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Culture, Creative and Tourism Industries Specialization in Italy

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Abstract: In contemporary society culture has become a value generating and innovative activity. Place specific processes – the agglomeration of businesses that specialize in the cultural and creative industries and the transversal linkages that develop within and across sectors, in particular tourism – are key to this generation and innovation.

Shedding some light on this place specific agglomeration dynamic, so far largely neglected, may increase the awareness of public policy makers and business actors and therefore the effectiveness of their intersectoral policies and market decisions in driving local development. Cross-disciplinary perspectives, approaches and methodologies have been applied at the inter-municipal level in Italy to examine whether and how culture, creative industries and tourism concentrate and cluster.

Local development in Italy still requires more than traditional tourism policies and / or the marketing of tourism and cultural heritage. The promotion of innovations and synergies between tourism, the cultural and creative sectors, and other sectors is fundamental to the development of a creative atmosphere as a driver of sustainable and competitive local development.

Key words: Culture and creative industries; tourism; specialization; agglomeration; Local Labour System; intersectoral development; Italy.

JEL codes: Z10, Z30, R12, R58, C38

1. Introduction

Contemporary society's shift towards the symbolic economy (Zukin, 1995) has transformed culture into a value generating and innovative activity (Castells, 2004; Hall, 2004; Hutton, 2009; Scott, 2010). Value generation follows a number of culture-led development paths (Della Lucia, 2014): the culture and creative industries (KEA, 2006; Santagata, 2009); non-cultural sectors and productive clusters for which culture is an immaterial input that gives meaning to products and brands (Papadopoulos, 2002; Cooke & Lazzarretti, 2008); culture tourism and creative tourism (Richards & Wilson 2007); the enhancement of human capital and social identity and cohesion through the use of cultural artefacts (Florida, 2002; Tavano Blessi et al., Pilati, 2012). Cross-fertilization processes within and between these culture-led development paths and between them and other sectors may innovate traditional development models and their outputs, as well as creating new business models and entrepreneurship through the injection of creativity and knowledge into local economies and societies. Culture is therefore at the heart of European, national and local development programs to regenerate and reposition territories by fostering their economic and social recovery (European Commission, 2010; CSES 2010; Sacco, 2012).

The value generation and innovation potential of culture relies on the agglomeration of firms and individuals working in the cultural and creative industries and the transversal linkages they can develop within economies and societies (Scott, 2006). A number of different place specific factors play a part in defining the nature and pervasiveness of local development dynamics, including the tangible and intangible local cultural heritage – both artistic-cultural and professional-productive (Hall, 2004; Scott, 2006), the strength of social capital linkages within and between society and economy (Go et al., 2013), actual and emerging scenarios (Dwyer et al., 2009) and innovative policy-making (Della Lucia & Franch, 2014; Della Lucia, 2015). Culture-led regeneration occurs when culture is the driver of local development and/or transformation through a number of culture-based and/or culture-led processes (Della Lucia & Franch, 2014). The notions of Culture 3.0 (Sacco, 2011) and creative atmosphere (Bertacchini & Santagata, 2012) explain how this potential pervasiveness of culture in place development and renewal results from a combination of cultural endowment and social capital (intrinsic

conditions) and policies and strategies in place in local contexts (explicit conditions).

This paper contributes to this emerging research topic positioned at the intersection of many different knowledge domains and draws on cross-disciplinary perspectives, approaches and methodologies to examine the extent of intersectorality in local cultural development in Italy. The most recent literature and empirical analysis on culture-led regeneration (Della Lucia & Franch, 2014; Della Lucia et al., 2016) and creative atmosphere (Bertacchini & Santagata, 2012) is combined with the established body of empirical research on industrial districts (Sforzi & Lorenzini, 2002) in order to analyse culture-based specializations in Italian local systems and whether and how the culture and creative industries and tourism cluster. The main research questions are: to what extent do Italian culture-led development paths converge/coincide with cultural tourism, which is the most widespread Italian stereotype? Is any innovative culture-led development actually taking place? Is there any interaction between tourism and other cultural and non-cultural chains? The first part of the paper combines the debate on culture-led regeneration and the creative atmosphere; the second analyses culture-led specialization within local Italian systems and the relationships between these specializations. The conclusions sketch the managerial implications of this preliminary exploratory study.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Culture-led urban regeneration. Opportunities and challenges

Regeneration has been defined as the transformation of a place that has shown symptoms of marginalization (economic, environmental, social and cultural) and decline caused by failures or weaknesses in its drivers of development (Impact 08, 2007). The models chosen to incorporate culture into a regeneration process affect the nature and range of culture-based and/or cultural-led transformation (DCMS, 2004; Langen & García, 2009). Culture-led regeneration is the model in which culture – often with a high public profile – is the engine of widespread transformation which catalyses the requalification of urban areas, the development of infrastructure and services, the animation of places with new attractions and the attraction of investment, human resource and visitor flows, thus enhancing the standard of living for both residents and visitors.

The more pervasive it is, the more culture-led regeneration provides a tangible (structures, systems, services) and intangible (symbols, values, social capital) legacy, which mark the local development process over time. Changes in local identity and image are undoubtedly the most important legacy (García, 2005); they may either retain a continuity with the past, or be strikingly different (Della Lucia & Franch, 2014; Della Lucia et al., 2016). Capturing value through local heritage can maintain a strong link with an authentic sense of place; however sometimes this sense may be too weak or even non-existent, and so unable to face the challenges of emerging scenarios (Dwyer et al., 2009). For these reasons, many policies foster value creation through investment in a number of catalysts that complement cultural heritage with consumption-led and experience-based cultural activities and attractions – flexible in targeting markets and effective in innovating a territory's image and position (Trueman et al., 2008; Zenker, 2009). Iconic building and events are currently among the main cultural catalysts serving these purposes (Hall, 1994; Getz, 2008) and tourism is often seen as one of the most important drivers for the creation and capturing of value through these tools (Richards, 2014). Their development has, however, also led to complaints about the loss of authenticity and serial reproduction of local landscapes and the latter's transformation into aestheticized places of consumption (Smith, 2007).

The reconciling of tradition and innovation through participatory and inclusive development processes is crucial to sustainable and successful culture-led regeneration (Della Lucia & Franch, 2014). The need for this balance also applies to the image-making, positioning and branding processes based on local identity which put territories enduringly on the global map (Govers & Go, 2009).

2.2 From culture-led regeneration to the creation of a creative atmosphere

A creative atmosphere (Bertacchini & Santagata, 2012) may be an output of a successful culture-led regeneration/development process; the atmosphere then feeds the process itself, thus establishing a virtuous cycle. Developing the idea of creative field introduced by Scott (2010), the creative atmosphere theory is an analytical framework for understanding and measuring the role of cultural and creative industries in local development. The theory is applicable to any society, irrespective of time and place – from Periclean Athens to Renaissance Florence to contemporary New York City or Shanghai.

A creative atmosphere in a community is produced by an intense flow of ideas and information – on

products, styles, art forms, consumer needs, technological innovation, business models, and industrial design. This concentration, and the interactions between workers and entrepreneurs that give rise to it, can be considered key factors in the extraction, sharing and enhancing of the creativity embedded in all the chains and phases of producing goods and services with high cultural and symbolic value (Currid, 2007, Tavano Blessi et al., 2012). Culture factories – key hubs and players in the cultural economy like publishers, fashion firms, large museums, movie and music producers, etc. (Hutton, 2009; Cohendet et al., 2010); local systems of small and medium-sized cultural industries – the backbone of the cultural economy and potential cultural districts (Lazzeretti, 2004) and micro-business services – small independent production companies and service providers that support both intangible and tangible components of cultural production (NESTA, 2009; Boyle et al., 2010) all contribute to the creation of a creative atmosphere. The coexistence of specialized and complementary cultural producers, and their related labour markets, also generates positive local externalities which, in turn, increase the sustainability of local development and competitiveness.

3. Case study and research methodology

In Italy policies around cultural resources have usually led to traditional development models based on cultural tourism and local products; complementarities with research and innovation, education and social inclusion policies and hybridizations between culture and traditional sectors have either been ignored or insufficiently promoted. There is still no national strategy for the development of cultural and creative sectors; competitive Italian strategic sectors (fashion and design) are not recognized as creative industries and their links to cultural industries and tourism are not fully understood (Sacco, 2012). A case study on culture-led specializations in local systems that examines the Italian situation should therefore be of considerable interest.

Culture-based specializations in local Italian systems have been analysed by extending well-established quantitative methodologies used in empirical research on industrial districts (Istat, 1997; Sforzi & Lorenzini, 2002). The adaptations previously introduced in their application to local development driven by tourism (Boix & Capone, 2004; Della Lucia et al., 2007) and the cultural and creative industries (Lazzeretti et al., 2008) have been further adapted. For example, the territorial units of analysis used in these studies have been updated (Local Labour Systems identified using 2001 Census data) and the classification of the culture and creative industries based on the English model coined by the English Department for Culture, Media and Sport has been changed (DCMS, 2001).

Given the inter-municipal level of analysis of the methodology applied to industrial district, the territorial units adopted are the Local Labour Systems (LLSs), aggregates of neighbouring municipalities identified through the daily home-work-home trips of the resident population (irrespective of work type) recorded by the National Institution of Statistics (Istat) during the most recent general Census of Population and Housing (2011) published in December 2014. The assumption underlying the inter-municipal level of analysis is that the places where a population lives and works may be considered a proxy of the context where most social and economic relationships take place. LLSs are thus more appropriate geographical areas than the traditional administrative units of analysis (municipality, province, region) when analysing phenomena connected to local development (actual social and economic interactions), whatever an area's driving sector(s) (manufacturing, tourism, culture and creative industries). In the last Census the method for the construction and identification of Italian LLSs was changed in order to comply with the principles and methodologies applied by the European Institute of Statistics (Eurostat) to identify Labour Market Areas harmonized at the European level. The methodology can therefore also be applied in other European countries and the results accurately compared.

The study method was divided into two phases. The first identified LLSs specialized in the cultural and creative industries and the intensity of their specialization. Given the specific local nature of these industries, the Italian model of the economy of culture introduced by Santagata (2009) was used to identify the sectors in each industry. Since the 12 sectors of this three-pillar model – cultural heritage, material culture and the content and information industry – have an extremely close, highly interactive, connection with tourism, this last has been integrated into the model. Table 1 shows the sectoral composition of the model adapted to this analysis.

The LLS's specializations were calculated using indices (LQ) that measure the number of employees in the culture and tourism economy – both as a whole and for its four main components – relative to the national average. An LLS is specialized when at least one of the corresponding five indices is greater than one. The intensity of specialization was classified on a scale of five quartiles. The data source on employees is the Istat's

statistical register of active local enterprise units for the year 2012 (Asia-local units), the most up-to-date national survey available. The number of employees in the local enterprise units of the cultural, creative and tourist sectors active in the Italian municipalities – disaggregated at the fifth digit of the Italian classification of economic activity (ATECO 2007; 152 sectors in total), were re-aggregated taking into account the current municipal composition of Italian LLSs (2011).

Table 1: ABOUT HERE

The second phase of the research analysed whether and how culture and creative industries and tourism cluster in local Italian systems. The only units of analysis were the Italian LLSs specialized in the culture and tourism economy as a whole. The statistical techniques of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Cluster Analysis (CA) were combined to identify to what extent the various culture and tourism economy components coexist in local systems and to identify the groups of local systems which demonstrate similar patterns of culture and tourism economy component clustering. These techniques were applied to the composition ratios of the index of the specialized LLSs to assess the various contributions made by the components of cultural heritage, material culture, the content and information industry and tourism to the overall specialization of the LLSs.

4. Main results

Two sets of results are drawn from the above analysis: first, a map of culture-based and tourism-based specializations within local Italian systems, and the systems' specialization levels in these sectors; second, the clustering of culture and creative industries and tourism at a local level.

4.1 Italian local system specialization in the cultural and creative sectors and tourism

In Italy the cultural and creative industries (16%) and tourism (2%) employ 18% of the workforce in local enterprise units, a total of almost 3 million people. 60% of these are employed in the material culture sector – the biggest, due to the leading role of the food sector (39%); the numbers employed in the content and information industries (16%), cultural heritage (13%) and tourism (11%) are almost the same.

Of the 611 Italian LLSs, 306 (50%) specialize in one or more sectors of the culture and tourism economy (Table 2).

Table 2: ABOUT HERE

The largest LLS group (64%) specializes in material culture – with the food sector playing a leading role, its highest levels of specialization are equal to almost five times the national average, concentrated in the centre (mainly Tuscany, Umbria, Marche) and north (Veneto) of the country. The LLSs specialized in tourism are the second largest group (41%), show the highest levels of specialization (between 6 and 23 times the national average) and are located mainly in the north-eastern (Trentino Alto Adige) and western Alps (Valle d'Aosta), and on the northern and eastern coasts of Sardinia. Despite Italy's rich artistic and cultural heritage, the LLSs specialized in cultural heritage are only 23% of the total, spread throughout the country. These results, however, underestimate real levels of specialization, since the analysis does not include the employees of public (cultural) institutions or private associations, which are, in Italy, an important segment of this cultural offer (for example public national museums). Finally, the group of LLSs specialized in the content and information industries is the smallest (6%), and usually coincides with the systems of medium-sized and large cities (Turin, Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome).

The number and geographical distribution of local Italian systems specialized in traditional cultural sectors confirm that local production (food sector) and artistic-cultural heritage continue to be important local development assets which are typically exploited through policies focused on cultural tourism and Food&Wine (Sacco, 2012). However, culture-led development is driven by the creative industries in some systems, unsurprisingly, given the importance of the Italian cultural and creative industry in Europe, both in terms of GDP and of employment, and the strong international position that some of these sectors, such as fashion and design,

enjoy (Santagata, 2009; Unioncamere & Symbola, 2011).

4.2 How intersectoral is cultural and tourism development in Italian local systems?

In terms of spatial coexistence, the PCA detected a negative relationship between tourism and the cultural and creative industries as a whole. In contrast, a strong positive relationship emerges between the cultural heritage and content and information industries, and, marginally, between them and tourism.

Based on these relationships, the CA identified three main clusters of LLSs with similar culture and tourism based local development characteristics (Table 3). The largest cluster (Cluster 3), which includes nearly 50% of LLSs, consists of systems whose local development is diversified in many culture-related sectors, in particular traditional cultural sectors (museums, archives, performing arts, etc.), new cultural sectors (music, movies, TV, publishing) and creative sectors (ICT, advertising, communication). In these systems, the sizes of which vary, tourism may also play a role. The city of Trento – which is experimenting with the combining of highly specialized knowledge and technology sectors with emerging specializations in publishing, film and cultural and creative tourism – is a good example of such a system (Della Lucia, 2014, 2015).

The second largest cluster (Cluster 1), which includes about 37% of LLSs, is composed of systems where tourism is the main driver of local development. These systems typically include small and medium-sized cities, which are well known both for cultural and other types of tourism (sea, mountain, lake, food&wine, thermal baths, etc.). This result is partly determined by the methodological choice to allocate traditional services that cut across different types of tourism (accommodation, tourist intermediation, entertainment and sports) within the tourism component. The smallest cluster (Cluster 2) includes the remaining 18% of the LLSs, where the sectors connected to material culture are the driver of local development. Many of these systems are productive clusters, famous nationally and internationally for their specialization in the typical made-in-Italy sectors (fashion, textile, industrial design and creative crafts).

Table 3: ABOUT HERE

5. Discussion

This investigation into Italian local systems' specialization in core components of the culture and tourism economy, and into the clustering propensity of these sectors, provides a comprehensive picture of the economic development based on the industries analysed. The estimations provided by these analyses are a crucial first step for any further qualitative or quantitative analysis of the interactions among these sectors.

The study reveals that most local systems are still strongly specialized in (cultural) tourism, highlighting the continued importance of traditional local development paths based on local cultural endowment (cultural heritage/resources and local products). However, there are positive signs of diversification and innovation, in culture-led development paths related to specializations in the typical made-in-Italy sectors, which are among the most dynamic Italian creative industries, and in the agglomeration of traditional and new cultural sectors with creative sectors.

These results can also be interpreted as the fulfilment of a necessary condition for the creative atmosphere of a place to emerge. Local concentrations of employment and enterprise in certain cultural activities undoubtedly allow for the creation of connections and networks between and among different actors, who are, themselves, central to the production of an atmosphere conducive to local development. However, this condition alone may not be sufficient to stimulate such dynamics. The development of a creative atmosphere requires that actual interpersonal and intersectoral interactions occur within and between cultural and creative industries, and between them and other sectors, tourism in particular. The results of this analysis do not answer these research questions, but can be interpreted as a first attempt to shed some light on the linkages and connections among sectors, because these potential connections are most likely to occur where traditional cultural heritage activities and cultural and creative sectors cluster. This result is more likely to be produced in the main urban areas due to the high density of population and talents and the proximity of creative individuals and enterprises which can be expected to allow for linkages and cross-fertilization between firms and sectors. In contrast, the independent paths followed by

material culture sectors and tourism show that there is ample room for improving the competitiveness of these important drivers of the Italian economy within the framework of creative atmosphere development.

6. Conclusions, limits and future research

This paper deals with the culture and creative industries and tourism as engines for local development and renewal, a topical issue in local development and managerial studies and of great interest to policy makers and managers. Although the recent idea that economic competitiveness and sustainable development crucially depend on the concentration and interaction between cultural and creative activities has been increasingly accepted in the literature, empirical studies are still rare, sector specific and mainly based on qualitative micro-case studies.

Our analysis overcomes this narrow perspective by building on the growing body of literature on, and the empirical analysis of, culture-led local development and integrating them with the extant body of knowledge on industrial districts. This results in a quantitative analysis based on the widest currently accepted and country specific definition of cultural and creative industries – including tourism, carried out at a country level (Italy) in inter-municipal local systems, as crucial spatial units for the investigation of phenomena related to local development. The analysis included tourism, the material culture industries (industrial design, art and craft, fashion, the taste industry), the content and media industries (publishing, film, television, advertising and software) and those sectors related to cultural heritage promotion (museums and monuments services, performing arts, architecture, contemporary arts and photography).

Local Italian systems are shown still to more than traditional tourism policies and / or the marketing of tourism and cultural heritage. The promotion of innovations and synergies between tourism, the cultural and creative sectors, and other sectors is fundamental to the development of a creative atmosphere as a driver of sustainable and competitive local development. While they accept the notion that cultural and creative activities are nationally and internationally recognized as pivotal for local development and regeneration, the actors in the tourism-driven development of many Italian local systems seem not to be creating strong linkages with culture and creative sectors, e.g. with the material culture industries which are the drivers of development based on the made in Italy sectors. This is clearly a lost opportunity, particularly if we assume that the general competitiveness of the country could be considerably increased through the fostering of creative atmospheres that stimulate the inclusion of economic and non-economic players, producing spill-over effects and complementarities between industries.

Although this study is exploratory and quantitative, its preliminary insights can be used to increase awareness of public policy makers and business actors and therefore the effectiveness of their intersectoral policies and market decisions in driving local development. However, many limitations remain to be overcome. The quantitative analysis should be carefully checked and complemented with qualitative or quantitative analyses of the relationships and forms of collaboration actually in place between and among cultural and creative sectors and tourism. A network analysis would help to detect and understand these interactions, by measuring the nature and intensity of the relationships between the points of the relevant networks.

Table 1 The Italian model of the culture and tourism economy

| Culture and tourism economy. Components | Sectors |
|---|---|
| A Cultural Heritage | 1. Museums. 2. Architecture 3. Performing Arts 4. Contemporary Arts and Photography |
| B Material Culture Industry | 5. Fashion and Textiles 6. Wine&Food 7. Industrial design and Arts&Crafts |
| C Content and Information Industry | 8. Movies 9. TV and Radio 10. Publishing 11. Software 12. Advertising and Communication |
| D Tourism Industry | 13. Hospitality 14. Travel Agencies and Tour Operators 15. Sports and Entertainment |
| Total | 152 Sectors (5 digit of the ATECO 2007 economic activity classification) |

Source: Adaptation of the Italian model of the economy of culture (Santagata, 2009)

Table 2 Italian local system specialization in the cultural and creative sectors and tourism

| | LLS | | Specialized LLS | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---------------------------------|------|-----------------|-----|-----------------|-----|-----------------|----|------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| | N. | % | A | | B | | C | | D | | ABCD | |
| | Index's range of specialization | | 1.0004 - 2.6254 | | 1.0005 - 4.7869 | | 1.0019 - 2.6510 | | 1.0002 - 23.0901 | | 1.0023 - 3.2552 | |
| Italy | 611 | 100% | 140 | 23% | 388 | 64% | 39 | 6% | 251 | 41% | 306 | 50% |

Note: A = Cultural Heritage; B= Material Culture; C = Content and Information; D = Tourism; ABCD = economy of culture and tourism as a whole

Table 3. The coexistence of cultural, creative and tourist sectors in Italian local systems

| Cluster | LLS | | Example |
|--|-----|-------|--|
| | N | % | |
| Cluster 1 Tourism | 149 | 36,8% | Courmayeu, Desenzano Del Garda, Badia, Canazei, Riva Del Garda, Finale Ligure, Ravenna, Riccione, Montalcino, Assisi, Gaeta, Amalfi, Otranto, Tropea, Taormina, Bosa, Santa Teresa Gallura |
| Cluster 2 Material Culture | 71 | 17,5% | Biella, Castel Goffredo, Arzignano, Thiene, Comacchio, Arezzo, Prato, Barletta, Bronte, Montebelluna, Valenza |
| Cluster 3 Cultural Heritage and Contents and Information Industry | 185 | 45,7% | Mantova, Vicenza, Foligno, Perugia, Pesaro, Roma, Torre Del Greco, Matera, Oristano, Iglesias, Caltagirone, Padova, Trento, Firenze, Pisa |

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