural and some towns are completely

abandoned. For those places the strategy should be even more different; and another approach is required.

The perception is that places like Matera, will unlikely evolve into virtuous innovative centres, able to agglomerate capitals and forces. At the same time, taking into account the relevant opportunity the city has, spaces for creativity and innovation should be implemented and developed. It is definitely hard thinking about achieving a certain economic and civic development in the long term without dynamic open spaces, integrated in the territory.

Matera shows the disruptive effects of the absence of collaboration and confront among stakeholders. Seeing the difficult situation in the south of Italy, the ECOC is a great opportunity for Matera that should be used in order to establish strong base for autonomous qualitative local processes. An economic strategy based principally on tourism, and the absence of horizontal processes of co-decision or co-design, are throwing citizens out from the project Matera 2019, without contributing to any local needs, as confirmed by them during interviews.

Despite the difficulty of tracing exactly any process that contribute to a creative environment, other cases, like Milan, Turin or the nearer Puglia have demonstrated the importance of the governmental support to the innovation of processes of social inclusion, cultural development and participative economies. An aware and prepared administration definitely gives an important contribution to these local innovators that, in turn, work on peripheries, creates new economies and increase the civic capital. The stabilization of these economies, therefore, requires a new political awareness and public leaders need to step back from their vertical attitude. The attention of local governments has to be oriented to stimulate bottom-up initiatives, without assuming a dominant role. Bottom initiatives are often able to grasp local needs and values, better than institutions. Moreover, they work daily with communities setting up participative processes.

Matera demonstrates that the local stabilization of rural areas is not able to leave horizontal approach and qualitative strategies out of consideration. Indeed, the problematic absence of public infrastructures and transportations, the dependence on traditional industrial sectors or administrative occupations, the “obsolescence” of the human capital, often unable to understand current processes, call for an additional

effort by all the stakeholders for laying the foundations of a communal development. It is important that local administration, creative entrepreneurs and local organization work in order to create a dynamic and harmonious environment, providing the right tools and competences to local citizens, so that every “unit” feel part of the total. At the same time, local intermediaries and public officers should grasp what each members can give to the entire community and valorise this value, helping them to feel part of the organism. It is a positive way to overcome local structural deficiencies, taking into consideration that it is a slow process and goals should always be community-oriented. Focusing principally on vertical strategies, like in the case of the public administration of Matera, will worsen the general inability of understating the current economy and, in this case, will make Matera a “Disneyland” for foreign people.

A substantive approach is going to be adopted locally, by some realities that are able to conciliate social and cultural attention with economic dynamics. In fact, Matera demonstrates that rural cities can be relevant laboratories for economic, social and cultural experimentation. Indeed, the conciliation of different contingencies has going to favour experimental creative industries with relevant social and cultural orientation. They are hybrid forms that combine functions and characteristics in a different way from the past, with strong local roots. These entities innovate processes and ways of approaching economies; they are part of an ever-changing panorama. The case demonstrates that this kind of hybrid creative industries activates little virtuous mechanisms: mutual networks and systems of micro-welfare, small local production chains, a continuative dialogue and experimentation with local traditional industries and the development of participative economies and practices.

At the same time, these hybrid entities make their financial unsustainability evident. That’s why it is definitely important that public leaders understand and support them, proving the juridical and economic aids able to stimulate creative economies and stabilize the environment, on new qualitative paradigms. They have to be understood and fed, in order to create relevant processes of local economic stabilization; otherwise the risk is speculation and the erosion of social and cultural capital, despite of opportunity of the ECOC.

The case demonstrates that bottom up initiatives are often qualitatively relevant, as well as, there are more and more creative entrepreneurs aware of the importance of implementing substantive approaches. It seems that the latter result easier when they

grow from the bottom. The problem is that without a structural political twist, toward qualitative approaches, these little economies are going to be marginal and unable to create relevant networks and environments in devastated areas like rural towns in the south of Italy. In this way, the latter areas remain really good experimental laboratories, but often end in itself. Indeed, we doubt their long-term sustainability without any kind of political support and virtuous peer-to-peer collaborations.

Big agglomerations will continue to have more and more resources even for structuring better these kind of economic experiments. However, the meaning will be completely different, since in rural areas they can be real engines for local stabilization, instead of being part of huger dynamics.

5 Conclusions

This study set out the necessity of qualities. It is overall accepted the importance of cultural and social capital, but still, as the case have demonstrated, it is more an academic problem than an effective political and social awareness. Speaking in terms of social and cultural capital is risky. Indeed, it can give rise to rhetorical assertions about the importance of culture for cities and urban economies. The risk is a generic conversation unable to explain how practically an urban economy can be revitalized. The topic requires further argumentations and usually it asks for quantitative elements able to valorise the economic contribution of culture to an economic system. Instead, speaking culturally about economic development could appear as a vague pointless conversation, unable to describe local processes.

Structuring a qualitative dissertation about the economic development of peripheral areas or small cities stresses the importance of values and force us thinking in terms of qualities when we deal with arguments as the cultural policy, the creative environment, the political choices or the entrepreneurial effort. Values are not countable; it freed the elaboration from any deterministic attempt, making fluid both the empirical elaboration and the conclusions.

The qualitative approach emphasis the importance of the social, civic and cultural capital for the economic conversation, so that any kind of economic and political strategy should be able to include these resources. In this case, the hope for Matera is exactly creating a harmonious program able to catch local qualities and values, to represent the community, and to facilitate the participation and sharing of its members. The importance of the latter two terms has been hugely addressed during the dissertation, and they are the most concrete representations of qualitative arguments. Providing resources to the community and working in order to generate worth for the entire group means activating a simple but powerful behaviour: trust, that is the basic element of any form of social and civic capital, which in turn are cardinal conditions for stimulating a creative environment.

The hope for rural areas, small cities and peripheral regions, that suffer the erosion of their capitals, to the detriment of big urban centres, is building participative

strategies of co-development where every member of the community should feel part of the change and active creator of civic awareness. In this way, local resources are definitely important and they should be considered the starting point for a qualitative strategy of rural development. At the same time, they should be managed in order to avoid instrumental speculative processes as in the case of Matera. There will be no hope for these cities until social and cultural resources are seriously taken into consideration in local cultural policies and urban regeneration strategies. An external agent, as the European Capital of Culture, can undoubtedly stir sleeping processes and a civic agitation; at the same time, these forces and resources need to be fed in order to create spaces for creativity and achieving forward-looking results.

So the hope for these communities is detached from the rigid supremacy of the economic indicators of success, and using these opportunities for rethinking their cultural and civic resources and the institutional approaches. Creativity needs spaces for trust and collaboration.

... And Considerations.

The concept of civic capital, already mentioned in the theoretical chapter, found important practical application in civic and urban Italian history. Bruni and Zamagni (2004), taking inspiration by the research of Putnam (1993a), explained why some region of the north and centre of Italy, like Umbria and Tuscany, have been models of civic orders, built during the course of the centuries. These models have been called “urban civilities” by Bruni & Zamagni (2004). This term is born from the union of two Latin words: “Urbs” (City) and “Civitas” (Civility). Their association would like to spotlight the centrality of the common good and the shared values for the same urban identity and for those economic, political and social structures that are part of it.

Recovering this concept is quite important. Indeed, as Zamagni claimed, the model of urban civility is intrinsically related to that one of Market Economy, so that the latter represents an important precondition of the urban civility. Nowadays, the current capitalistic implication uses to distort the conversation around economy and the market economy, since the formula of capital accumulation has consistently varied the finalization of the productive activity, turning it exclusively to the maximization of

profit. The logic of the maximization of profit, and its instrumental implication, therefore, is the essential condition neither of economy, nor of the market economy. Indeed, the latter sprout from the conversation among different actors that interact differently, always finally oriented to the common good.

Re-thinking the topic through a substantive approach allows us to reevaluate culturally the entire political-economic structure, so looking for those social and cultural qualities that we sought several times during this work. In this sense, the research of a qualitative approach, as well as, the social/collaborative transition that some of vital important organizations and entrepreneurships are operating in the creative environment of Matera, are not just contingent strategies, attributable to the research of innovative and efficient approaches; rather cooperation and participation are fundamental conditions for achieving the common good, which should be the base of the economic conversations too. It means that these conditions cannot be limited to social or cultural settings, but rather they can redefine new characters among profit and not-for-profit, embedding instrumental reasoning into the qualitative reasoning of culture and civility.

It is so important understanding these new forms of mutualism and substantivism, since they are the result of the general necessity of finding more appropriate answers to human needs and values. This process sprout as a reaction to the increasingly instrumentalization of the capitalistic contingency; at the same time it does not by any means delegitimize the market economy and the liberty of competition. Concerning this, it could be important remembering the real meaning of “competition”: it comes from the Latin word “cum-potere”, that means “going together”, “converging to the same point”.

This work, through the case of Matera, does not aim to be a mere anti-capitalism exercise; rather we would like to propose a reason for meditating on the possibilities that advance and the task that young people, in accordance with brilliant contemporary mentors, have in order to bring the current economic and political conversation back to qualitative and cultural paradigms, where collaboration and the common good are the essential condition for the creation of civic and creative sustainable environments. I personally hope I gave my contribution to the conversation, aware that several eminent authors, organizations and institutions are already working hard in order to change the

contemporary economic debate and to innovate processes in order to achieve more qualitative paradigms and solutions.

Processes have to be innovated. Our case has shown all the limits connected to vertical strategies of development. They are often superficial and in the dark of what is important for the members of the community. New schemes of interaction and democracy are required. The importance of experimenting new qualitative approaches to economy and politics is across-the-board and it involves several contemporary problems. Instrumentalism reasoning seems to be too extended, weakening our civic and democratic evolution. Moreover, the case demonstrates the difficulty of still defining the board among profit and not-for-profit and the attempt of innovating the processes of creative commons and collaboration. A qualitative reasoning would take apart the profit reasoning, opting for more inclusive approaches, where profit is part of the social and cultural conversation.

Unfortunately it seems to early for proposing concrete solutions to the innovation of instrumental processes. It is an experimental field and actually we are not aware of its future development. It is evident, from the case too, that these social and cultural innovations need time, especially if they have to operate on institutions, structures and approaches. At the same time, despite these complexities, small urban centres could be the place where different approaches are experimented and innovated. The lesser complexity, the easier attitude of cooperating and commonly creating, as well as, the necessity of finding their dimension in the current global competition, can be important condition to favourite a certain innovative environment. It could be important following this work into other context and keep studying those environments where political and economic processes experiment more qualitative dimensions and how they contribute to the entire local economy.

Starting from restrained dimensions will give us more immediate contributions to the research of new a substantive reasoning. We need to regenerate starting from qualities and empathy.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Table of interviewees

#	Interviewees	Type	Contact	Date	Min.
1	Lia Ghilardi	Cultural Planner	lia.ghilardi@noema.org.uk	30/3	73'
2	Raffaele De Ruggieri	Mayor	segreteria.sindaco@comune.mt.it	31/3	51'
3	Nicola De Ruggieri Zetema	Cultural Association	Fondazione@zetema.org	31/3	11'
4	Officina Frida	Craft	Tel. +39 08351652534	12/5	38'
5	Raffaele Vitulli Matera Hub	Start-up incubator	info@materahub.com	12/5	20'
6	Emmanuele Mancini	Craftsman	Tel. +39 3283856753	13/5	22'
7	Francesco Paternoster	Designer	paternosterfrancesco@gmail.com	13/5	50'
8	Lela Campitelli Materia	Craftsman	materia@materia-lab.it	13/5	35'
9	Emmanuele Curti	University Professor	emmanuele.curti@gmail.com	14/5	51'
10	Rebecca Riches Lucania Living	Touristic Consultancy	info@lucanialiving.com	16/5	32'
11	Luca Antani Studio Antani	Video Communication Consultancy	Tel. +39 3285764054	16/5	37'
12	Mikaela Bandini Can't Forget Italy	Video Communication Consultancy	Info@cantforget.it	17/5	22'
13	Raffaele Pentasuglia Bottega Pentasuglia	Craftsman	Tel. +39 3203009196	17/5	62'
14	Andrea Paoletti Casa Netural	Co-working space	casa@benetural.com	18/5	60'
15	Collettivo Fara	Architecture studio	info@c-fara.com	18/5	28'
16	Open Lab	Hi-Tech Incubators	info@openlabmatera.org	18/5	31'

17	Paolo Verri Fondazione Matera Basilicata 2019	ECOC Committee	direttore@matera- basilicata2019.it	18/5	59'
18	Vito Epifani Ass. Matera 2019	Cultural Association	matera2019@gmail.com	28/10	98'

Meeting Cresco (network of local cultural organizations)		crescobasilicata@gmail.com	19/5	131'
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Participants	Type	Contact
Arteria	Cultural Association	info@arteriamatera.it
Fondazione South Heritage	Contemporary Art Organization	Tel. +39 0835240348
Iac – Centro Arti Integrate	Cultural Association	crescobasilicata@gmail.com
MomArt	Cultural Association	info@momartgallery.it

Appendix B: Example Contact Interviewee

Dear Mr. / Mrs. X

I am Carlo Ferretti, Master student of Cultural Economics at Erasmus University, Rotterdam. The reason why I am writing to you, regards my Master Thesis. Indeed, my research would like to study the process of urban regeneration activated by the candidacy to European Capital of Culture. Precisely, I would like to observe how local actors are involved in the cultural project, which kinds of institutional relations have been established to the develop the project, and the economic and social fabric of the city. For achieving these goals I need to be helped by local organizations and cultural actors, active in the urban network.

I would like to interview you, in order to enhance crucial information to my research. I would be in Matera for meeting you personally. Please let me know, when you have some minutes to dedicate to my research; I am quite flexible for adapting to your commitments.

Please contact me to my email address: carlo.ferretti19@gmail.com, or my telephone contact: +39 3347441037.

Moreover, if you are not in Matera, we can organize a Skype meeting. This is my Skype contact: [carlo.ferretti19](https://www.skype.com/people/carlo.ferretti19).

I look forward to hearing from you and having the possibility of meeting soon.

Best Regards,

Carlo Ferretti

Appendix C: Qualitative Thematic Analysis Coding List

Color Code:

Deductive developed from the Literature

Inductive developed from the Case Study

❖ Social Dimension

- Local dynamics
- Participation
- Activism
- Collaboration and level of interaction
- Interaction with public Institutions
- Civic capital
- Access to information

❖ Cultural Dimension

- Cultural resources
- Cultural local identity
- Uses and Costumes
- Political Culture
- Relevance of the Cultural and Environmental Heritage
- Multiculturalism

❖ European Capital of Culture

- Strategic approach
- Management processes
- Political goals and strategies
- Address
- Expectations
- Research & Development

- Reaction
- Collaboration
- Incentives
- City Image
- Initiatives
- Social and Cultural impact

❖ Urban Economy

- Clusters and Networks
- Presence of talented open mind people
- Creative Industries
- Cultural and Economic Experimentation
- Social Impact
- Institutional Dialogue
- Territorial peculiarities
- Deeply rooted activities
- Economic Culture
- Usage of Local Resources
- Financial structure

❖ Political Management

- Political History
- Innovation of processes
- Instrumentalization
- Weight in Public Life/Decisions
- Management of resources
- Structure of Decision-making
- Community Participation

❖ Creative Environment

- Spaces for creativity

- Creative Institutions
- Know-How
- Political impact
- Territorial Inclination
- Innovation
- Social Activators
- Exogenous Factors