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## An emerging market and the query of how-to-do: Culture as a driver for development and socio-economic cohesion

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### Abstract

In the Programming Period 2007-2013 culture was defined as an emerging market, but from 47 billion EUR Structural Funds, only 6 billion (1.7%) were allocated to culture. Is culture only an issue of national interest? Why culture is considered to be an emerging market? May be because of tourism and rising visitors flows at sites and museums or because digital media dominate the youth? The mission for democratic societies is to utilize culture as a driver for economic development and social cohesion and the emerging query is how this goal could be achieved. Without acknowledging and embracing universal values and human rights, culture cannot become the rational supporter, attitude formatter and regulator of social behaviour. To make this possible, we argue, that we need to transcode contemporary impressions into emotion: in one word to employ art and artists. Economists need to demonstrate the social balance and the social profit of the enterprise *Culture*.

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### 1. Introduction

*Culture! "Let us invest in culture!"... "Culture is the real field to extract profit for a modern and advanced country" ... "Let us focus on culture, the driver and multiplier for development ...*These phrases are taken randomly from the statements of the representatives of the major governments of the European states and the EU. All right, then, but how do we measure the return on investment? Just measure only direct returns? What

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are the parameters that take into account that define the nature of the different strategic sectors? And what does it exactly mean *to invest in culture* rather than investing in construction or in the production of ice cream? Can we use the same criteria or is it necessary to proceed differently?

The development of the cultural heritage sector has reached a crossroads, and has become strategic for the times we are living. A proof is needed that the strategic dimension of cultural heritage is not just a figure of speech. The sector requires the most diverse range of disciplines to perform as a final service or commodity in the eyes of the consumers and indeed only few fields of application require such a vast integration of different skills, -giving to economists a strategic role: We must ensure that each sectorial contribution is able to perform with resilience and without fear in front of modernization and adaptation to new needs, new rules or new professional approaches and capabilities. Without fear of the epistemic fracture, the linguistic turn, similar to the analysis of Thomas Kuhn on scientific thought (Kuhn, 1962; Gattei, 208:137-163). We need to clarify at least some positions to launch a debate and find the common field of confrontation.

The prevailing economic crisis has clearly brought many societies at the razor's edge to collapse, leading to the understanding that social value of any investment is more important than the actual income: the sums governments can save from health services and the police, if violence is decreased, are substantially more than the sums invested for culture. Nurturing and disseminating cultural heritage values, is not only increasing domain specific expertise and cultural capital, gender equality and non-discrimination, cultural diversity and tolerance, but it is substantially decreasing disregard on women and transgender people, teenager violence, racism, health and mental problems to name but a few examples. So what could be the primary goal of an investment in culture or cultural heritage?

## 2. The social cost of violence and the Darwinian regression

The purpose of this paper is mainly to figure out the intention embedded in the policymaking declaration about *culture*, and to look for the rational and pragmatic body in the statements affirming the principle. In an effort to investigate and define the possible advantages, the application fields shall be analyzed one at a time, being aware of the necessary structures that will allow the forecasts to be realized. We are formulating a hypothesis, that the purpose of the investment is to increase the knowledge of a particular phenomenon, of a particular time period, a particular work of artistic or historical value and that this, precisely because knowledge is the amplifier of critical consciousness and of the intrinsic ability of humans to establish individual collocations in the world so interconnected and interdependent world. For precisely these reasons the investment in knowledge is considered advancement (Stuart, 2006:6; Manca, 2015). Knowledge and information is embedded in everything we do and every product we use and in this vein any innovation become progress only if it is followed by public and intensive use infiltrating society. If the encounter of artworks with visitors is indeed knowledge acquisition, the investment purpose would be a noble one and the direct benefit of those who had an active part in that meeting, immediate and fruitful. But there is so much more. In the spirit of the Aristotelian Grammar, by imagining the world as result of critical consciousness, culture becomes **the social glue**, the cohesion of the substrate itself, we are led into the world of world where the desire to discover is measured on the ability to understand, a world where opinions are formed on the basis of awareness and self-awareness and not on undigested suggestions of others (Μανδηλαράς, 2000; Churchill, 2010:229-233).

This world exists, it is called democracy, and we must achieve it. One could object that in order to define a strategy that invokes the utility of an investment, there must be something much less ethereal than a general principle. To explore, if culture can ensure the investment return, we change for a moment, but only apparently, the topic: news at global level and in recent years report about increased violence against the weak in general, but in particular on women, transgender people, immigrants, violence at home, frenzy shootings in the public domain, serial killings, violence of all kinds. We witness an increase on violence eruptions by people that one would never expect them doing so. Violence practiced by people, who are described to journalists as “normal” by their neighbors. The UN has professionally studied the phenomenon also from the economic point of view

and the following are the criteria of analysis and conclusions which researchers have come to in regards to the costs that the company incurs as a result of the increase in this phenomenon (UN Women Facts and Figures, 2013). Day, McKenna and Bowlus discuss 3 categories of costs (2005:6-7):

**Direct tangible costs** are actual expenses paid, representing real money spent, like taxi fare to a hospital and salaries for staff. They costs can be estimated through measuring the goods and services consumed and multiplying by their unit cost.

**Indirect tangible costs** have monetary value in the economy, but are measured as a loss of potential, like lower earnings and profits resulting from reduced productivity. They are also measurable, although they involve estimating opportunity costs rather than actual expenditures.

**Direct intangible costs** result directly from the violent act but have no monetary value, like pain and suffering, and the emotional loss of a loved one through a violent death. They may be approximated by quality or value of life measures

**Indirect intangible costs** result indirectly from the violence, and have no monetary value, like negative psychological effects on children who witness violence which cannot be estimated numerically.

The authors conclude that: *“The costs of violence against women are enormous. Economic development is limited as long as violence against women exists. All of the economic costing literature indicates that the whole of society pays for the costs of not addressing this pressing social concern.”* (Day, McKenna and Bowlus, 2006:45). It seems clear that when reducing violence, civilization grows and money is earned, at least in the sense that money is not used to retribute victims of violence and lift public domain damages. But what should be further done to reduce violence? Increase the penalties? The penalties exist and those who practice violence are certainly not afraid of the punishment as a deterrent, just like chronic drug addicts continue to risk their lives and keep taking the substances although they are perfectly aware of health damage and death risk.

Another rising expression of violence in recent years is bullying among teenagers. The medical and philosophical analysis of the phenomenon starts already two decades ago and it is still ongoing; (Bond et al. 2001; Gedron, Williams and Guerra, 2011; Wayne, 2013). News are full of reports about violence suffered by young students who are filmed by fellow students without their consent, the latter proud of themselves and full of joy for the achievement to expose the first. Apparently a new law of the jungle: *“Bullying is a complex problem that can be heartbreaking and miserable for those targeted. But research suggests that many adults have a hard time understanding just how much kids can suffer emotionally from bullying – unless of course they too were bullied”* (Phillips, 2010:1). Scholars argue that this lack of understanding is often called the “empathy gap” (Nordgren, MackDonald and Banas, 2001:120-128). We argue that this phenomenon can be called regression towards an archaic and primitive culture. Indicative of a new world order in the post internet revolution, is one of the most viewed videos on Google, showed a boy beaten down and humiliated by classmates in the civilized city of Turin, in Italy (Crosato, La Repubblica, 1/03/2006). With the school classroom as the stage for violence a pack of wolves falls onto the victim in an attempt to eliminate it. Others were demonstrating satisfaction for the act on the victim, while others kept reading or writing as if nothing happened. One of them drew on the blackboard the symbol of the SS without any horror to the act, and for the symbol of the destructive power that has ravaged Europe only 7 decades ago. The act is criminal and such an attitude should be the social concern of all.

*Regression* is the term used by Galimberti because the power of reason, character and thought are dramatically diminished (Crosato, 2014 in: Il Rasoio di Occam, 28/03/2014). The only dominating force is once again that of the muscles used only after cowardly assessing that its strength exceeds that of the victim and that the herd is in unity and solidarity against a single specimen with instinctive behaviors of animal species. Regression is indeed the right word, because humans in their evolution have gone a long way from gestures to word and language, from confrontation to dialogue, from nature to culture. Reason and thought are achievements of culture that are forming the basis of our democratic society. Their aphasia explicitly means the return to uncontrolled instincts, putting the human evolution into reverse. Bullying and violence against women are clearly indicators of regression. Merely listing them as ‘violence’, without reflecting on the component ‘recession of the human evolution’-, underestimates the danger and is obscuring the answer. Thus we are being

lead in a society where the animal instinct leads the male to appropriate the female for reasons of physical strength. On the other side the power of emotions and love rule the life and the future of the sapiens human species, which is guided by culture. The identity of the sapiens human species is a cultural one, and not natural. And here it is imperative to quote Charles Darwin: *The man may be excused for his pride to step up, although not for the own merits, at the top of the living scale, and the fact that he elevated higher than other animals, instead of having being placed there from the beginning, can give hope for a still higher destiny in the distant future. .... The very essence of instinct is that it is followed independently of reason (Darwin, 1871:405)*".

### 3. Reformulating the savings concept for investments in culture

This paper strives to make explicit the extent of this indirect gain in investing in culture towards a numerical index able to weigh the social contribution of culture and translate it in the only yardstick that for now society understands: money. The income of today cannot be separated from the problems of tomorrow and vice versa. A cost of a culture-driven, socially and civilly virtuous activity today that benefits another sector must be reflected within the budget depicting the benefits and be allocated as the right measure to the actual generator. Well established studies demonstrate that intellectually active seniors are less prone to be frequent hospitalized and therefore spending money on culture, means to save on health care (Frankish, Milligan and Reid, 1998; The Romanov Report, 2002; Jappia and Punteneay, 2012).

Darwin used the world hope to give us the responsibility for future events for us and for other species. It is as we say that only science can have this kind of vision. This vision is inevitably leading to the responsibility that mankind puts on the own shoulders after having understood the evolution itself through the scientific method. *Sentimental Education* that alone banishes any violence against the weak is a lesson that comes from our ancient literature, the theater, the cinema, thought to represent and disseminate human achievements. In the remote past, constructing artifacts, which we now call archaeology, was the symbolic message of our ancestors to represent human achievements. If the sentimental model, if love, compassion, solidarity according to the code used by artists for millennia, is our distance from the animal world, then the widespread and conscious use of culture, the possibility to interpret and live, and the cultural resources of the past reinforce our awareness and evolutionary growth. This alone is enough to give practical meaning to the adjective "strategic" continuously used about the culture (Galimberti, 2007). The sentimental and behavioral model, dialogue and mutual understanding are life contexts alternative to bullying and opposed to violence against women. A society regulated by culture leaves no room for aggression; it is easy to understand how an investment in culture is generating a clear reduction of these phenomena and therefore spectacular economic growth.

Some industries consider scientific research as a not productive cost, even if it is produced in-house. Occasionally they do not possess the capacity nor the analytical tools to realize how much of their production efficiency is resulting from scientific research of a decade earlier. A highly polluting chemical factory produces profits that become net losses in the years to come, in social costs, reclamations and waste disposals, not considered toxic at time of production and then proved to be such. Too often it is the private benefit that causes a high cost in public administration and civil society. These analysis tools should be made explicit and provide adequate corrective glasses to the ruling class, in case the latter is short-sighted and not able of a broader view.

The production of culture, the markets related to digital creative industries, the promotion of cultural heritage as symbols messages coming from past civilizations with the eyes still on the present, new museums, conceived as narrative habitats, proactive centers of artistic experimentation in the territory of memory are the key players of this new vision of the market that provides a fundamental contribution to the value of social quality. In his last book, *Il governo della cultura*, Walter Santagata defines social quality as the extent to which people are able to actively participate in social, economic and cultural development of their communities in conditions that improve the collective well-being and individual potential (Santagata, 2014). At the same time social quality can be defined as the factor that allows individuals to realize various combinations of actions both elementary like access to culture and cultural heritage, to basic citizenship goods, the right to health, and complex like participation to the community life and increase the ability to achieve their life plans. Unfortunately, things do not seem to go in this direction: the 2013 OECD report "*First Results from the Survey*

of *Adult Skills*" measures the percentage of adults with no ability to express themselves or to solve simple mathematical problems, meaning individuals, who in an advanced society, are no longer able to reason, have a deficit in abstract thinking, are not able to form concepts providing us with a ruthless, but precise picture of our time. Reading the report it seems we have plunged into a world that has lost the ability to analyze and deduce, about which data reveal that is a common feature, penalizes the production practices of culture and favors, albeit indirectly the aforementioned distortions. Sir Karl Raimund Popper has reserved fierce criticism to the *bad teacher television*, suggesting that television was sensationalist and superficial precisely because of the fact that the offer was to be enjoyed indistinctly by all (Popper, 2002). More caustic than Popper, Sartori states that unlike the communication tools that preceded it, television destroys more knowledge and understanding than it produces (Sartori, 2000). Aligned with this view a recent OECD report demonstrates that intensive use of technology is not the solution of the educational problem, emphasizing that the countries with the highest rate of illiteracy, are those with the highest rate of TV consumption (OECD, 2015).

#### 4. The driver of experience and culture as regression antidote

Following Gadamer's concept of hermeneutics as postulated in his opus magnum *Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, when dealing with an artwork of historical and architectural value from the past, the greatest difficulty to interpret the inherent value is the distance between the knowledge necessary to arrive at an understanding of the artwork, even at the elementary level (Gadamer, 1990): the cognitive gap of the public is growing and with it the losses in cultural capital. In the past it was assumed that the interpretive tools needed were already property of the public, part of their intrinsic wealth of knowledge provided by other cultural institutions: schools, first of all. In recent years we witness a considerable increase of visitor flows to museums and sites. However, despite the increase, the cognitive gap, when being confronted with coded artworks is in many cases creating a real frustration enough to bounce back the public and giving birth to the motivational gap. The cultural heritage system fails to activate the cognitive process of its members (Antinucci, 2014:28-29). This lack of understanding is not solved by providing information through a standard descriptive apparatus, because the human cognitive system is very complex as studies testimony from the times of Immanuel Kant to cognitive sciences today. Knowledge is not acquired because the lack in abstract thinking and the low ability to formulate concepts interrupts the assimilation. Examples of museums or portals rich in information remain are at a cognitive-emotional level unsuccessful, a proof that the approach aforementioned is not working (Antinucci, 2007, Palombini, 2012:12-13).

In regards to a cultural heritage agency's communication with the public, it is the information architecture that has to be entirely redesigned to attract and retain the attention of the audience: it must be "administered" through a narrative structure that is capable to activate the cognitive and the motivational component, both essential to the assimilation of data necessary for the construction of the information environment, essential to allow the interpretation of the artwork. The narrative, the language of cinema and that of the theater, born thousands of years ago, helps to decode the symbolism behind which artists conceal the reality. It is the narrative that brings with it all the emotion and emotionality assisting visitors to navigate in their own wealth of ideas and thus reconstruct the meaning of the artwork itself. This process, proven in years of work in the field, provokes the chain reaction that multiplies the results. If a story is written and performed so compelling, it increases interest and curiosity. It thus encourages the structural integration supporting the cognitive approach. It is the latter that allows knowledge to be processed, assimilated and placed in the aforementioned context. The awareness of having understood influences strongly the motivation to keep going, offers satisfaction and reinforces the focus in all future processing activating the chain reaction-cognition-motivation releasing new energies to real learning. This process of alignment between symbolic signals deriving from the past and the context capable to decipher them, we call for the sake of understanding "tune". Tuning should be explained to the digital native youth (Cartelli, 2012), as the youth today navigates among programmes and devices just by pressing buttons and thus are quickly jumping from one frequency to another. Who has a few more years, recalls the analogue radio and remembers what it was, at least initially, difficult to turn the tuning knob to immediately trace down the desired program. During tuning the radio was emitting strange lunar sounds, a

cacophony to which one had to get used, to drive with extreme sensitivity until it reached the desired programme.

Who is working in cultural industry, is looking for emotions, that will become emotion that vehicle if experience. Since the brain cannot know what experience will be offered in the future, it develops concepts learned throughout life and acquires a new experience based on previous experiences and incorporates the active higher functions, such as memory and judgment, which are the key for comparison (Zeki, 2009:49). Without deepening into the perception that is beyond the scope of this paper, it is critical to understand that in the world of culture is the supply that is creating the demand and not vice versa. By being confronted with the unexpected a cognitive imbalance is created, which through the redeployment of previous experience, produces a new balance in a new frame of reference: the new experience. Experience exists only as a function of the fact that it appears in front of something unknown, something that has the potential of upsetting the creative industry and the field of promotion of cultural heritage can co-exist and be successful only if they become the production of new artworks in the hands of today's artists (Dewy, 1994:204-217). The work of art should not be giving everything to the senses, but just what is required to put imagination on the right path.... as Voltaire puts it "*the secret to being boring is to say everything*". Also in art, the best is too spiritual to be offered to the senses; it must be born from the imagination of the viewer, generated by the work of art (Shopenhauer, 1913:1883-1884). Very often the sketches of great masters are more effective in processing by the audience than their completed, finite paintings, as Homer does not explicitly describes Helen in the Iliad and her image of beauty is left to be reconstructed by the individual interpretation. Assisting the intensity of the experience Rapsody C deals with Helens beauty in the teichoscopia incident (verses 141-160): Helens approaches the part of the wall, where the aged Trojans are watching their sons die in battle for her sake. And indeed so great is her beauty, 'devine' calls it Homer (vers 171), that the aged citizens take their eyes away from the dying sons to admire Helens immaculate beauty ( Ομήρου Ιλιάδα, Παρωδία Γ', στίχοι 121-244). This unexpected attitude of the old fathers is what is shaking the audience and immortalizes Helen's beauty. In other words, in Dewey's spirit, experience happens only if we meet the unexpected.

The market of culture, to its inherent characteristics, is not a market that can be traditionally understood. A *market economy is an economy in which decisions regarding investment, production, and distribution are based on supply and demand, and prices of goods and services are determined in a free price system* (Altvater, 1993; Gregory and Stewart, 2004). It is clear that the market is based on the law of supply and demand. At the beginning of the supply-demand mechanism, there is a need, a need that must be met, for which it must be produced in order to satisfy the need. The easiest way is to buy products with set prices. While market surveys precisely define, through established patterns what are the preferred tastes of consumers to define products that may have the widest possible demand, we wish to confute this thesis in the domain of art and culture. To expose the mercantile view of art assessment, we refer to the Chase Manhattan Bank project, "*The most wanted paintings*", that offers deeper insight for the argument of the experience being realized in the sphere of the unexpected. The artists, Vitaly Komar and Alex Melamid have investigated, using traditional methods of market research, the preferences of users for paintings, treating them as customers of the consumer society. Selected for each country in terms of individual preferences, colors, backgrounds, sizes, have been processed as data. According to the results, paintings have been produced exactly as if they potato chips or a television format for the evening entertainment (Komar and Melamid, 1994:334-338). The result is frightening in terms of aesthetics and although the paintings are made according to the average preference of the country selected, no one wants them.

## 5. Conclusion

The cultural market continues to be driven by the market economy, but market laws do not work if applied to culture or the promotion of cultural heritage. We need a new approach, as by applying the old procedures, we are damaging the sector. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has lost its ability to be an indicator of quality of life of the society that generates it, including its ability to attract new capital since the choices of citizens and policy makers attribute a constantly increase to the social quality, a dimension that is

beyond the mere economic calculation, but it has a devastating indirect effect on the economy (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitusi, 2009). In the classic representation of the mathematical model whose balance is determined from the intersection of supply and demand, when as a result of an advertisement, a fashion, the demand grows, more people wish to satisfy their need to possess that good or make use of that service willing to pay a higher price. The supply adjusted to this demand, the assumption is, that to satisfy my need to acquire an asset that I clearly want: all this has little to do with the cognitive activity.

Public authorities would learn from the artistic and cultural mechanisms that the latter naturally tend to the maximum possible quality, while continues unabated the destructive work of those seeking only the lowest economical level. This practice with which we still live, does not lead to saving the public money, on the contrary it allows choices without implications on the civic responsibility of commissions and produces tenders without any expertise on the subject. EU funds taking into account the social impact of culture and national fiscal incentives could present favorable conditions to those organizations and institutions that contribute more than others to the brake of "regression" to growth. The recent destruction of globally valued heritage in Syria and the Iraq, urges to underline that scientific research, heritage conservation, landscape preservation, the protection of historical-artistic past are characteristic of nations with conscious awareness, that results from the daily production of culture, used as a social regulator and cohesive social glue (COE, 2011:1-5; Turek, 2015:1-3).

Culture is a strategic sector by definition, we took some practical examples and demonstrated how this sector can address the quality of the social life of a nation and that cultural and creative industry cannot exist without the production of new culture. All the sector needs is to rewrite market rules and representations of market incorporating the impact on society and clarifying the strategic importance through the emergence of growth of other sectors that culture allows. The involvement of sectors of society interested in the effects of the lack of culture, the effects of regression: the police hospitals, from schools to religious institutions. For years, we study systems of integrated budgets, for years enlightened economists claim the idea that the value of a company is no longer is its material assets, but the intangibles are the real frontiers of integration and then small museums continue to complain about budgets at a loss just because the business management is not able to address and measure the social impact.

The creative cultural industries are the pinnacle of the development of culture in the economic sense. But creativity puts a new perspective: its use to increase social quality. The challenge is to align the discipline to this revolution, becoming part of the linguistic turn, override the tendency to try to represent the new within the fossilization of the traditional thinking. We need new rules and new economic indicators that are applicable in the practice of public government and the economy. We should be managing with new rules, or else to create a management culture for culture is a useless occupation.

The mission for democratic societies is to utilize culture as a driver for economic development and social cohesion. Abstract thinking, synthesis of capabilities that are lacking according to the aforementioned OECD report and according to the hypothesis of cultural regression and rising violence, it's like missing a gear in an engine, where the latter represents the ability of a nation to produce, grow, and stabilize in the international market. If on the contrary we invest in promoting abstract thinking, critical reflection and the collaborative society using culture and heritage a participatory public spaces, we would have clearly produced the indirect benefit of investing in culture.

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