



“License to Listen”: the Challenge of Building a System of Participatory Inventory of Ich with Coastal Communities in Portugal

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ABSTRACT

The international project *Celebration of Coastal Culture* was developed between 2007 and 2009, with the aim of contributing to the identification and the study of knowledge and experiences of the Portuguese fluvial-maritime communities. Focusing on the design of a participatory methodology, based on the principles of co-production and co-authorship of knowledge associated with these cultures, this method was structured starting from the construction of an inventory of “collective voices”, in which the local population could define rhythms and paths able to enhance new meanings to the concepts of Culture and Cultural Heritage with their wisdom. This article presents the structure of the project and also the tools that led to the definition of an inventory system committed with the assessment of the water cultures. Everyday gestures, plural dialogues or intuitive knowledge emerged along the way, gradually shaping the lines of a glocal development. The balance is positive, but the process demands commitment, understanding, creativity and, above all, long-term planning.

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1. Introduction

During the years of 2007-09 the project *Celebration of Coastal Culture* (CCC) emerged under the coordination of the *Mútua dos Pescadores*, a Portuguese insurance cooperative directed at the fluvial-maritime sector that because of its profile, territorial structure and relationship with coastal communities, assumed the role of promoter.

Financed by the *European Economic Area* with funds from the *EEA Grants*, co-financed by the Sines City Hall², and conscious of the damage inflicted on the activities of traditional fisheries by European norms and policies, the lack of recognition and incentive on the economy at a national level, or the effects of acculturation and homogenization of globalization, the CCC proposed to promote fluvial-maritime local culture as

a vital factor in sustainable and integrated development. To this effect a method was outlined which made it possible to work closely with water based communities, with the objective of learning more about the living conditions, to value traditional knowledge and also economic systems in tune with the rhythms and resources of nature.

In this sense, if on the one hand the CCC proposed to contribute to the construction of a model for alternative development with the awareness of the diversity which still endures in these communities (Abreu e.p.), on the other hand, and under the scrutiny of world heritage, it is important to mention that its principles, objectives and methods have made it possible to take on an intense process of identifying and documenting cultural specificities of these communities prior to the approval and implementation of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (ICH Convention) of UNESCO (2003) in Portugal.

Within this context, among the scientific products of the CCC there was a Doctoral thesis in Museology³, from which this article emerges. Based on this thesis and taking as a starting

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²Sines is a coastal council situated in the Alentejo region. Its basic economy consists of a relatively stable fishing sector and industrial activities in the Industrial Park (GAS) and the port.

³Under the title “Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sociomuseology: a study

point an innovating participatory inventory, we have proposed a reflection on the practices associated with this function within the Museological scope and in the light of the concepts and recommendations defined by the ICH Convention.

2. The Starting Point

In the conception of the CCC there are two factors that play an essential role and that help us to understand the logic that defined and guided an innovative process which will be hereby discussed. Firstly we can identify the actual nature, mission and structure of the Project promoter *Mútua dos Pescadores*, an insurance agency with a long history and a vast field of action in the maritime sector - which include the intervention in various projects of local development, social economy and gender equality - and that, as consequence, constitute a solid project striving for the valuation of cultural capital of the populations and of the coastal regions (Sancho Querol, 2011 p.181). The second is based on two claims that take as starting points, history, geography and a national culture, with the aim of promoting reflection on knowledge management models and resources related with water culture and its inhabitants:

1. Portugal is a country whose history is closely connected to the sea, and whose presence has inspired diverse forms of culture in the populations which exploit this sector and that form a vital element of their identity.
2. This country currently possesses a maritime area 18 times bigger than its own land and an Economic Free Zone (ZEE) which takes up half the area of the EU. Again we are dealing with the same factor: the sea, its natural resources and socio-cultural capital which constitute a strategic source of sustainable development at various levels.

Keeping this in mind, and with the aim of paving the way for those communities which possess this capital, the CCC chose to use a participatory methodology which not only gave them a voice, but also took into account the knowledge of the use of their specific culture. The CCC has progressively situated these communities at the heart of the process of identification and the study of their customs, knowledges and traditions. So besides contributing to the awareness, knowledge and recognition of the most valuable daily practices and of those who bring them to life, the methodology applied resulted in the cooperation and co-authorship of the knowledge compiled.

This led to the identification of a set of cultural assets. These same cultural assets which have been scantily studied, scarcely categorized and poorly valued, are the reflection of a fluvial-maritime culture such as the Portuguese that, because of its history, symbolic character and potentiality are called to represent

those fundamental elements in cultural cohesion and identity, within the scope of sustainable development.

In addition to this, by compiling such a diverse selection of national entities, as we shall see in the following pages, this project intended to promote the debate on three levels:

- Questioning the true dimension of cultural diversity;
- Challenging the participatory models by relating within the same process, participation, safekeeping, social justice and local development;
- Acting along with the growing need for definition and study of riverside cultural identities, as a fundamental option of cultural enrichment of each community and, consequently, of its visitors.

3. The Structure: A Network Of Experiences

The CCC was conceived by a group of specialists in the fields of Anthropology, Geography, Cultural Heritage, Local Development and Social Work, from the *Department of Social, Cooperative and Training Action* (DASCF) of the *Mútua dos Pescadores*.

By connecting the dimensions of land and heritage, and these two to an objective chosen by each of the local entities selected to develop the fieldwork, the team from CCC structured the Project, its philosophy, its method and the network of national and foreign collaborators that helped to build the process. The network was composed of a first group of Portuguese local entities on whose land and within whose communities the work would take place, and a second group of observers (universities and museums, national and foreign) whose mission consisted in evaluating the process from both, a scientific and technical point of view, based on experience.

3.1. The field agents

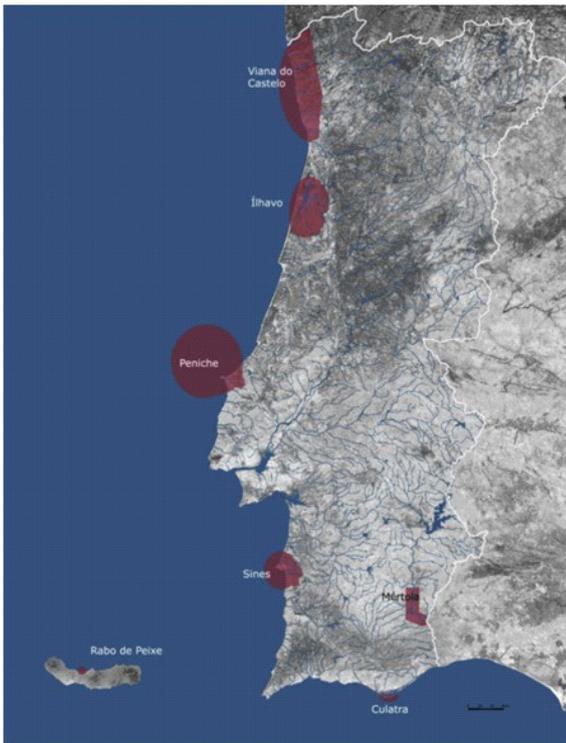
As part of the first group we find seven local entities strategically spread out over the national territory. Their selection took into account the history, the proximity, the experience or familiarity with the social and cultural issues related to each community, as a way of guaranteeing that each one represent its cultural interests and meet the aims of the project.

In addition to this, to give life to the project, each entity picked a challenge⁴ related to local identity and to the situation of the Natural and Cultural Heritage and its sphere of influence, and defined a pedagogical principle that represented the objective aimed at the other local entities. In this sense, challenge and principle structured the study during the three years of the Project. The national scheme resulted as follows:

of inventories”, this thesis was done at the *Lusofona University of Humanities and Technologies* of Lisbon, with the support of the project *Celebration of Coastal Culture* (2007-09) and the doctoral program of the *Foundation for Science and Technology* (FCT), of the *Portuguese Ministry of Education and Science* (2010-11).

⁴In the Portuguese context of CCC we opted to use the term “problemática”, which refers to a topic that affects the evolution of local culture and which can be identified as an object of collective debate with the aim of exchanging opinions, defending attitudes and formulating solutions.

Figure 1: Network of local entities responsible for the fieldwork in Portugal.



Source: ©CCC

Figure 2: Group debate on the adaptation process for traditional ship held at shipyard in Viana do Castelo.



Source: ©Lorena Sancho Querol

- *Ships from the North Association (ABN)*. Challenge: law decree on the recuperation, replication and restoration of traditional boating (a field of Portuguese heritage development). Pedagogical principle: "Networking", since we are dealing with an objective which is of interest to other national entities. Area of inventory: Minho and Douro Rivers. Cultural assets for inventory: documentation on law decrees and legal protection of traditional boating systems today.
- *Maritime Museum of Ílhavo (MMI)*. Challenge: to use the past constructively in the present, starting from local cultural expressions (fishing crafts, cod fleet, fishermen...) Pedagogical principle: "I know you know and you can". It intends to promote the valuation of the Aveiro Lagoon in the construction of local identity. Area of inventory: Aveiro Lagoon and surrounding councils. Cultural assets for inventory: tangible and intangible assets connected to the Lagoon and its local cultural panorama.
- *Association for the Development of Peniche (ADEPE)*. Challenge: valuation of the past and present sardine industry of Peniche. Pedagogical principle: "Valuing experience and the sea resources". Area of inventory: maritime area for sardine fishing Cultural assets for inventory: any phenomena connected with sardine fishing as a central element in the construction of Peniche identity.
- *Sines City Hall (CMS)*. Challenge: collision between tra-
- ditional fishing/tourism, and the petrochemical industry associated with the threat of pollution. Pedagogical principle: "Reflect on threatened nature". The root to a number of changes detected by the local population related to GAS. Area of inventory: the Sines council and the nearby coastal area until the Santo André Lagoon. Cultural assets for inventory: tangible and intangible elements of the traditional fishing economy.
- *Association for the Defense of Mertola Heritage (ADPM)*. Challenge: connection between tradition and modernity in the evolution of the use of the river (fishing and transportation), strongly devalued by contemporary society. Pedagogical principle: "Keep the void from invading the river". It emerges as an answer to the need to return life as an element of communication to river. Area of inventory: River Guadiana valley from the area of Pulo do Lobo until Pomarão. Cultural assets for inventory: elements of the traditional fishing and sailing industry and natural aspects of the Guadiana valley within the context of environmental and functional changes.
- *Network of Women in Fishing (Estrela do Mar)*. Challenge: to study the role of women within the system of local social organization and in the construction of cultural cohesion of the population of Culatra. Pedagogical principle: "To shelter the desire for equality". It intends to recognize the importance of the woman in the evolution of local communities. Area for inventory: Culatra Island. Cultural assets for inventory: biographical elements relevant to the construction of gender equality in the fishing world.
- *Porto de Abrigo OP*. Challenge: relation between traditional knowledge - which is consolidated according to its exercise and intergenerational transmission - and formal teaching, structured according to age, criteria, programs and manuals. Pedagogical principle: "To estimate and

Figure 3: Master naval craftsman in shipyard from *Rabo de Peixe*

Source: ©Lorena Sancho Querol

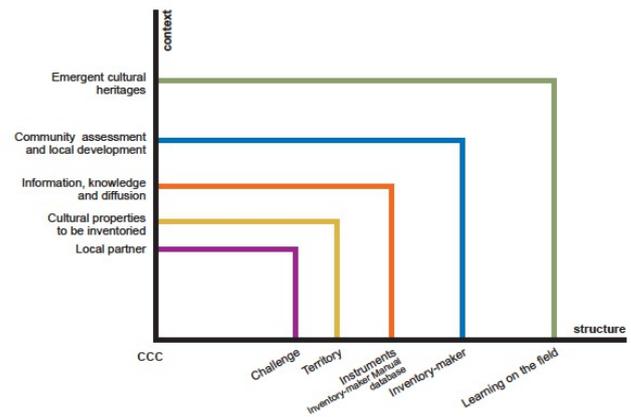
value intuitive knowledge”, related with the need to integrate traditional knowledge into fishing school manuals. Area of inventory: Fishing community of Rabo de Peixe, Ponta Delgada, Azores Archipelago. Cultural assets for inventory: biographical elements connected with learning the fishing trade and acceptance of formal teaching in a population with a strong tradition of autonomy in the assimilation of fishing knowledge and technology, taking into account that we are dealing with an elevated level of school absenteeism.

3.2. The Observers

A second group of observers’ mission consisted in complementing the academic and technical component of the project in fields such as Anthropology, Geography and Sociomuseology. Among them we find a first group composed of Portuguese Universities (*Lusofona University of Humanities and Technologies and the New University of Lisbon*) and a Norwegian one (*Universitetet i Tromsø*), and another group composed of museums: *the Maritime Museum of Barcelona* (Spain) and the *Museum Nord* (Norway).

4. The Method: Recognizing Plurality, Valuating Diversity, Promoting Sustainability

The methodology used by the CCC stems from a contextual vision that allows us to identify a set of local realities with the aim of recognizing a heritage value, as well as an intrinsic potential as a basis for a balanced development. These realities are frequently ignored, passing unnoticed due to its intangible nature, but also because of the complexity of its identification, documentation and diffusion. For this reason, the methodology used in the CCC was based on the participatory inventory model. This made possible the documentation of local cultural expressions in a study produced by those most familiar with it forms, and also recognize the capacity of the community to

Table 1: Axes of action for the project *Celebration of Coastal Culture*

Source: Martins (2010)

document its own goods, giving way to an informal learning process on the value that these goods add to the context of culture and local development.

As background to this methodology we also find the idea of sharing and diffusing the Portuguese fluvial-maritime inheritance from a contemporary perspective, taking as a central axis of action the co-authorship of the knowledge, and its diffusion through a data base created for this effect.

In order to better explain the methodology of the CCC we have outlined in **Table 1** two groups of concepts according to a logic of complementarity and a chronological order intrinsic to the process.

In the first set - located on the horizontal axis - we find the conceptual tools that give shape to the structure and which made the achievement of the objectives possible, composing its central body. In the vertical axis we have outlined those products which aided the evolution of the process, and which vary according to the entity responsible for the project in each geographical area, and the socio-cultural morphology of the land. The combination of both sets in motion a process that leads to an experience of participatory inventory which, when exercised regularly, and with due guidance, can help to construct an interesting base instrument for cultural development of the communities and for the valuation and active safekeeping of its cultural diversity on a long scale.

According to this logic, the variables of both axes are able to grow in number as the project evolves, and as it seems necessary and interesting to raise the sphere of action to other territories, proposals, inventory-makers, or instruments.

As a consequence, the CCC takes as its starting point for the participatory inventory process, five pairs of concepts that we will now outline, and whose practice results in the knowledge and study of the local cultural forms acquired throughout the project.

The first of the pairs is formed by the **Challenge** and **Entity** selected for each field of action. With this objective in mind, of the seven entities that formed the central structure of the project, six are located on the continent and one in the Azores. It is nec-

essary to state that a reasonable equilibrium was achieved in what concerns the representation of the different coastal populations - north, centre and south, and the Azores Archipelago. In this context, each entity constructed and applied the ideas of the CCC in its field of influence, choosing as a link a challenge on which its inventory would develop as well as a reflection on the protection of its fluvial-maritime culture.

In the second pair we find the **Territory** and the **Cultural properties (or assets) to be inventoried**. Through this it was possible to construct the initial geography of the project - composed of the seven spheres of action, its entities and proposals - and to define, not only the physical limits, but also the social and cultural elements on which the inventory was developed.

The third pair is composed of **Instruments** created for the inventory and the **Information, knowledge and diffusion**. With this objective, the coordination of the CCC designed a set of conceptual and material tools that serve to guide entities and the inventory-makers for the exercise of inventory. Among which we can point out:

- the semi-structured model for the interview that was used, which included different information on its construction and use;
- a "Manual of the inventory-maker", formed by two volumes which outlined the method of the inventory defined for the fieldwork, based on the interview and oral communication;
- a set of training Seminars (the "CCC Seminars"), which facilitated the contact between the different entities and teams, and also the exchange of personal experiences, objectives or points of view between them and the coordination;
- a Data Base to diffuse collected information, where we are able to identify the different inventory-makers, and also consult the documentation on the cultural expressions which were studied.

In fourth place, we find the pair formed by the **Inventory Maker** and the **Community assesment and local development**. In this set each local entity selected a number of people, who because of their profile, personal history, knowledge and experiences, were appropriate to conduct an inventory of knowledge in the respective fields of action, and in the combined context of cultural expressions related with the chosen challenge. These people, supported and guided by the local entity and the coordination of CCC, volunteered to collaborate on the inventory, gathering information through semi-structured interviews, oral communication and written observations. The intention was that the inventory-makers gradually become agents of valuation and revitalization of the elements being studied, precisely because, through the exercise of inventory - identification, documentation and profound knowledge of the specific cultural elements of their community - they acquired a different sensibility that could lead to a shifting of attitudes related with the valuation of the local context, its contemporary re-signification and function.

Finally, the pair composed of the **Learning on the field acquired through the exercise of the participatory inventory** and the **Emergent Cultural Heritage** which thereby resulted, would translate into a progressive cultural development of the inventory-maker and in the natural evolution of the concept of Cultural Heritage performed by the community.

These five pairs of concepts defined the basic principle of the Project: through the exercise of the participatory inventory, the inventory-maker was given the opportunity to understand the relevance of this activity for the preservation and valuation of its culture. On the other hand, through its practice, besides increasing expertise, it would also increase knowledge and participate in the construction and definition of a number of local assets, until now underestimated and often ignored. Not only would this contribute to the reformulation of local identities but also, and according to the theoretical debate which accompanies the re-signification of knowledge associated to local culture, positioned itself on the territory in answer to the question of the most appropriate paths of local development.

The teams which were formed on the field were asked to outline a set of objectives among which we find:

- identify a significant percentage of local expressions of fluvial-maritime culture (approximately 50%), proceeding to its heritagisation through the inventory and diffusion (entry in Data Base and other products of diffusion of public access);
- define, according to the work experience, the profile of the inventory-maker giving shape to local networks of inventory-makers who, individually or in a group, would give continuity to the work of the CCC after its official end (2010), prolonging a dynamic which would contribute to the valuation of local cultures (depending on the entering of data, the publication or the socialization of knowledge);
- contribute to the possibility of renovation of the teams of inventory-makers on the land of each entity;

4.1. *A new sociocultural profile: the inventory-maker of the coastal culture*

In tune with this methodology of access to local socio-cultural reality we find another of the innovating elements of this Project: a new profile of inventory-maker who went by the name of "inventory-maker of the coastal culture" or "CCC inventory-maker".

The CCC inventory-maker could be identified as a local inhabitant with the predisposition to socialize ideas and objectives at the heart of each community, knower of local questions being studied, available and interested in collaborating with a project such as this one - dependent on the exercise of participatory practices - that placed them at the level of co-author of the information produced during the process of heritagisation. Furthermore, during the work experience, the CCC inventory-maker was able to understand and assimilate new values, functions and meanings that, because of the integrating, inclusive

Figure 4: Dina Pereira and Sílvia Padinha, shellfish collectors of the Island of Culatra and inventory-makers of the CCC, learning to use the project GPS to locate study areas.



Source: ©Luis Martins

and contemporary nature of the project, have become in part the elements on which its daily world is constructed.

This fundamental subject of the Project was selected in each community by the respective entity of the national structure, to collaborate with its knowledge and experiences in the mediation, collection and systematization of information.

The identification and definition of this new socio-cultural profile was an object of study of the Project from the very first moment. In this sense, and as it appears in the "Bill of Compromise of the CCC", the coordination of the Project requested of each entity that formed part of the national structure, the identification of a minimum of four agents with the referred profile to assume this role for the duration of the project. (CCC; *Mútua dos Pescadores*, 2008b pp.317-321).

Despite the difficulties encountered in the understanding and practice of the Project, especially in what refers to the challenges posed by the management of time, objectives and tools, both on the part of the coordination as of the inventory-makers, the end results were very interesting, especially if we take into account that, from Viana do Castelo until the Island of Culatra there is presently a work and experience potential that may be used on a local scale in heritage initiatives of different topolo-

gies related with, for example, the commitments proposed by entities such as UNESCO.

To this respect, and taking as a starting point the pedagogical principles of each entity of the national structure, we can define the philosophy behind this process of inventory as follows:

"I KNOW YOU KNOW AND YOU CAN NETWORKING. These are the principles that respond to the need to reinforce the dignity and the recognition of social diversity which are at the heart of discrimination [...] REFLECTING ON THE THREATENED NATURE VALUATING THE EXPERIENCE AND THE SEA RESOURCES KEEPING THE VOID FROM ENTERING THE RIVER. These are the principles which are subjacent to the dignified battle for economic equilibrium at the heart of coastal communities, in the context of 21st century discourse. [...] TO CARE FOR AND VALUE INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE TO SHELTER THE DESIRE FOR EQUALITY. These are the principles that stimulate social dialogue and the sharing of these responsibilities within the community. The inventory-maker respects and values cultural heritage with the intention that culture in general will open the space for minority and specific culture, such as those of coastal cultures, to manifest itself [...]". (Baptista y Martins 2010 p.4)

4.2. The work tools of the participatory inventory

Along with the structure of the Project, its objectives and principles, and the social and heritage agent responsible for the fieldwork, other tools were also created which helped to structure the process of inventory. Among these we can highlight the "Manual of the Inventory-maker" previously mentioned, and with it, the method used in the preparation of the interview.

The "Manual of the Inventory-maker": a learner's guide for fieldwork

Through careful reflection on the participatory philosophy of the CCC, in the "Manual of the Inventory-maker" we find an outline of the social profile explained earlier, and also a presentation of a set of principles and concepts which help to define the methodology of the inventory. Simultaneously, the Manual presented a selection of themes that allow us to identify important aspects used to characterize populations and riverside assets of cultural nature, defining the universe of interest for the Project.

These themes can be divided into *10 Formative Units*, focusing areas of special interest, contemplating simultaneously the later organization and treatment of the collected information, with its diffusion and updating in mind. Following the order established in the Manual, the units outlined the following themes:

- UF 1: The minimum pair: interviewer/interviewee
- UF 2: The uses of the rivers and seas
- UF 3: Representing
- UF 4: Landscape and Scenery
- UF 5: Ordinary and extraordinary

- UF 6: Project and construct
- UF 7: Fishing
- UF 8: Resource, transformation, product
- UF 9: Organization
- UF 10: Networking (CCC and Mútua dos Pescadores, 2008b pp.16-20)

From here, those who assumed the role of CCC inventory-maker were able to prepare the scripts for their interviews, to be applied to other local agents, with the intention of sharing information and documenting the existence of specific knowledge or experience, but also its evolution, function and symbolic dimension.

The interview: a flexible tool

The next phase of the preparation of interviews allowed the CCC inventory-maker to structure a dialectic process with whomever he/she shared the information on the themes outlined in the Manual. This last document referred a set of fundamental points, which required that the organization be done in accordance with the selected themes.

As a result, the script would be similar to a semi-open interview, and its use would represent a moment of sociabilization of knowledge associated with the object of study.

This model responded to another of the concepts created at the heart of the Project: that of the "minimum pair". According to the Manual the "minimum pair" was composed of the interviewer and interviewee, that is, by the smallest human composition on which a semi-directed dialogue can be established between two people whose work deals with cultural reality (CCC y Mútua dos Pescadores, 2008a pp.7-31).

From this point of view, the interview was transformed into a means, and not an end, where reciprocity, synchrony with the interviewees, and the preparation of the study topics, gave way to meanings once lost in time and to guide the process in directions suggested in the Manual.

5. The Results

The final products processed during the development of the project can be divided into two groups, if we take into account the more or less tangible nature of meanings attributed to this concept within the heritage scope. Among those we can consider tangible, we find:

1. A "Manual of the Inventory-maker", composed of ten survey units which would be simultaneously Training Units of the inventory-makers and which would help to define the structure of the Data Base.
2. A Data Base with SIG, containing the information and the knowledge collected and studied during the process of the inventory of the fluvial-maritime local Heritage, allowing public access to this information (see: www.muwapescadores.org/Frontend/).

3. The creation of a small team of inventory-makers of each local entity, who received training to be able to work with the instruments referred under the coordination of the central team to the project.
4. The creation of the conditions for each of the inventory-makers made it possible to follow through with the observation, register, study and inventory of the cultural assets related with the chosen objective, converting into local inventory-makers facing the progressive exercise of the inventory within its land.
5. The definition of a set of ethical, didactic and pedagogical Principles which reflected the norms and objectives that oriented each inventory-maker during the process of inventory;
6. The conducting of a number of Seminars on the analysis of the processes in course, and the transmission of knowledge that took place in the territories of local entities, or in places chosen by them. (Ílhavo, Peniche, Rabo de Peixe, Faro/Culatra and Viana do Castelo);
7. The conducting of a Final International Seminar that took place in Sines, co-financed of the project.
8. The support in the elaboration of two products of scientific nature which emerged in the academic context, and through which we attempted to further a series of concepts related with the practices applied on the field:
 - A Master thesis in Anthropology focused on the fishing sector of Peniche and on migration, conducted by the anthropologist João Coimbra, at the *Faculty for Social Sciences and Humanities of the New University of Lisbon*.
 - The Doctoral thesis in Museology from which the present paper results, from the *Centre of Studies in Sociomuseology*, of the *Lusofona University of Humanities and Technologies* of Lisbon.
9. The organization of a set of exhibitions of itinerant nature, exposing the lines of thought which were used, as well as the chosen challenges and the topics studied by each local entity during the process of the inventory.
10. The development of experimental activities for the inventory of local cultural expressions between 2009 and 2012, articulated with a group of students of the *Tavira Secondary School*, where traditional and industrial production of salt in the Algarve were studied; a group of inventory-makers indicated by the Viana do Castelo City Hall studied the fishermen's quarter, and later the maritime component of the celebration *Senhora da Agonia*, a local festival better known as the *Sea Procession*.

Among them, the product with the most relevance would be the Data Base, not only for having been constructed to reflect this vast offer of objectives and products, but also because, due to its temporal permanence⁵, it would constitute the main

⁵One of the requisites of the projects financed by the EEA-Grants funds consists in guaranteeing the continuing activity of the products created for at least five years from predicted term of the projects.

element of diffusion of the Project and its results. Besides, its structure allowed for the approaching of a number of extraordinary realities which are grouped in 13 thematic forms, one of support, (Tab of Origin and Location) and 12 of inventory: Interview, People and Organization, Document, Object, Event, Report, Know-how, Fishing Crafts, Land Crafts, Building, Place and Glossary.

As a means to balance the end product of an experiment such as this one, it is important to mention that, as a result of the three years of work, there are at this moment over 300 interviews conducted on different lands under the Project. This means that a considerable amount of local cultural expressions has been documented, many of which had either never been dealt with until now, or had never been treated as an object of close or participatory study.

Going back to the pre-established classification for end products of the Project, it is necessary to allude to the set of assets of more intangible nature, and among those which were identified, essentially those that include a knowledge that emerges as a result of work experience performed by each one of the people who, because of their connection to a specific local institution, began to understand other ways to look at everyday reality and the many related cultural assets.

In this context it would be interesting to highlight, for example:

- The ability to value a life experience, of work and learning, together with the different knowledge acquired along the way;
- The dynamics of other forms of relation within the community, to be able to work in the defense, knowledge and diffusion of something special and personal, which up until now had been irredeemably condemned;
- The recognition of other historical figures, up until then submerged and unknown because of the difficulty of their study;
- The abandon of anonymity of these communities, their tracks, interests, knowledge and possibilities of sustainable development.

Finally, having comprehended the relevance and pertinence of the sociocultural principles defined during the CCC to recover from what had been lost and learn to value other forms of local culture, and understanding this sphere - the place - as a space for the democratization of identities and as *"a cultural arena through which new connections of meaning are established"* (Peralta, 2006 p.84), moving in the direction of a practice of balanced development, we would like to question the museological dimension of the process from the point of view of Lameiras-Campagnolo and more specifically, her concept of *"para-museological structure"* (1989 pp.137-138).

Taking into consideration, the principles, methods and objectives which under the heading of Sociomuseology gained shape in the recent decades (Sancho Querol and Sancho, 2013 pp.90-92) and, above all, the simplicity of its structures and

the high commitment they represent in what respects the valuation and integrated development of local communities, we would ask: wouldn't it be interesting to create a network of para-museological structures - or museological units - at the service of maritime, rural or urban communities which participated in the CCC, with the objective of following through with the dynamics created, allowing for the channeling of social and cultural synergies, the mobilization and re-use of knowledge that emerge during the process?

These and other questions remain open, facing the need to further the chosen path, but also because the studied realities are associated to people, places and values that transform and vanish at a steady rhythm.

6. Conclusion

In the light of the context that emerges of the present paper, a doctoral thesis in Museology on PCI inventory, and taking into account the objectives of the CCC, it is worth noting that although heritage was not considered a central aim of the process, sustainable development of the coastal communities through the study and valuation of its resources and cultural expressions, an initiative of this nature, constitutes, without a doubt, a clear example of contemporary heritage recognition and, above all, useful to local populations. That is to say, a heritage recognition which is able to respond to the challenge of an alternative globalization, where the local, national and global dimensions intertwine in the construction of a present awareness of diversity.

What better fate could heritage recognition attain but the sustainable development of small local communities?

With all the difficulties, obstacles and challenges characteristic of a process which proposes to open the way and question the established methods, the CCC was an inspiring experience because of its approach to the land, its people and daily cultural expressions, but above all, because of the courage in defining new forms of local participation, committed to the development of capacities, interests and challenges of the water communities today.

According to this perspective, the participatory model can lead to the construction of the cultural dimension of utopia (Aínsa, 2013 p.88), not only because it developed from fragments, the invisible or ignored through established dialogues or because of the nature of the communities and assets of study, but mainly because by giving them a voice, recognizing them as keepers, creators and transmitters of an ancestral knowledge, they become essential in the process of change and in bringing to light what has been submerged by society.

All that remains is to walk keep them alive in time, so that their voices are kept in tune, so that they may help to orchestrate, from their land and based on their experience, the challenge of making the present a "good place".

Endnotes

1. Sines is a coastal council situated in the Alentejo region. Its basic economy consists of a relatively stable fishing sector and

- industrial activities in the Industrial Park (GAS) and the port.
2. Under the title "Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sociomuseology: a study of inventories", this thesis was done at *Lusofona University of Humanities and Technologies* of Lisbon, with the support of the project *Celebration of Coastal Culture* (2007-09) and the doctoral program of the *Foundation for Science and Technology* (FCT), of the Portuguese Ministry of Education and Science (2010-11).
 3. In the context of CCC we opted to use the term "problematic", which refers to a topic that affects the evolution of local culture and which can be identified as an object of collective debate with the aim of exchanging opinions, defending attitudes and formulating solutions.
 4. One of the requisites of the projects financed by the EEA-Grants funds consists in guaranteeing the continuing activity of the products created for at least five years from predicted term of the projects.

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