

EU PROJECT: European Network of Village Tourism

A BRIDGE BETWEEN ANCIENT IDENTITIES AND NEW DEVELOPMENT MODELS

ABSTRACT

The European Network of Village Tourism is a new product based on the identity of traditional villages, valuing and upgrading their heritage, in direct contact with their inhabitants and the environment that surrounds them.

Through this project, supported by financing from the Interreg III C programme, the Portuguese region of The Alentejo, Lapland in Finland, the Italian region of Trentino, the region of Arad in Romania, and the Polish region of Lomza have taken responsibility in their areas for the promotion of Village Tourism and Tourism of the Imagination as components of their tourism activity.

This Network offers you discovery tourism, a search for myth and for things of the imagination; the signs wait to be discovered in these ancestral regions.

The imaginary is a set of representations aroused from the material and nonmaterial culture linked to a defined social and natural environment.

Material culture means architectural and natural heritage, handicraft and gastronomy.

Nonmaterial culture means legends, story-tales, popular belief; those are expressed by rites and traditions.

Imaginary Tourism is the discovery of a territory through a narrative setting-up of both nonmaterial and material culture.

The touristic activities of this project are being developed under the concept of the Imaginary Tourism. Under this unifier element it will be possible to communicate to the market, not only to the target but also with the view of reaching different targets, using a coherent language, a strong image of every regional brand.

KEY WORDS

1. Tourism
2. Popular culture
3. Villages
4. Sustainability
5. Women

INTRODUCTION

The idea of creating an European Network of Village Tourism appeared in 1999 during the execution of "The Learning Sustainability" project, developed in the frame of the European Initiative Recite II. Considering the importance that the growth of the tourist sector could have for the growth of the involved rural communities and also, and essentially, for the European social development, a second phase of the project European Network of Village Tourism was designed on the year of 2002. To reach this aim, a partnership was set up by five regions located in European Marginal Areas, namely Alentejo in Portugal, Arad in Romania, Lapland in Finland, Lomza in Poland and Trentino in Italy.

This partnership has presented an application form in January 2003 to the European Initiative programme Interreg III C South, which was approved on June of the same year. As a result, a new period was born for this project idea that will last until the end of 2006 and with the basis that has been created in meanwhile will continue afterwards.

The European Network of Village Tourism, coordinated by the Évora Tourism Region, has been developed by a partnership composed by the University of Évora and the Regional Direction of Agriculture of Alentejo, in Portugal, the Centre of Alpine Ecology and Consortium BIM Brenta in Italy, the Regional Development and Innovation Services at the University of Lapland, in Finland, the Social Action Direction of the Municipality of Arad in Romania and the Municipality of Zbójna in Poland.

The overall objective of the European Network of Village Tourism is to promote sustainable development by using tourism as a catalyst instrument for integration and sustainability, by promoting tourism development in the involved villages and the regions participating, in accordance with the concept of Village Tourism and Imaginary Tourism, and by creating a sustainable structure for European cooperation.

The activities of the project seek the development of Village Tourism and Imaginary Tourism concepts, as part of the tourism activities in the involved regions.

Each involved region has its own thematic element under the same concept, giving to the Network a diversified range of choices for the target market. Witchcraft for Trentino; megalitism for Alentejo; shamanism for Lapland; legends for Arad and Lomza: since the past times, these cultural elements are linked with the idea and concept of imaginary, of magic places, full of a cosmic force able to transmit feelings and to make the imaginary flow. The use of this powerful mental linkage to this important cultural heritage will contribute to the promotion of the other products, also communicating them as a magical element, something which can make the tourist “dream” for taste and try it. These elements are the basis to create and develop a range of activities, like seminars, events, nature trails, festivals, workshops and others.

The development activities of the project have had, as initial objectives, the preparation of a guidance document for deepening the concept of Village Tourism, with its base in what will be developed and characterized as the criteria for the selection of villages, the Village Plans for each integrated village and a Strategic Plan for the development of the Network, which will define the statutory framework, and the model for management and for financing, as well as providing publicity and promotional strategies. Along with these studies an analysis of the profiles of the potential market of this product has been carried out, not only in the villages and regions involved but comparing with other experiences throughout Europe. These documents are the basis not only for the setting up of the Network, but also for giving direction to informational and promotional activities, as well as the activities related to training and professional qualification.

At the same time, the work of stimulating and energizing the Network has been developed throughout 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006, and based on meetings involving representations from all of the partners. The meetings have taken place in each of the regions participating in the project. The meetings have had a range of objectives: coordination, and giving direction to the global project; learning about and exchange experiences; seminars to deal with specific questions within the framework of the processes involved in the local development of partners. In addition, these meetings are a means to enable the guidance documents to be discussed and evaluated, and to prepare the organisational of the regional networks, as well as promotional and communicational activities, and action directed towards professional qualifications.

The informational work directed inside the Network started with the setting up of a website reachable through this address: www.euronet-village.com.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Culture

It's culture that determinates the belonging to human gender. This concept is still far to be well defined, because it tries to describe something that is immaterial, faint, sometimes elusive and uncatchable but that not only changes but forges, literally, everything around us; it even decides what we can distinguish with our eyes, touch with our hands, understand with our brain. It's culture to cause perception, and not the contrary. Tylor gave in 1871 such a definition of culture: "that complex ensemble that includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, uses, right, customs as well as any technique or use acquired in society from mankind". In other words, the universe within which persons move, predicaments within which we are able to think, models that move our hands when working, the way to feel emotions, to express feelings, to perceive nature, to conceive God, together with the modes of communicate all these. A basic character of culture is the transmission of memory from each generation to the following. Without communication, without transmission of memory, there is not culture.

The symbolic frame of reference

A mountain, without people living on it and drawing its livelihood from its slopes, would be just a pile of rocks and stones, geographically describable for its position on earth's crust and its geology. If we would to take the matter further, we could individualize it from its fauna and flora. Finished. For whom lives there, on the contrary, it means the centuries ancestors employed to terrace its sides and bring it under cultivation; means paths and trails traced all long the years; means home, familiar landscape. For mountaineer peoples, the concept of "dwelling" is not delimited to the house, it includes the mountains around. And also includes the chapel they built on the top, underground, still the archaic, prehistoric place of worship dedicated to the mother mountain, whose memory was not lost because at the place of the matriarchal goddess there is the holy virgin, venerated in the same way by crossing the passes and meeting who lives in the other side, a pilgrimage that lasts from thousands years. Everyone was born there, tells "my mountains", investing them with strong symbolic and affective meanings, inaccessible to any else, for example to the sportsman, who only comes here in order to scale a face on free-climbing, and sees it just as a vertical surface to approach with technique and bravura. The symbolic frame of reference is the complex of the signification phenomena as shared and culture-characterizing social phenomena. This same culture, can (also) be depicted as a complex of practises and representations arranged into a symbolic order, into a hierarchy of significations that organizes and give sense to the world, making it accessible to whom lives in it within a singular configuration, peculiar to a social group living in a certain historic period. It means that is not possible to strip a community of the symbols that give value to their existence, under penalty of annihilation, identity obliteration, loose of cohabitation and mutual respect rules, and immense social problems. These are all things unfortunately happening every day on earth, causing wars, destructions, mass urban drifts, emigrations, conflicts between who leaves and who stays, between who's coming in and who's receiving. There is not a totally coherent symbolic frame of reference because it, forged about the slow times of mankind's history, maintains some earlier signification dating from more previous times referring to today's needs, and others that also could contradict each other, could come from other places or have a different cultural derivation, and so on. We can assert indeed that the complex of the significations maintains a minimum order: it consists of a series of rules composing a code of significations. This code allows anyone to understand the value of things, to interpretate the conscious and unconscious system of collective representations in a society, to communicate within and outside it.

A formalized, represented, lived reality: the complexity

There is not a perception of reality if not within a cultural model; there is not a sense in human actions if they are not previously filled with a signification and reinterpreted within a thinking framework. Without a code, a form, is not even possible to sense reality: Alps, perceived as “montes horribles” from city people, were not even depicted in paintings until Dürer; mountain towns were portrayed with a plate, reassuring background: they denied to mountains the right to exist. If we are not used to see anything, we don't look at it, its image does not reach the brain, it is not perceived and we think it does not exist.

For example, to most of collecting and hunting tribes, but also to many alp or Mediterranean shepherd's communities, feeding grounds for wild animals to hunt or for domestic ones to care is a common property, they get a sacral value and is not possible neither to buy nor to sell them. Therefore, they must be maintained at best conditions in order to transmit them to future generations. There are actions that are simply not thinkable, so they are not possible as is not possible to represent or live them. The matter is different for people that sees the land as a profit source, a reason to invest: so they can not only engross it by enclosing it and expelling its inhabitants, but they also can scot-free build on it sky resorts, drill it to draw oil, overbuild it in order to fill it with second-houses “view” style.

For many decades, peasants' societies were considered as “simple civilizations”. Actually, it is a totally wrong vision. In alp rural communities, associations where people takes part are many, from the parish to the civil defence, the fire brigade, the voluntary work, the religious congregations, the Alpines, the band, and so on. The same individual often belongs to several institutions, and plays out various roles according to situations, differently from the city, where people more rarely belongs to a structured group and runs collective activities and one's social life is reduced to family, bar and some rare event. Then comes the question: “who runs a more complex life”?

Actually, each culture is complex and multifarious at the same degree, including itself and its contrary. Such as any human group is also get interested in things that, without a refined work of cultural decoding, are impossible to perceive. The use of more or less abstract terms is not depending from a more or less developed intellectual capacity, but coincides with a more lively attention towards reality's qualities, towards the differentiations that is possible to bring in. This aspiration to an objective knowledge (Inuit populations use scores of words to designate snow, they are more specific than any glaciologist; the same happens among Tuaregs when they speak about sand) represents one of the less considerate thinking sides referring to “simple” societies members. If we accomplish a deep analysis, we discover that, in both types of civilization, the universe is matter of thinking at least in so far as it is a mean to satisfy needs.

Selection in acculturation processes

Cultural anthropologists found out that in acculturation processes, when two groups come to relate each other, they do not simply adopt a whole cultural frame, but they rather choose some ambits they import and assimilate as soon, other ambits that need more time to do that, and others that would never do. This selection is, of course, more limited in conditions of domination and violence, but it exists always and anyhow. In other words, even under strong imposition conditions (the colonisation; an invasion where an ethnic group tries to annihilate another; a theocracy that wants to eliminate the indigenous religion) the dominated, the acculturated ones, succeed in maintaining some characteristic of their original civilization, while renouncing to others, less important, in order “to please” dominators. For example, in spite of christianisation and witch-hunting, that imposed a

public abjuration of old beliefs and the conversion to the new credence by a hail of stakes, almost everywhere in the country, where a medical service did not exist, they maintained the archaic healing rites, perhaps considered the most basic and necessary manifestation of old animist belief and the sacred places, turned into catholic churches but still maintaining their apotropaic task towards nature's spirits, in the guise of saints or devils according to needs.

When an acculturation process is going on, any element imported from outside is not accepted as it is in its originating society: the accepting community reworks them, "digests" them and makes a re-interpretation following its capacity of understanding and representation, arranges them by accrediting different meanings, new values corresponding to its own needs and cultural frames. Re-interpretation, therefore, does not duplicate identical cultural modules and does not reopen traditional values: it is a mix between the two actions, and it is the frame where usually happen many cultural changes, if not most of them. The mix between new cultural features with traditional forms generates innovations, original, peculiar, dynamic cultural frameworks that can rescue from dying of asphyxiation old cultures, no more in condition to fit to changing times, and works as a "cultural tonics". On the other hand, re-interpretation can also become a resistance act against a dominant power that tries to impose an alien, far and not wanted, not understood civilization.

Let's take popular culture in Italy and one of its most peculiar expressions: the dialect. Since our country was unified, about one century and half ago, the state made unbelievable efforts to impose, through the school, an unique language, even going until veritable terror acts towards students and their parents, seen as ignorant and inferior ones because they could not express themselves in a correct Italian tongue. And anyways, in a matter of few decennials Italy was upgraded to European levels, and the various tribes that lived in the peninsula were able to understand each other. Of course, with the ample repressive means they used and the shame that one felt, in a "cultivated" milieu if caught to express himself in vernacular, for many years that immense linguistic richness seemed irretrievably disappearing, with great disappointment of nostalgic people who wrote savant articles filled of yearning for good old days (that will never come back) and conferring the linguistic death liability to "foreign contaminations".

Actually, since about twenty years dialect has renewed among viable communities, becoming simpler and deleting words that weren't no more used, because daily life has changed and working place is no more the country but the office, and absorbed Italian and foreign words useful to design professional ambits that did not exist before (for example, terms about informatics). When a dialect disappeared, the social group that spoke it is extinguished it was for quite different reasons that foreign influences (abandonment, loose of identity, economic crisis, immigration). We found out in this way that dialect is a lot more used today than twenty years ago, even from young people.. And bands are born that use popular languages to compose songs they sing in a rock style (with purists' great shock), and they climbed the charts even reaching the top. Unlike old times, popular music has mixed up with Afro, Reggae, Rock and New Wave rhythms; from folkloric music has become ethnic, and even who does not at all understands what it says listens to it, in the same way that happened before with overseas bands... Here's a typical cultural re-interpretation process, that we would easily find again in many others social sectors.

New and old identities: a dialectical relationship

The issue of identity, of traditions' repossession , of recovering the pride of belonging (to a territory, to an ethnic group, to a linguistic minority) is striking unexpected aftermaths: a demand for civilian commitment, to take responsibility for coming out from marginality, to

invent development models not aimed to delete the cultural inheritance from ancestors in the name of a maybe not desired progress but that, on the contrary, start from it to build a new existence. In this way, anthropology is no more only the research run in university ambits, but also that one that's going on in ethno-anthropological worships that are born every day in small towns, out from these milieus until now devolved to ethnographic investigations. Not only that: many other subjects are carrying out, perhaps even not realizing it, tasks that were until now reserved to anthropologists; from tourist operators interested to a cultural exploitation of folklore to environment protection associations, to people who cares about sustainable development in far from communication and capital fluxes areas; to advertisers, doctors, botanists, zoologists, economists, European Union operators, feminists, anti-global militants, social workers...

The more and more burning demand imposes to use the hoarded knowledges in view of a practical use that will lead not just to a better understanding of the already existing but also, and especially, to change the situation. A contribution is strongly claimed to work out a new cultural context's basis, that will consider the complexity. The concept of *glocal* is now taking root even in anthropology: a neologism that, while reaffirming the importance of a local approach, doesn't deny, but instead promotes a common belonging – each one in its rich difference – to human gender, to earth planet, consisting in communication, exchange, constructive comparison, founded on respect and difference's valorisation. It's the old anthropological project, to rebuild unity through differences' settlement, that doesn't give up to propose itself to anyone dares to accept the challenge.

In Europe peasant people is tooth and nail resisting (they are 6% of total population) endangered by extinction not so much due to agriculture's mechanization than to the surrounding cultural disdain, submitted to an identity crisis that they perhaps never had to face before. Minority ethnics, that on a certain moment in their history were swallowed by stronger cultures risk to loose the sense of their permanency on a dispossessed territory are burning away without succeeding, or willing, to get integrated. Since some years, and not everywhere, in different ways, respective central governments admitted, on paper, their right to exist. But, in the while, things became more complex. For a great deal of mountain people got in touch with global, metropolitan culture, they became hybridised, and it's often difficult for them to find out and work out a new dimension of their own, because cultural shock was too sudden, they live at the border of social system, and seem not to exist in cultural terms.

To claim that they come back to the origin is the dream of many anthropologists, of most tourists, of the ubiquitous nostalgic people (who enjoy modernity's comforts). But that's anti-historical, hypocritical, worthless. In their attempts to take part in dominating social systems, minority groups have different reactions, they can try to deny their own culture and to pass into the majority community, without putting in any claim, ashamed perhaps of their origin; they can accept a minority status, trying to reduce its disadvantages, and to obtain assistance through aids and financings, or they can choose to put in evidence their diversity, using their identity to develop new positions and models to organize activities in those sectors that didn't exist inside the community before, or that weren't developed enough to support an external comparison. In spite of alarm cries, surely well-founded, many populations succeeded in taking the third way, proving to the West that there's not only a way to progress.

For popular culture admirably resists to dominating civilization and often succeeds in imposing itself, through the widening of the fruition ambit of some "folkloric products". Even if sometimes this operation becomes a traditional wealth's subtraction, partially from its protagonists and historical keepers, the subordinate classes or minority populations' members, culture can, at the same time, to preserve and maintain itself while changing. This process is put in evidence into tourist purpose manipulation of rites, ceremonies,

music and customs, that “purist” anthropologists abominate so much, or into religious syncretism, that leads many respectable ladies to follow “alternative” medicine practises, to look for trance, to try to contact “spirits”, and what to say, then, about old cults renaissance, about “old believers” return, about the revaluation of such figures like shamans and healers?

This is a new, difficult enquiry field, extremely interesting to the anthropologists who can work not just as powerless witnesses of the regression and extinction of thousands years-old cultures, but like development agents for the formation and the self-consciousness of these ethnic groups that want to find their own existence (and resistance) way.

RESEARCH METHOD

Methodology for sustainable development: action-research

During our fieldwork, we have employed the action-research technique, consisting in data-collection aimed at the development of a given region, through the involvement of its population. The goal is eminently practical: the actors involved in an action-research study are both the researchers and the informants. The definition of the problem comes at a later stage, when researchers and the community come together to discuss the relevant information and decide in concert what should be done next.

The observation of the social context is vital. “context” is an expression which comes from the Latin verb “con-tessere”, meaning “to weave together” and, by extension, “fabric.” Specifically, “context” includes all the elements that define the identity of a group, a set of complex economic, social, cultural, human, religious, mythical, and archetypal relations that constitute a social milieu. This is the key-scenario for every development plan. It must consider both economic and socio-cultural dimensions and must be empirically tested, by trial and error. This is what makes it flexible: it varies as the context changes, for there are no universally applicable, pre-packaged solutions. Needless to say, theory is important, since no intervention can be built on a foundation lacking an accurate theoretical framework and a reasonable amount of information.

Two methodological assumptions underpin this approach:

1. The gradual emancipation of the social sciences from positivism and the theoretical models of the hard sciences, with their irrefutable results and their scientific reliability based on universal laws. Diversity of human behaviour generates a variety of situations and solutions even when the context is ostensibly the same: it is this complexity that a positivistic approach cannot fully grasp;
2. Expertise must be applied. Expertise is only valuable when it is of some use.

Guidelines

For our action-research we have followed the EU preferential guidelines for 2002-2005. The proposed criteria are as follows:

- Capacity of the project designers to make it suit the needs of the community;
- Bottom-up approach at every stage;
- Broad participation in planning and execution;
- Increased equal opportunities, especially for women, through mainstreaming and empowerment throughout the design and implementation of the project; involvement and economic, social and cultural growth of disadvantaged areas;

- Identification and involvement of end-users, by informal as well as direct contact
- Project sustainability.

RESULTS

Tradition and Modernity

It's actually worthless, and a methodological mistake to surrender to nostalgia. Also because it can happen to face refusal reactions from the guest community, which is well acquainted with the improvement about health care, feeding, housing and school that industrial civilization brought along it, and doesn't see for which reason they should renounce to these advantages.

Many ethnic groups well took the hint, and before a demand (the wild culture), they developed a tourist offer where they sell to visitors what they have: their traditions, precisely. That succeeded in that way to get preserved, to get adapted to new demands, to evolve. The African Dogons described by Marcel Griaule in the 1930's understood that what the tourists are looking for, is still the ethnic group the great anthropologist described: despite of western anthropologists reproof, who after all would hope that the Dogons would effectively continue to live like seventy years ago, they clear-headedly developed a (low environmental cost) economy, precisely based on their traditional legacy. Other groups could really fine use sophisticated technological means: in Lapland, who first and better learnt to use snowcats, cell phones, Internet links were the Sami, the reindeer shepherds who were considered until that moment as backward and little intelligent people. But there's also who said that Sami culture is on its extinction way now, because "they use the snowcats to go tend the animals, and after they come back home to sleep". Like to say: instead of spending the night with temperatures that can reach 50 centigrade subzero, they found a system to improve their life quality.

The planet is full of similar cases; to get scandalised is misplaced, anthropologically (and politically) incorrect.

Better, we must acknowledge the occurring changes and assess them also for the positive things they brought to people: if a change is socially accepted, it's because it can give something in return.

It was through empiric research, run up especially in Africa, that Balandier and other dynamic anthropology supporter contributed to re-discuss a dualistic vision opposing tradition and modernity, which, faced to concrete reality's test, revealed to be simplistic and reductive. Today's growing globalisation has made extremely current again those studies, as well as anthropologists' work, because they can contribute to identify and decode the complex influences and cultural changes through which every society (and no more just traditional cultures) must face. Because globalisation, while perceived at a mass level almost only as a de-structuring phenomenon, that is devouring and destroying the ancient value framework, allows to find out, the direct opposite on the field.

Like some of them, of course, would disappear, some other traditions take new life, become current again, restart to be practised, become again a collective self-identifying symbols. Actually, as Hobsbawm already proved, tradition is not a cultural matter, is not something already existing inside the community: it's a custom, originating by material or immaterial needs (like the internal cohesion), that's building up in time, that changes according to the historical age, and that, when needed, can even be produced out of thin air.

For this reason, we must not see the tradition as something belonging to the past: actually, it interjects, and heavily, in present's definition. It contributes to realize new social and cultural mixes. It fixes events' perception. Despite conservative efforts, thus, the

relationship between tradition and modernity is not a dichotomic, but dialectic one. The consequence is the worthlessness of separating and stigmatization of “false” and “authentic”: they are from the beginning non-existent categories. We should ask ourselves, instead, which function will it fulfil, which need would it satisfy a tradition in time, in space, in studied community’s mind and sensitiveness, or in the community where we act as development agents. In some situation, the anthropologist can even be requested to rebuild, re-valorise and modernize archaic rites or tales: in a few words, to re-build or re-invent some tradition into a logic way, i.e. plausible. This demand can emerge due to various reasons: to recompose a community around a shared symbol, avoiding abandonment; to create tourist attractions and give origin to some identifying economic forms, and so on. Refusals, pruderies and academic purisms in the name of an alleged or desired authenticity are, at least, counter-productive: only the new tradition’s reception, or not, will tell us if it was the worth to invent it.

The Reconstruction of the Memory

A community’s memory is strictly connected with its identity: by recovering its own history the collectivity can give a sense to its past, but to its present time too, because it can decode its motives. But it succeeds also in obtaining these self-appreciation increasing values that can make it strong and compact, that can give it back the pleasure of participation, which can help it in valorising its culture, in making a project for an autonomous future: in this field, the anthropologist’s work can become a primary one. In fact, there’s now more than one alp village that hired an ethnologist as a permanent development advisor.

The logic behind the research and collective historical memory reconstruction work is this: we’re facing human groups that, due to different reasons levels, are into a difficult, or even extreme situation, that should find in itself (with some operator’s help) the necessary means to get moving to a renaissance road, or they risk a short term extinction. The renaissance must happen by recovering the belonging, the community sense, the solidarity ties proud, which were destroyed long the decennial of moral and cultural abandonment: in a few words: by giving back a sense in forming a life and an existence precisely in that place. We thought to recover first the autochthon culture, history and past: only by re-finding a common memory we can project a future together. And this was the precise request from most inhabitants of the settlements that got moving long this road: they were well conscious themselves that the production means’ repossession could only work through the resumption of cultural means of subsistence and planning connected to the territory chosen to live in.

To start this sort of intervention, it needs to identify the historical, cultural, social and economic ties that linked men to the environment where they live to take that cultural legacy that settled long the centuries in the unconscious, and constitutes now a certain zone population’s public imagination and contributes to shape the customer’s esthetical and using demands that the tourist operator must fulfil. It’s necessary to identify the connections preserved by the urban texture with the green areas that, especially in regions strictly tied to the environment, often represent a historical centres’ inhabitants integral feature both by the physical than by the “mind’s horizon’s” side. These ties must be strengthened and valorised not only for esthetical reasons, but also to improve life’s quality; it’s then necessary to find out and revalorise the mythic and legendary legacy that gives a sense, a meaning and an affective value to a precise territory. To link the “tales” to precise sites that people can identify, so as to trigger again that creativity’s and inventiveness’ developing process, which originates by the tale to pass through the invention, ending with the myth’s re-elaboration, which the diffusion of a “scientific” culture

interrupted, and that brought to a really severe human impoverishment, even before than a poetic and cultural one, of the tradition populations.

In this work with all the methodological features – long-lasting, on-field, close contact with people, available data's analysis, information's return to the source, ethnologist's cultural estrangement...-, and that moves from the anthropological research, a quite good contribution can come by schools' involvement through students and teachers, to work in gathering data, in re-discovering, mapping and re-valorizing the artistic, cultural, environmental, mythic and social legacy of the studied area. They could become, at their turn, the new generation anthropologists, what's already happened in some occasion.

The Development's Anthropology

The proposition of an own identity civilization, duly "revised" so as becoming understandable to the foreigner, and able to give the illusion of authenticity and genuineness (there's nothing more built-up, professional and sophisticated, than organizing a cultural-immaterial wealth tourism!), it can also become an unescapable choice for these regions having anything else, or settled off great people and capital streams.

To create development starting from popular culture, it can be decisive to exploit, in tourist terms but not only, the public imagination sphere, whose remaining many civilizations hide below centuries of christianisation. Everywhere in Europe, as well as in America and other world's regions, the Inquisition and the missionaries did a fine job to destroy identities, but left in people regret and yearning for something they couldn't know, nor choose; for a closer to men religion, for divinities with whom was possible to talk, for fantastic beings to evocate, for a more free and less repressive moral, and for an intact nature. It's matter of re-discovering archaic religious forms, which often are still alive and kicking indeed, disguised as more orthodox ceremonies, of linking them with the artistic, traditional, musical legacy, of going in search of the archetypal memory, that is essentially a place's *genius loci*. It's matter of organizing events in which the visitor can fell as being part of this research work and of all the expressions that make the ancient spirituality revive, the feast's sense, the archaic legacy we bring, without knowing it, along us.

To start an action of this sort, it needs a serious and deepened research work did by professionals, and not improvised *en amateur*. There's nothing worst than a tourist who feels he's being mocked; further, the culture institutions working in the region will criticize you, and the same will do the so-called local intellectuals' association aiming to protect their own cultural identity, and not to "sell it off on the market". The specialists' contribution is necessary because the anthropological research must be linked with the various producing sectors: handcraft, gastronomy, hospitality, itineraries, events' ideation and organization, to find out and have access to founding. It needs year of working and taking it hard, having clear in mind the objective, being able to obtain local administrations' approbation, making the population and the living social body actively take part to the evolution process, making them feel and become the protagonists and the interpreters of their own destiny. It needs a high level permanent education for all the development actors: administers, operators, entrepreneurs, young people wanting to have a future without leaving the village, school teachers, women organizing bed and breakfast tourism but also, in general, interested areas' residents and, of course, the researchers, who can even be used to an academic job, but who often consider commitments of this sort as less important and meaningful for the career and the "scientific milieu".

A participation must be developed, where agents will not be "represented" but where they succeed in taking in their hands their own responsibilities and thus their lives, their future and their destiny. This achievement can be obtained only through the self-consciousness

and the culture promotion, which must undertake an ethnographic landmark. Once, there weren't communication problems: the border between public and private was very vague, and everything was made together. That surely implied some disadvantage: social judgment was very hard on transgressors. In exchange, loneliness was almost unknown and solidarity, even if necessary, represented a social value. Nowadays, instead, to meet each other has become a problem: privacy's widening and strengthening fatally lowered life's quality, and each of us lives enshrined in his/her shell, "safe" inside home's walls. Common initiatives, shared ideas don't exist anymore: indifferentism and disinterest are diffused feelings. Paradoxically, this situation makes ever more difficult any improvement and development action that, by force of circumstances, must be shared; and there can be no sharing without discussion, without continuous interpersonal relationship, without exchange between generations, without young people's participation. It's a complex and in-the-round operation, demanding continued and joined efforts from all the involved parts, that can trigger the emerging of latent conflicts and demands for their composition: a pre-existing cultural frames' breaking action, that must turn the anthropological research's professionals into territorial valorization's agents, giving them an orientation towards a local culture's recovery and mixing up public body's, tourist and economic operators', groups and associations', common people's and, why not? – tourists' efforts too, not seen as "culture thieves" but as renewing instances bringers, which can even include some positive element.

COCLUSIONS

THE CULTURAL AND MAGIC TOURISM IN THE ALPS

Us living and working there, we're not used to consider the Alps as an art tourism's destination, because the only resources until now exploited are the environmental and sportive ones. It's totally wrong and even self-injuring, for the alpine range was a human settlement place since prehistoric age and, until the Renaissance, between the economically and culturally richest regions in Europe. That age's artistic witnesses are many and well-preserved, both at a gentlemen's and religious architecture level, than at a spontaneous and popular architecture level.

Not to mention the cultural legacy, consisting of feasts and traditions, gastronomy and handcrafts, agricultural landscapes, myths, legends, music, customs, ethnical and linguistic minorities, all things that never had a market quotation but, in the tourist and self-identifying imagination, are a real unexploited capital, which the alpine range was able to preserve through centuries. The shamanic legacy the mountain and forest civilization left, further, is still quite alive in tradition and, since the Church loosened the social control's vicelike grip and the ancient animist religion's denigration, residents and tourist started to identify the witches with the *genius loci* par excellence. The talisman symbols protecting the wild nature but also men's homes, so well that the witch-shaped puppets are among the best seller souvenirs, and the halls where there's a conference about are always filled with guests, as well as with resident people, eager to listen at their "history's tales".

This process was advantaged because there are, in the alpine territory, Celtic originating prehistoric art witnesses directly referring to the archaic culture: *dolmens*, *menhir*, *cromlechs* that the vast public can immediately identify and interpret. And then there's the permanence, under a christian form, of divinities and rites connected to the previous civilization. In this case, the understanding is not so easy, but it must be mediated with a specialist's explanation, conceived in sort to involve tourists and residents.

Trusting the root appeal, several alp range's tourist resorts decided to base their promotion and marketing and shared formation and cultural growth strategies to the magic and

imaginative world, to give new value and valorising the popular culture. They try, as far as possible, to network exchanging their experiences, growing up a fan public who gets in touch communicating each other the yearly scheduled manifestations even on autonomous initiative, calling each other by phone and exchanging information, allowing in this way a good saving on adverts costs.

For sure, to move long this way, it needs investment: a lot of investment in culture.

The theme of magic as a popular culture's expression is charming and very appealing to tourist operators: just think to Scotland and Ireland, which organize ghost tours to the Loch Ness with its famous monster, to the Alto Adige's castles where they organize weekends to discover the head-less killer, to the fortune they had the "witches' villages" in the Spanish Pyrenees, to the role-players meetings... There is, between others, the opportunity of joining the "magic" places into a net, such as making possible to pack an integrated offering, and getting in relationship for common cultural and tourist initiatives. Further, when you "sell" a place, you are also offering the gastronomy, the handcrafts, the environment, the feasts, and the historical and architectural witnesses. Magic can catalyze all an interests' range, of opportunities to make an integrated tourism within a sustainable development context, by recovering one's own identity, historical, architectural, ecological, agricultural and so on legacy.

The communication about events of this sort, besides the classic advertising's channels, must be able to exploit, in a far more producing way than in the past, the tourists' "pass it on", the nets, the specialized magazines, the intellectuals working in this sector, whoever in general interested in it, also trying to put them in communication each other, so as to multiply promotion's potentials.