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Cultural heritage and organizing capacity: a case study of the town of Allariz, North-Western Spain

Laima Nomeikaite

University of Bergen, Norway

laima.nomeikaite@hotmail.com

Cultural heritage resources are increasingly being recognized as a development tool for local societies that are facing socio-economic difficulties. Despite the opportunities that cultural heritage resources can bring to local development, rapid changes taking place in the global environment are making it difficult for many rural and urban areas to produce and reproduce a culture economy. Recent organizing capacity theories assume that successful socio-economic revitalization and the achievement of sustainable development depend on organizational capacity. Based on a theoretical model of organizing capacity, the aim of this paper is to analyse how local actors can use cultural heritage resources as a strategy for socio-economic revitalization to sustain local development, based on the experience of the town of Allariz. This small town represents a unique example of how it is possible to revitalize a local economy by focusing on cultural heritage resources, with the involvement of local actors (such as local politicians, voluntary community groups, and locally-based experts). The critical factors behind this success and the sustainable outcomes of local development strategies were the judicious use of organizing capacity tools such as vision, strategy, leadership, societal and political support, and strategic networks. The conclusion this paper seeks to draw is that organizing capacity tools are required to successfully and sustainably develop a culture economy, and to achieve a competitive advantage in the global market.

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Introduction

Globalization in terms of time- space compression (Harvey, 1989) has resulted in greater mobility of capital, investment, information and people, leading to the fundamental changes in economic, social, cultural and political spheres in rural and urban areas of Europe. One of these changes is rural restructuring: that is, the shift from a manufacturing, agrarian economy to a service economy in rural areas of Europe. This shift can be attributed to increased global competition and political liberalization, which have led to the polarization of rural areas. Some have faced the decline of the primary sector, out-migration and environmental degradation: in rural and urban areas that are experiencing economic difficulties, cultural heritage resources are increasingly being recognized as a tool for development (Loulanski, 2006a), with particular attention being paid to tourism. The increasing spatial mobility of tourists and the growing demand for experiencing places of culture and heritage have led many rural and urban areas in Europe and elsewhere to use their rich resources as a strategy for promoting tourism in order to revitalize their socio-economic base (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004, Nel and Binns, 2002, Russo and Van Der Borg, 2002, Richards, 2000).

In spite of the opportunities that cultural heritage resources can offer for tourism or broader local development, many rural and urban areas experience difficulties when it comes to taking advantage of their potential resources and responding to global competition (Fonseca and Ramos, 2011, Sharpley, 2002, Ribeiro and Marques, 2002, Landorf, 2009). Russo et al. (2005) note the case of a number of marginalized areas that have seized the opportunity to develop tourism but have neglected the concept of sustainable use of their cultural heritage resources. A further limitation on the valorization of cultural

heritage for local development is imposed by a lack of expertise in the management and planning of cultural heritage resources (ibid.). Jansen-Verbeke (2007) makes the point that traditional patterns of supply and demand in cultural tourism are no longer adequate for the promotion of a cultural economy, due to rapidly changing global market segments.

There is general agreement among global organizations (UNESCO, 2002, 2004, ICOMOS, 1999) and other authors in the tourism and heritage fields of study (Aas et al., 2005, Getz and Jamal, 1994, Simpson, 2001, Selin, 1999) that partnership and collaboration among different stakeholders will create a framework for sustainable development, but despite that fact, this strategy has proved to be a difficult technique to realize in practice (Aas et al., 2005, Landorf, 2009, Hall, 1999, Wilson and Boyle, 2006). It is especially difficult to build a collaborative climate in outlying areas, where there is a common problem of a lack of communication between public and private actors, and a scarcity of expertise in heritage tourism planning (Fonseca and Ramos, 2011, Sharpley, 2002, Ribeiro and Marques, 2002). Landorf (2009) also identifies existence of this problem not only in the stakeholder collaboration approach, but also in the strategic planning processes of World Heritage Sites. Based on empirical evidence from six such sites in the U.K., she notes that gaps persist in the strategic planning approach, which still needs to be improved by the application of a more meticulous analysis for the design and implementation of tourism policy and a better integration of local communities in the process.

Van den Berg & Braun (1999) argue that local societies need to change their focus, and concentrate on organizing capacity, which is assumed to be the driving force behind successful socio-economic revitalization and an equally important tool for urban place marketing. Theories of organizing capacity have not inclusively focused on the cultural heritage resources, but rather on the general socio-economic revitalization of major metropolitan regions in Europe. They present empirical evidence that the successful design and implementation of a development policy depends to a great extent on organizational capacities such as vision and strategy, leadership, political support, societal support, strategic networks, and communication (Van den Berg et al., 2003). However, there has not been academic movement that incorporates all of these organizing capacity tools into a single theoretical approach of the valorization of cultural heritage resources for tourism or local development. According to Jansen-Verbeke (2007) and Russo (2001), the success of a valorization of cultural heritage resources for the promotion of tourism or local development relies on organizing capacity, but they do not explain in any detail how different organizing capacity tools might actually be used for this purpose.

This paper finds support for theories of organizing capacity (Van den Berg et al., 2003), and argues that sustainability and successful socio-economic revitalization in places with a strong cultural heritage can only be achieved if all the relevant organizing capacity tools are present and appropriately balanced. This research, which is based on a theoretical model of organizing capacity, studies the case of the town of Allariz, and seeks to analyse how local actors can use cultural heritage resources as a strategy for socio-economic revitalization to sustain local development. It has the further aim of stimulating practical and theoretical knowledge in relation to cultural heritage resources and organizing capacity.

The town of Allariz was selected for this study because it provides a clear insight into about how a theoretical perspective of cultural heritage resources might operate within an organizing capacity. Allariz had all the necessary organizing tools which, according to organizing capacity theorists Van den Berg & Braun (1999), make up the principal conditions for achieving a competitive advantage in the global market. The successful tools used for the local development of Allariz included a long-term vision of sustainable development on which its programmes and plans were built, a strong, dedicated, and entrepreneurial leader, a united community and professional strategic networks, and solid political and societal support.

The Allariz development project has won a number of strategic planning and urban management awards. In 1994, it received the European Urbanism Prize from the European Urban Planning Council for its "Project for the Integrated Recovery of the Historic Heritage of Allariz and its River". The Spanish Ministry of Development also gave Allariz an award with twelve other Spanish towns for the best sustainable development practice in 1996 and 2001, following the United Nations 'Habitat II' agenda.

The first section of this paper presents a theoretical model of organizing capacity, including the tools and processes of the valorization of cultural heritage for local development. The second part illustrates the methodology that was used. The following sections specifically illustrate the case of Allariz, including its historical context, policy process, successful organizing capacity tools, and achieved outcomes. Finally, conclusions are drawn.

The theoretical framework of organizing capacity

The aim of the theoretical model of organizing capacity is to illustrate the analytical tools for studying the valorization process of cultural heritage resources as a socio-economic revitalization strategy for local development. A particular theoretical model of organizing capacity has been developed for the purposes of this paper, based on standard theories (Van den Berg et al., 2003) and the literature on the cultural economy approach. For the purposes of this research, organizing capacity refers to *"the ability to enlist all actors involved and, with their help, to generate new ideas and to develop and implement a policy designed to respond to fundamental developments and create conditions for sustainable development"* (Van den Berg and Braun, 1999: 995). In other words, it is a capacity that deals with both the tangible

qualities of a heritage place, such as infrastructure, workforce, and locations, and its intangible qualities, such as safety, the quality of life, its image, and marketing.

In Figure 1, cultural heritage resources - or "culture" - are presented as a reorganizer of the economies on which policy processes are based. According to Ray (1999), when a local development strategy is undertaken, the local people start out from the discovery of their potential resources (which in this study are cultural heritage resources), which are then used to drive and define development. The most critical aspect for successful policy processes of a socio-economic revitalization of heritage places depends on organizing capacity tools: vision, strategy, leadership, political support, societal support, and strategic networks (Figure 1). These elements will be explained in detail below.

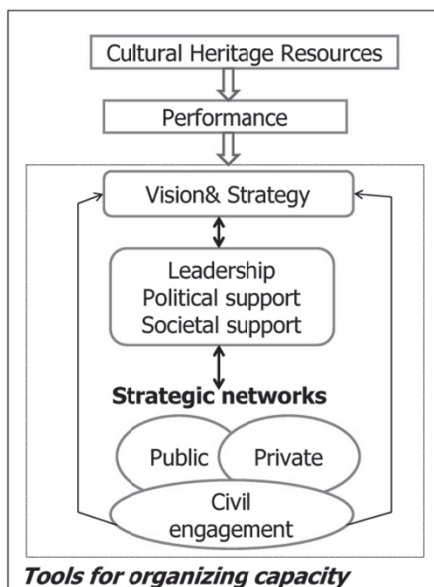


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of organizing capacity (source: adapted from Van den Berg, Van der Meer, and Pol 2003)

Vision and strategy. Based on the strength of cultural heritage resources and the weaknesses of a local area that make up a comprehensive view of the community, local actors develop a strategic vision. According to Van den Berg & Braun (1999), an integral vision and strategy is a crucial element of a development policy, because it includes all the spatial-economic and socio-cultural aspects of a place. They also state that an integral vision is important because it prevents uncertainty in policymaking and helps to develop concrete objectives, as well as to hold on to strategies, programmes, and projects. When local actors agree on a vision, it should be placed into a set of objectives for the separate aspects (Canzanelli, 2001). The objectives should be well analysed, and should fit into the broader vision and strategy (Kotler et al., 1999).

Leadership. A good leader is assumed to be a crucial pillar of successful local development (Van den Berg et al., 1997, Nel and McQuaid, 2001). The introduction of a development policy and its implementation and design require strong, dedicated leadership that steers the local community towards development actions. Leadership in this sense derives from the theoretical approach of the social entrepreneur linked to the concept of the charismatic leader. There is a special need in those areas that face socio-economic development problems for a style of leadership that embraces a range of entrepreneurial skills, such as financial capabilities, creativity in problem-solving and managing available resources, an ability to deal with risks and uncertainty, and the creation of collaborative local social capital (Purdue, 2001). Van den Berg & Braun (1999) state that leadership by a key person is crucial to monitoring the formation and coordination of strategic networks.

Political support. Political support from international, national, regional, and local government is an important element of organizing capacity, since the initiation, design, and implementation processes must rely on political and financial resources (Van den Berg et al., 2003). Political support also includes financial backing from a variety of donors or through international cooperation with the local government. The

preservation of a heritage and the management and improvement of physical infrastructures are costly activities, and financial support must usually be obtained for the realization of a comprehensive local development strategy (Canzaneli, 2001).

Societal support. In relation to cultural heritage management, the empowerment of local communities in the design and implementation process is assumed to be a precondition for the successful design and implementation of a development policy (Loulanski, 2006b). This is the case firstly because the community has knowledge of its cultural heritage resources: local people know the place, and they know what they want their future to be. Secondly, the involvement of local people suggests an opportunity for the protection of a heritage as well as for raising awareness of the importance of cultural heritage for the local society. This contributes towards preventing adverse socio-cultural influences, especially the possible loss of a sense of place and tradition. Finally, the empowerment of the community in decision-making processes regarding the preservation and management of a cultural heritage facilitates mutual trust between all the actors involved and strengthens social cohesion, thus helping to recover self-esteem and pride (Clark and Drury, 2000).

Strategic networks. "Networking between individuals involves knowledge sharing, building trust and developing shared rules and inter-subjective meaning" (Fløysand and Jakobsen, 2007: 212). Networks are about the exchange of knowledge, careful local community planning, and cultural heritage management, which require a combination of expertise and local knowledge. The various networks working in multiple fields need local private and public actors, voluntary community groups, training institutions, professional organizations, urban planners, and architects. The process of valorization of cultural heritage in local development strategies encompasses a wide range of areas, including the environment, the economy, and cultural and social parameters. In order to maintain a balance between these areas, the involvement of all the local actors and various experts is required in the decision-making processes in order to build a collaborative climate among the different stakeholders (Jansen-Verbeke, 2007).

The organizational structure of a local community also requires a high degree of innovation. In order to capture global trends and respond to global competition, local networks cannot be static; they need to keep changing and engage with global networks "*networks are not static and fixed in time and space, but constantly changing and multispatial*" (Fløysand and Jakobsen, 2011: 332). Jansen-Verbeke (2007) also makes the point that local places should alternate between local and extra-local networks and integrate a number of global demands, trends, and projects into the local place in order to produce and reproduce a cultural economy successfully.

Methodology

The research approach adopted for this work relies for the most part on qualitative methods. The research was concerned with the qualitative analysis of organizing capacity tools and the policy processes that surround cultural heritage for the purposes of the valorization of local economic development. The qualitative techniques used in this research were applied through three avenues: oral methods (26 semi-structured interviews), textual analysis (documents, photographs, maps, articles, and acts), and observation. The primary data on the context, policy processes, and organizing capacity tools of Allariz were derived mostly from the semi-structured interviews. Face to face, verbal interaction during the interview process provided insights into the complex behaviours, motivations, and opinions of the population, which in turn helped to underpin the theoretical model of organizing capacity. Certain information regarding historical background, policy design, and implementation was fact-specific. The information obtained through the semi-structured interviews was validated by an analysis of two principal documents - the Subsidiary Norms (Concello de Allariz, 1994) and (the Special Plan for the Historic Town of Allariz) (Concello de Allariz, 1995) - and by using various statistical data sources. I had used also observation method. Observational method was necessary to use to get additional information about the informants, documentary material and to broaden my understanding about the place. The fieldwork was carried out in Allariz between January 2 and February 17, 2010. Stakeholders¹ were identified by using the snowball sampling method. I interviewed public, private, and community stakeholders with ties to tourism, cultural heritage and local development areas and who had been directly involved in the socio-economic revitalization process.

Allariz: the context of its socio-economic revitalization

Allariz is a municipality in Ourense province, in the Autonomous Community of Galicia in North-Western Spain. It is 18 kilometres from the capital of Ourense, and the municipality has a surface area of 85.3 kilometres. The municipality is divided into sixteen parishes, with a total population in 2010 of 5,910. Half of the population resides in the town (Santiago). The river Arnoia, which is 87 kilometres in length, crosses the municipality from east to west.

The town was registered as an historic-artistic ensemble in 1971 because of the large variety of artistic architecture to be found there. The historic centre contains 596 historic buildings, of which 424 are listed as highly-protected buildings of architectural and historic interest (Concello de Allariz, 1994). Allariz has also a broad spectrum of ethnographic heritage, including linen factories, tanning factories, and windmills located along the river Arnoia. This ethnographic heritage, which has now been converted into

tourist products, is an indicator of the socio-economic activities on the banks of a river that played a significant part in the economy of Allariz, particularly until the 1960s. The town's cultural heritage has always had an important cultural, symbolic, and socio-economic role. One might say that the existence of the town itself, and its location and physical setting (such as the cultural identity of its people), is in fact closely linked to the river Arnoia (from personal interviews with all the local government sources, private actors and individual community members).

In the past, Allariz was not only an important centre of trade, but also a town of significant industrial weight. This increased during the 19th century with the development of the linen industry and leather tanneries. At the beginning of the 1900s, Allariz had more than fifty linen workshops. Linen was the main occupation that led to significant economic growth. The population grew to about 10,000 (Concello de Allariz, 1994). After the decline of the linen industry, the tanning industry reached its peak, and became the main economic activity until the 1960s. However, the leather industry collapsed in the 1960s when the deindustrialization process hit Allariz, just as in many small towns and rural areas in Galicia and Europe. The difficulties in adjusting to structural changes due to a low level of competitiveness in the industrial sector and the lack of economic diversification into other industries resulted in Allariz being trapped in a long-term socio-economic crisis. The majority of the active population was unemployed, and the unemployment rate increased. During the period between 1984 and 1988, the level of unemployment was at 41%, and in the two years that followed it reached 67% (Concello de Allariz, 1994). Emigration began right after the decline of the tanning industries. In the 1960s, the population was 9,241, but by 1981 it had decreased to 5,009 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2010), as people migrated to areas with better economic opportunities, such as the Basque country, Catalonia, and other parts of Europe.

The high level of out-migration also resulted in the abandonment and degradation of the historic quarter of the town. In 1989, only 878 people lived in the historic centre, and a quarter of the population was over 65. The protected historic and architectural buildings were at risk. Some were preserved, but the work carried out by outside experts led to considerable environmental damage to the historic quarter (Concello de Allariz, 1995). These problems were exacerbated by the political power structure, which was based on personal economic interests, and ignored the problems that Allariz was facing: *"no solutions were provided by the Municipality - only slamming doors - and there was no possibility of discussion"* (Personal interview with Cristina Cid Fernández, a local politician, who has been in government since 1991; 2 January 2010). The accumulation of the various economic and environmental problems and political power drove the local people to mobilize against the government. These social movements expanded when the river was contaminated and the government refused to clean it (Personal interviews with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010, and Mar Gil, a journalist and author of books on Allariz, 2 January 2010).

On 8 August 1989, the conflict between the mayor and the citizens exploded. The people took over the streets in protest, demanding that the river Arnoia be cleaned up. They locked themselves in the municipal offices for three months. The protesters' slogan was *"Save the River - Save the Future of Allariz"* (Personal interview with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010). This shows once again the significant symbolic importance of the river for the people of Allariz, which became the driver of future development in the town. The conflict lasted until the Mayor resigned on 21 November 1989 after many demonstrations and much conflict. A new local administration was formed immediately afterwards. Having experienced the oppression of the former authorities, the new government intended to create a more democratic Allariz, where every person could be in charge of his own resources and the future of the town (Personal interviews with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010; and Carmen Seara, a private actor from the culture and tourism sector, 25 January 2010). Together with the civil population, the new local government launched a strategic local development project for Allariz known as the "Subsidiary Norms". The recovery plan was based on the only remaining resource: cultural heritage and the proximity (18 kilometres) to the capital, Ourense (Personal interviews with Daniel Pino Vicente, an urban sociologist, who was responsible for drafting the Subsidiary Norms and PECHA, 8 February 2010; Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; and Anxo Quintana, who was in local government and Mayor of Allariz from 1989 until 1999, 4 February 2010).

The section that follows will present the policy process and organizing capacity tools in terms of the overall strategic local development plan of Allariz.

"Subsidiary Norms" - the integral strategic local development plan of Allariz

The new local development project for Allariz was launched soon after the resignation of the authoritarian government and Mayor in November 1989. Allariz town council needed to bring in an expert team (since the government lacked expertise internally) which would help frame and implement a comprehensive policy on spatial, economic, social, and environmental issues, while enabling the conversion of cultural heritage resources to facilitate recovery and conservation (Personal interviews with Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010; Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; and Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010). To this end, the town's administrators invited a technical team, Consultory Galega SL, Urban Sociologists, and architects of the strategic local development plan for the rural and urban areas of Allariz - the "Subsidiary Norms".

The main goal of the "Subsidiary Norms" strategic local development plan was to resolve the town's problems (unemployment, de-population, and environmental degradation) by establishing clear criteria for designing and implementing the objectives for urban planning and sustainable development (Concello de Allariz, 1994). With regard to cultural heritage resources, the main strategies proposed were to make the place attractive to live in by recovering its historical heritage resources in order to promote community service development, and to diversify the economic base through the maximum possible use of cultural heritage resources.

"What was done was to identify the values that Allariz possessed, which were its history and natural environment, and not only to convert the ecological, artistic, and aesthetic heritage values, but also to progress its economic values" (Personal interview with Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010)

As they were prepared with a high level of civil participation, the Subsidiary Norms were important for the construction of social capital (Personal interviews with Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010; Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010; and Carmen Seara, 25 January 2010). During their formation and the dissemination and discussion process, various meetings were arranged with twenty-two neighbourhood associations, builders and promoters working in Allariz. Two additional programmes were also developed for the implementation of the Subsidiary Norms. These were:

The PECHA plan (Special Plan for the Historic Town of Allariz), covered heritage management and interventions in the historic town centre and on the river. Allariz had been declared an historic artistic site as early as 1971 (Decree 1319/71 of the MEC dated 20 May 1971). The PECHA plan was designed and governed by heritage law, and respected the town's highly-valued artistic and historical heritage. PECHA had two main objectives: to preserve the town's historical and artistic heritage without sacrificing its authenticity, and to resolve the problems faced by the historic town by recovering its cultural heritage for cultural and socio-economic uses (Personal interviews with Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010; Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; and Francisco García Suárez, in local government since 1989, and Mayor of Allariz from 1999 to the present, 4 January 2010. Concello de Allariz, 1995a). In line with this vision for Allariz, the aim of PECHA was to make the town both a living and a tourist space. In order to achieve this goal, it emphasized the redesign of places of historic and artistic heritage, expanded open spaces, and guaranteed environmental quality, all of which would make the place attractive and serve the needs of both the current population and potential visitors (Personal interview with Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010). The PECHA plan involved the signing of agreements for the reactivation of the historical town with property owners in the town and with territorial and financial institutions.

PEDRA (The Arnoia River Ethnographic Park) was the name given to the programme for recovering elements of ethnographic heritage along the river. PEDRA is a group of five museums, three of which are located by the river – "O Muíño do Burato" (the old watermill), the "O Fiadeiro" linen museum (in the old linen factory) and the "Fábrica de Curtidos Familia Nogueiras" leather museum (in the former tannery). The aim of establishing these three museums was to recover and integrate ethnographic elements in Allariz which had been significant for the cultural and socio-economic areas of the town's history, and were closely linked to the River Arnoia: leather tanneries, water mills, and linen manufacturers (Personal interviews with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010; Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010; and Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010).

The two other museums are located in the town centre, and include a Doll Museum ("Museo Galego do Xogueté") and an Iconographic museum ("Aser Seara"). The former contains a collection of dolls, and is located in the socio-economic centre in the old 16th Century Courthouse. The latter contains a collection of sacred art, including a large variety of religious sculptures and pieces.

Organizing capacity tools

Vision

The vision for the Subsidiary Norms was developed with a high level of citizen participation. This vision was formulated as follows: "*Make Allariz a place to live, a place that has been recovered and converted into an economically active, environmentally sustainable, culturally rich, and socially conscious space. A place to live, with citizens, in the XXIst century*" (Concello de Allariz, 1994). The Allariz vision expresses the basic conditions of sustainable development, which comprises all the inter-dependent elements of Allariz's urban and rural development policies (social, cultural, environmental, and economic). In order to achieve a global vision for the town, the following objectives were proposed (Concello de Allariz, 1994):

- Improvement of the quality of life for residents.
- Prevention of population bleeding via immigration.
- Maintenance of multi-functionality and land use, and organization of new locations.
- Stimulation of economic growth and employment.
- Promotion of culture.
- Encouragement of participation by citizens.

- Protection of resources and natural areas and of the town's Historical and Artistic, Ethnographic and Cultural Heritage.

Local government and experts also worked to raise awareness of cultural heritage and inform the local population about sustainable development policies during the development of the global vision (Personal interview with Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010; Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010). This vision continues to be followed in Allariz today.

Leadership

The successful design and implementation of the "Subsidiary Norms" depended in large degree on the leadership capacities of the former Mayor, Anxo Quintana, who was in office from 1989 to 1999. Without such a strong leader, it would have been difficult to overcome the socio-economic crisis and implement the development project successfully (Personal interviews with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; Mar Gil, 2 January 2010; and José Javier Pérez Bouzas, a representative of Allariz's Chorenta Business Park, 20 January 2010). He had the required leadership abilities to invite all the necessary actors to Allariz, to monitor the coordination of strategic networks, and to take responsibility for direction, coordination, and planning. He also had a social entrepreneur's talent: a strong visionary mission to cope with risks and uncertainty, and clear objectives for solving problems and recruiting the whole community into action:

"A leader should have clear ideas and know what he wants. People say: 'I want the best', but this must be translated into things, into processes and priorities, and in this respect Anxo Quintana is unbelievable, a promoter of ideas. Anxo Quintana obtained all the necessary actors and steered them in the right direction of strategic networks." (Personal interview with Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010).

The leadership abilities of Anxo Quintana were significant for the purposes of building a social capital characterized by mutual trust between the local government and the community (Personal interviews with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; Mar Gil, 2 January 2010). This led to a collaborative climate, where the local people became involved in the decision-making process. It is also important to underline the fact that the mutual trust between leader and local community derived in some respects from the political conflict. Anxo Quintana played a protagonist's role in changing the political structure, which was undermining the socio-economic vibrancy of Allariz. Figure 2 shows Anxo Quintana with the Allariz community around him during the political conflict in 1989.



Figure 2. The leader and the community

Political support

The design and implementation of plans and projects relied on a local political will to tackle a variety of socio-economic problems. The new self-management project started from zero, as there were no economic or institutional resources left, and there was not even political support from the central or regional governments (Personal interviews with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010; José Javier Pérez Bouzas, 20 January, 2010; and Celestino Feijóo Rodríguez, a representative of the Municipal Urbanism Office of Allariz, 5 January 2010). The self-reliance strategy meant that it was the local government that had to find people and materials for managing services and

carrying out tasks. Local government played the predominant role in enhancing public participation and securing quality of life for its citizens. From the beginning, the local government's requirement was to develop the Regulations for Citizen Participation, in order to increase participation by local citizens in public works matters. This strategy became one of the most successful and significant elements for building social capital, which led to the successful design and implementation of the overall strategic local development plan of the Subsidiary Norms:

"The success of Allariz lies at the political level. The previous authorities had been poor. Even though they tried to make an effort, it did not work. Before, a Mayor or a Councillor came for an hour. When the new ones came in, they stayed busy for many hours; they created a common link, and created a beautiful town by the river" (Personal interview with José Javier Pérez Bouzas, 20 January 2010).

"People feel that the town belongs to them, people make the town better, they are proud of it, it is important because the Municipality has tried to keep people involved by being protagonists, with popular participation through change and evolution" (Personal interview with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010).

The actions taken by the local government underlined the strength of its entrepreneurial knowledge to attract the necessary expertise and establish companies, which helped to achieve sustainable development outcomes. On the initiative of its leader Anxo Quintana, various institutions such as the Municipal Urbanism Office of Allariz, the "O Portelo" Municipal Economic Promotion Centre, REATUR (the municipal tourism promotion company), Allarluz SA (the municipal biomass electricity company), and the environmental association Rudra SA were formed (Personal interviews with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010; Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010).

Local government also provided financial, organizational, and expert support for private actors. At the beginning of the overall strategic local development plan, few local private actors were willing to invest in or join the project in the economically declining area of Allariz (Personal interviews with Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010; Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; and Mar Gil, 2 January 2010). The Allariz municipal office saw the need to provide various kinds of support for private actors in order to attract people and inward investment, and so the Municipal Urbanism Office of Allariz was established for this purpose. This office not only carried out urbanism and planning roles, but also acted as social and technical support for the private actors, providing consultation on any matters regarding their property or offering expertise in investment matters (Interviews with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; Mar Gil, 2 January 2010; José Javier Pérez Bouzas, 20 January, 2010; and Celestino Feijóo Rodríguez, 5 January 2010). There was also very strong encouragement from the local authority to build strategic networks between private and public agencies. Private actors were motivated to collaborate in order to strengthen competitiveness in different sectors. Cristina Cid Fernández explains this process:

"We tried to group private actors into professional and neighbourhood associations that had not existed before; we now have five. The fact is that we almost forced them to form associations, and now we are managing them. We organize events throughout the year to fill the hotels and stimulate activities and employment. We are trying to change their mentality to get them to be the ones who get involved and work together".

It is also crucial to underline the need for financial support from external government institutions. In the case of Allariz, financial support from other institutions was important for the realization of its development objectives because the municipality of Allariz had no financial resources at the beginning of the project (Personal interviews with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; Francisco García Suárez, 4 January 2010; and Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010). Applying the philosophy expressed by the former Mayor Anxo Quintana "*We had to break from the notion that we would not get any money if we asked the institutions*" (Personal interview with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010), the local government developed financial networks with the Central Government, European Union institutions, and later with the Ourense Council and Xunta de Galicia to secure financial resources. They managed to obtain significant grants from these institutions, and were thereby able to achieve strategic plan objectives such as the recovery of natural and historical heritage.

Societal support

Strong societal support from the civil population was a major force behind the successful Allariz local development project. The local population was actively involved in the decision-making and implementation process from the outset. This solid social cohesion among all the local actors can be tied to the socio-economic and political problems that the people had faced previously, which led to the growth of a strong social capital; this created trust and a powerfully collaborative climate in which to work and change Allariz while preserving its cultural heritage resources:

"The development project of Allariz was born after conflict, which means there was a neighbourhood implication that makes everything possible. For example, in 1990, we said we needed 100 volunteers to organize a theatre, and 300 people showed up. Everyone here worked. From the beginning of the project, local committees were created in which people worked voluntarily; they enrolled in the group they wanted to join, and also started cleaning the streets, and even planning for culture and tourism. This started a network of participation that we could not find anywhere else" (Personal interview with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010).

Societal support was also secured because local government and experts were able to put forward rational proposals for how the policy process could be completed, and how the objectives could be implemented. Social support was also generated due to the democratic politics initiated by the new government, which guaranteed the rights of the local people, and encouraged their participation in the decision-making process (Personal interviews with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010; Daniel Pino Vicente, 8 February 2010).

The local population was not only the source of information in the realization of these goals. It was actively involved in the process with the guidance of experts. Community volunteer groups worked in the environmental, heritage management, social, and cultural fields. They not only contributed greatly to the implementation of the local development strategy, but also formed various cultural organizations, such as traditional ethnographic (including the Ox festival), food, and music festivals:

"Without a base of citizen involvement, it would be unfeasible to attempt a project such as this. Without majority and decisive support from the population, we could not have completed our urban planning policies. The population saw the problems and wanted to set in motion a series of actions related to environmental and urban development" (Personal interview with Bernardo Varela López, a representative of the Allariz local government, 15 January 2010)

"What makes Allariz unique is the project. There are other towns that have a very interesting historical heritage, but what is different here is the power of a group of people to change, rehabilitate and protect their wealth" (Personal interview with Marta Somoza, representative of the Municipal Urbanism Office of Allariz, 5 January 2010).

Strategic networks

The main line of communication for the various networks in the implementation of the Subsidiary Norms was the coordination between local government, experts, and civil engagement networks, joined later by private actors (Personal interviews with Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010; Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010; and Francisco García Suárez, 4 January 2010). Firstly, in terms of professional expertise, Allariz (which lacked expertise internally) needed to invite various experts in order for the design and implementation of various development plans and projects to succeed. Secondly, tangible heritage preservation and management required that specialist staff be employed. From the outset, the successful local government strategy was to engage the services of the expert Galician team of Consultory Galega SL, who converted the ideas of the town's population into a valuable, comprehensive project:

"Professional expertise was required to realize the community goals. What we do is to interpret the needs, desires, and even dreams of the people and try to give them effective guidance to achieve them (Personal interview with Daniel Pino Vicente, 5 February 2010).

"Governments must take responsibility and set out the objectives: what we want, and where we are going. We did not know. A Galician consultancy team was commissioned to convert our ideas into projects. And we always tried to make the population aware of the ideas and projects we had. That was the mechanism that was followed" (Personal interview with Anxo Quintana, 4 February 2010).

The other key element was the formation and prescription of cooperation in various community fields in the implementation process of the Subsidiary Norms. Various groups of working people were formed, composed of individuals from local government and experts and volunteers from the community who worked in urban planning, environment, culture, and socio-economic development. Local meetings of each of these groups were arranged in order to improve the efficiency and comprehensibility of the plan in solving socio-economic problems. As a result of this network strategy, everybody was clear on their roles, and knew exactly what to do with whom, how to collaborate and how to carry out the development projects (Personal interviews with Mar Gil, 2 January 2010; Daniel Pino Vicente, 5 February 2010; and Celestino Feijóo Rodríguez, 5 January 2010).

The successful strategy of the local government was to innovate and change the organizational strategy of local networks. The local government of Allariz needed to integrate private actors into the development processes in order to improve the competitiveness of various economic sectors. For this purpose, local government moved from the first stage of strategic networks to wider networks by developing professional, neighbourhood, and socio-cultural groups. The transformation processes took place during 1999. Five professional private actor networks were formed: the Association of Entrepreneurs of Chorente Business Park, the Association of Hotels and Tourism of Allariz, the Association of Merchants and Manufacturers of Allariz, and the Association of Artisans of Allariz. Other non-profit socio-cultural associations were established: the Ox Festival Association, the Jan de Arzúa Cultural Association, the Association for the Promotion of Rural Development, the Interruris Youth Association, and the Puzzle Social Welfare Association, which fights social exclusion.

Today, networks in Allariz are formed and balanced among experts, community members, and private actors in various cultural, social, environmental, and economic fields. They are characterized by mutual trust and a collaborative climate, which allows for the innovation and improvement of socio-economic wellbeing in the community:

"We understood that we were not doing things separately. We are made up of 33 partners from 37 local hotels, bars, restaurants and lodgings. The reason for the creation of our Association was to be a source of pressure on and collaboration with the Municipality. Alone, we were nothing, but together we are stronger, we have better links, and we collaborate on festivals. So I think we have achieved our objectives and are opening up new paths" (Interview with Julio Fernandez Piñeiro, a private actor, member of the Association of Hotels and Tourism, 7 February 2010).

"Allariz is a municipality of 115 employees working for the Council; there is a good level of sensibility in the people, and they give good advice. Courses for entrepreneurs have been organized, and people talk about economic development. The key is that everyone believes in it. The success lies in observing, imagining, and creating, in seeing, believing and wanting, in feeling and building. From the perspective of a foreigner in this area, I believe that their capabilities are positive" (Personal interview with Eva González Pérez, a municipal technician from the O Portelo Municipal Socio-economic Centre, responsible for rural development, 19 January 2010).

"The secret is the closeness, the proximity between government and neighbours. We are accessible. There is a connection with neighbours, with officials, and with technical staff. We are accessible at any time of the day, and they even call us at home" (Personal interview with Cristina Cid Fernández, 2 January 2010).

The Allariz local government works constantly on innovating public, semi-public, and private networks, while trying to engage with opportunities presented by global networks (Personal interviews with Eva González Pérez, 19 January 2010; Julio Fernandez Piñeiro, 7 February 2010). The Town Council has developed direct links with external institutions such as the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade of Spain, the Council of Economy and Industry of Galicia, and the European Regional Development Fund. It has also begun to work with global projects such as fashion outlets, citizens' information, and communication technology projects such as the Avanza Plan and the Agora Virtual Project. The Agora Virtual Project and the Avanza Plan are acknowledged to be among the most significant recent projects that have greatly improved competitiveness and socio-economic conditions in the local society of Allariz.

Evaluation of the outcomes

Over the last 20 years, Allariz has managed to overcome the major problems that it was facing before 1989. A global vision has followed, achieving sustainable development goals to make Allariz an economically active, environmentally sustainable, culturally rich, and socially conscious place. Strategies based on cultural heritage resources and its proximity to Ourense have made it possible to achieve these main objectives. Cultural heritage resources have proved to be a driving force for its local development. Some of the most important economic and socio-cultural achievements are illustrated below.

One of the main objectives of preserving the rich tangible heritage in the historic town and along the river was achieved by preserving 572 historical buildings out of 596: 122 facades, 381 dwellings and 29 commercial spaces (Gil, 2009: 165). The Subsidiary Norms of Municipal Planning, PECHA and PEDRA, were decisive in the recovery of the environment both in the urban and rural areas of Allariz. The river banks were reclaimed and the main sanitation networks renewed. The ethnographic heritage of the mills was re-established, and 115,510 square metres of public space were transformed and opened for public and private use compared to the 18,146 square meters before 1989 (Concello de Allariz, 2010, Gil, 2009). Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 illustrate the transformation of the buildings before 1989 and after.



Figure 3. Abandoned building before 1989



Figure 4. Rural hostel after 1989



Figure 5. Tanning factory before 1989



Figure 6. Leather museum after 1989

The Allariz development project overcame a high level of unemployment, which was at a staggering 67% in 1989. In 2010, the unemployment rate was 9.5 % of the active population between the ages of 15 and 65, lower than both Ourense Province and the Spanish national unemployment level, which was 13% (Caja España, 2011).

The number of small and medium enterprises in the construction, service, and agriculture industries increased more than four times, from 65 to 278, between 1989 and 2008 (Concello de Allariz, 2009).

There was evident growth in secondary tourism services such as restaurants, hotels, and bars. Between 1989 and 2008, the number of hotels increased from 2 to 14, the number of restaurants from 3 to 18, and the number of cafes and bars from 27 to 67 (Concello de Allariz, 2009).

The number of jobs also grew steadily. During the period from 1991 to 1995, 267 jobs were created; this number increased to 804 in 2004. The employment rate was 1451 in 2007, (90 in agriculture (6,2% of total occupation), 350 in industry (24,1%), 229 in construction (15,8%), and 782 in the service sector (53,9%) (Caja España, 2011).

The rate of emigration decreased by almost one-half during the period between 1960 and 1990. Today, the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (2010) illustrates a slow but significant growth in the population: in 2000, the population was 5258, and by 2009 it had increased to 5910.

The preservation of the cultural heritage has also created socio-cultural effects. The careful planning and management of the cultural heritage, combined with the principle of sustainable development, has created an attractive place to live. The most important achievement of the Allariz community is that it became a vibrant place to be, due to the broad spectrum of cultural heritage products that serve various consumer demands, for the young and the old, for the population, and for visitors. It was successful because it was based on a single main strategy – the improvement of the quality of life for the local population - and because it offered a good ecological, economic, social and cultural place to live:

"Allariz had a beautiful old town, a river, which is wonderful because it is healthy; it is hard difficult to believe that it was previously a sewer. Housing prices are more convenient than in Ourense. One had to provide a good example, and the new government did this. Allariz is enjoying sustainable development that is growing every day due to the people that are moving here, and to tourism, the forest, the heated pool, bridges, and camping" (Personal interview with Oscar Nieto, a private actor, a leader of the Association of Merchants and Manufacturers of Allariz).

"Allariz has become a service town, many shops have opened - supermarkets, opticians, banks, it is well located, closed to Ourense, it is clean and tidy, has a great kindergarten, a swimming pool, the river for taking walks in summer, lots of things... it is not a bedroom town, because people make their lives here, there are young couples with children. The population of Allariz has grown a lot, especially young people around 30" (Personal interview with Antonio Soria Rocafort, a local artist, a newcomer from Madrid).

The preservation of the cultural heritage has also contributed to "people's identity, because they are prouder, not only of the historic centre, but also of the countryside, which also contributes to social and individual identity. From an economic viewpoint, they can live here because transport has been improved, and jobs have attracted new people" (Personal interviews with Celestino Feijóo Rodríguez, 5 January 2010).

Conclusion

This case presents a situation in which local actors have managed, with little outside support, to overcome a socio-economic decline left behind after a process of rural restructuring and a previous authoritarian government. The local development strategy to attach value to cultural heritage resources and geographical proximity has been shown to be an effective way of transforming the condition of the

degraded and neglected area of Allariz and achieving sustainable development. Cultural heritage has played a role not only for urban and rural renewal, image-building, the promotion of tourism, and socio-economic expansion, but also in recapturing a sense of pride in the town's identity, resulting in strengthened social cohesion. This paper argues that success in achieving sustainable local development through cultural heritage relies on the degree of organizing capacity.

There is a need in a rapidly globalizing world for societies to organize themselves more effectively in order to be able to respond to global competition. Many organizing capacity factors must be taken into account: a vision, strategy, strong leadership, and strategic networks, as well as political and societal support. As a result of combining all these components of organizing capacity, cultural heritage has proved to be a significant contributor to the Allariz economy, which has made it possible to achieve sustainable local development.

Having reflected on the case of Allariz, one might now raise the question of whether this case could be applied elsewhere. A small town with a strong leader, proximity to a large city, and a broad variety of cultural heritage resources cannot be found everywhere. In addition, we might question whether the local development project would have worked if there had not been an earlier political conflict. This was an important factor driving the socialization process and socio-economic change in Allariz. Although it may be difficult to find another example like it, the case of Allariz might be used to stimulate theoretical and practical knowledge in relation to cultural heritage and organizing capacity, and to provide an example of how other heritage places might use their resources as a strategy for socio-economic revitalization to sustain local development.

I argue that careful planning and management of cultural heritage resources should be undertaken, and a balance struck between preservation, sustainable use, and development. Sustainable development initiatives depend not only on the leadership's capabilities to maintain the trust and support of the community, but also on its entrepreneurial skills. The successful valorization of cultural heritage resources must depend on political support for financial, technical, participatory, and collaborative encouragement for their citizens. Local government must also facilitate innovative thinking from private actors and community members. Societal support should be encouraged and integrated in the local development project by the local government.

The strategic networks need to be clearly formulated, and the roles of the actors well defined. Networks should be constructed of experts, community members, and private and public actors. The preservation and management of cultural heritage resources and urban planning require local and outside expert knowledge, in addition to well-balanced lines of communication. The success of a cultural economy also relies on the local government's abilities not only to manage and organize, but also to innovate in its organizational structures, and to engage with global networks.

Finally, cultural heritage resources should be seen as a broader comprehensive strategy for local development, rather than one that is limited to the tourist industry. Without the promotion of other industries, the local economy of Allariz could not be sustained. In order to achieve a competitive advantage in the global economy, local actors need to attract local innovative and entrepreneurship skills, as well as financial and intellectual capital. Local areas need to widen their areas of knowledge, sharpen their management skills, and organize their cultural economy and market their physical or cultural resources.

Endnotes

¹ I use the personal names of my informants, whose consent has been obtained.

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