



2022

IL CAPITALE CULTURALE
Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage

eum

Rivista fondata da Massimo Montella



Il capitale culturale

Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage

n. 25, 2022

ISSN 2039-2362 (online)

© 2015 eum edizioni università di macerata

Registrazione al Roc n. 735551 del 14/12/2010

Direttore / Editor in chief Pietro Petrarola

Co-direttori / Co-editors Tommy D. Andersson, Elio Borgonovi, Rosanna Cioffi, Stefano Della Torre, Michela di Macco, Daniele Manacorda, Serge Noiret, Tonino Pencarelli, Angelo R. Pupino, Girolamo Sciuillo

Coordinatore editoriale / Editorial coordinator Maria Teresa Gigliozzi

Coordinatore tecnico / Managing coordinator Pierluigi Feliciati

Comitato editoriale / Editorial board Giuseppe Capriotti, Mara Cerquetti, Francesca Coltrinari, Patrizia Dragoni, Pierluigi Feliciati, Costanza Geddes da Filicaia, Maria Teresa Gigliozzi, Chiara Mariotti, Enrico Nicosia, Emanuela Stortoni

Comitato scientifico - Sezione di beni culturali / Scientific Committee - Division of Cultural Heritage Giuseppe Capriotti, Mara Cerquetti, Francesca Coltrinari, Patrizia Dragoni, Pierluigi Feliciati, Maria Teresa Gigliozzi, Susanne Adina Meyer, Marta Maria Montella, Umberto Moscatelli, Caterina Paparello, Sabina Pavone, Francesco Pirani, Mauro Saracco, Emanuela Stortoni, Carmen Vitale

Comitato scientifico / Scientific Committee Michela Addis, Mario Alberto Banti, Carla Barbati, Caterina Barilaro, Sergio Barile, Nadia Barrella, Gian Luigi Corinto, Lucia Corrain, Girolamo Cusimano, Maurizio De Vita, Fabio Donato, Maria Cristina Giambruno, Gaetano Golinelli, Rubén Lois Gonzalez, Susan Hazan, Joel Heuillon, Federico Marazzi, Raffaella Morselli, Paola Paniccia, Giuliano Pinto, Carlo Pongetti, Bernardino Quattrococchi, Margaret Rasulo, Orietta Rossi Pinelli, Massimiliano Rossi, Simonetta Stopponi, Cecilia Tasca, Andrea Ugolini, Frank Vermeulen, Alessandro Zuccari

Web <http://riviste.unimc.it/index.php/cap-cult>, email: icc@unimc.it

Editore / Publisher eum edizioni università di macerata, Corso della Repubblica 51 – 62100 Macerata, tel (39) 733 258 6081, fax (39) 733 258 6086, <http://eum.unimc.it>, info.ceum@unimc.it

Layout editor Oltrepagina srl

Progetto grafico / Graphics +crocevia / studio grafico



Rivista accreditata WOS
Rivista riconosciuta SCOPUS
Rivista riconosciuta DOAJ
Rivista indicizzata CUNSTA
Rivista indicizzata SIMED
Inclusa in ERIH-PLUS

The City of Culture: a Chronicle of Change Foretold

Lucrezia Lopez*, María de los
Ángeles Piñeiro Antelo**,
Miguel Pazos Otón***

Abstract

At the beginning of the 1990s, one of the main architectural megaprojects in Spain took shape: the City of Culture, in Santiago de Compostela (Spain). Promoted and approved by the then president of the Galician government, Manuel Fraga, in the vicinity of the historic centre of Santiago de Compostela, the final destination of the Way of St. James and a World Heritage Site. Since then, it has been at the centre of numerous criticisms, among them many authors have denounced a “lack of planning”, since its peripheral loca-

* Lucrezia Lopez, Department of Geography, University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), Praza da Universidade 1, 15782 – Santiago de Compostela, Spain; lucrezia.lopez@usc.es; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4451-6423>.

** María de los Ángeles Piñeiro Antelo, Department of Geography, University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), Praza da Universidade 1, 15782 – Santiago de Compostela, Spain; manx-les.pineiro@usc.es; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8837-989X>.

*** Miguel Pazos Otón, Department of Geography, University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), Praza da Universidade 1, 15782 – Santiago de Compostela, Spain; miguel.pazos.oton@usc.es; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3253-6654>.

tion has been a problem towards achieving its initial objective. This proposal aims to analyse and reconstruct the evolution of uses and the urban imagery associated with the City of Culture, two aspects that have had to be modified in order for this space to survive in time. At the methodological level, planning documents have been reviewed and interviews were conducted in order to verify the political efforts.

A comienzos de los años 1990 tomaba forma uno de los principales megaproyectos arquitectónicos de España: la Ciudad de la Cultura, en Santiago de Compostela (España). Promovido y aprobado por el entonces presidente del gobierno de Galicia, Manuel Fraga, en la vecindad del casco histórico compostelano, meta del Camino de Santiago y Patrimonio de la Humanidad. Desde entonces, ha centralizado numerosas críticas, entre ellas no pocos autores han denunciado una “falta de planificación”, pues su posición periférica ha sido un problema para lograr su objetivo inicial. Esta propuesta pretende analizar y reconstruir la evolución de los usos y del imaginario urbano asociado a la Ciudad de la Cultura, dos aspectos que han tenido que modificar para que este espacio sobreviviese en el tiempo. A nivel metodológico, se revisan los documentos de planificación y se realizan entrevistas para verificar los esfuerzos políticos.

1. *Introduction*

In recent decades, many cities have changed and adapted to the new times and governance trends¹. In this space, which has always been a meeting place for old and new paradigms, historical ideologies have determined urban functions and representations according to the intentions of the different rulers. Likewise, there has been a progressive evolution from the industrial revolution to Fordism, until recent times where neoliberal interests prevail². In contemporary urban spaces, actors of different nature (public and private) coexist, competing in a continuous promotion of the city in line with what is required by the *glocal* ideology³. On the other hand, culture (and its multiple expressions) has taken centre stage and has become one of the decisive elements for urban economic and social development and identity⁴. In this way, cultural policies have taken hold, contributing to a local and *entrepreneurial turn* in the urban context⁵.

Indeed, it is not easy to compete *in* and *for* urban space, as this implies discerning urban marketing strategies⁶ whose success is not assured. In this sense, this contribution focuses on analysing a tangible dimension of culture, namely

¹ García 2008.

² Linheira *et al.* 2018.

³ Hernández I Martí *et al.* 2014.

⁴ Connolly 2011; Sánchez Belando *et al.* 2012.

⁵ Scott 2010.

⁶ Bianchini 1999.

the genesis (the past), and the present of one of the most (but not only) debated architectural buildings on a Spanish scale: the City of Culture (or Gaiás, as it is also called more and more frequently), in the Galician city of Santiago de Compostela. Unlike previous studies⁷, the main objective of this research is to analyse and reconstruct the evolution of the urban imagery associated with the City of Culture (hereafter referred as CoC) and the possible role of the pandemic in this transformation process (preference for outdoor spaces, remoteness from urban congestion, healthcare functions and vaccination centre, etc.).

The text is structured in five sections. Initially, there is a brief review of the role of cultural policies in urban management as they participate in the urban renewal and underlie a process of instrumentalization in the construction of a successful urban projects. These theoretical premises serve to introduce the case study, the aforementioned CoC, being an example of the reinterpretation of culture in an urban context. At a methodological level, the planning documents have been reviewed to identify, categorise, and assess the changes related to the conception of this project. Interviews have been conducted to verify political efforts, highlighting the desired future project that the community has and the new urban settings. However, in recent years, the CoC has been included in a good part of the cultural policies promoted by the Galician government. As a result, the actions recently undertaken invite us to rethink the concept of “periphericity” associated with this space, which in the urban imagery of Santiago de Compostela is gradually acquiring a centrality, thanks to a series of “changes” necessary for its sustainability, and which will be detailed in the following sections.

2. Cultural Policies: a Brief Genesis of Their Urban Protagonism

The arrival of globalisation in the cities accelerated the appreciation of culture as a possible catalyst for urban development, as it showed that culture can become a beneficial economic asset for the city, thus claiming its centrality in local policies⁸. Bianchini and Parkinson (1993) have studied cultural policies in European cities and their effects on urban regeneration, although according to García (2008), cultural policies have developed at a slower rate than desired.

The scenario of European cultural policies has been quite heterogeneous, as different actions have been carried out at varying rates. In the 1970s and 1980s, the economic potential of cultural resources was ignored, since at that time cultural policy was considered a mechanism to promote community de-

⁷ Bermúdez 2018; Figue 2012; López Silvestre, Álvarez Cebrián 2007.

⁸ Miles *et al.* 2000; Scott 2010.

velopment and encourage social participation⁹. But by the mid-eighties, cultural policy had already come to be considered as a tool for urban development and physical regeneration, coinciding with what Kong (2000) defines as a period of “cultural economic policy”, and the “age of urban marketing” in the words of Bianchini (1999). The first transformations in public and cultural policies occurred in the urban centres of the United Kingdom during the 1980s and the 1990s¹⁰.

According to Kong (2000), at that time four aspects were identified: 1. Increasing investment in the infrastructures needed for cultural production; 2. The launch of iconic advances in the art world and major events in city centres; 3. A resurgence of urban public spaces, and 4. The growth of public and private participation. All these measures promoted competition between cities since state decentralisation and deregulation policies fostered a growth of local and regional competencies and the inclusion of other non-governmental actors in decision-making processes¹¹.

It was only in the early 1990s that the importance of culture for urban regeneration, economic development and social inclusion was understood¹². Several studies on cultural regeneration indicate how this progressive awareness went hand in hand with the “instrumentalization of culture”¹³. In other words, culture was consciously and deliberately manipulated to achieve direct economic benefits through strategies linked to the construction of an attractive urban image (*branding*)¹⁴. This approach involved strengthening ties between cultural and economic policies, something that was achieved through the implementation of strategies for the construction of international urban brands, the so-called *place branding*¹⁵, which, in turn, resulted in a total repositioning of the city and the creation of new spaces¹⁶. Among the first actions on a European scale, the European Cultural Capitals initiative must be mentioned, which produced actions aimed at the economic development and regeneration of urban centres through creative industries and the tourism sector¹⁷. According to Tibbot (2002), the success of a cultural project lied precisely in its ability to promote a regeneration of the *destination brand*, based on the promotion of the different elements that composed it and creating a *sense of place*. It was about putting in place a powerful system of identification and attachment that

⁹ Kong 2000.

¹⁰ Sánchez Belando *et al.* 2012.

¹¹ Brenner 2004; Jessop 2004.

¹² García 2004a.

¹³ Belfiore 2002; Gray 2007; Kearns, Philo 1993; Keating 1988; Sánchez Belando *et al.* 2012; Zukin 1995.

¹⁴ Philo, Kearns 1993.

¹⁵ Linheira *et al.* 2018; Pike 2011; Rius Ulldemolins, Zamorano 2014.

¹⁶ Evans 2003.

¹⁷ Balsas 2004; García 2004b; Mooney 2004.

served as an amplifier for successive cultural policies. However, Evans (2003) warned about the risks of these type of projects, which could create division between the other existing cultural identities, since it is a process of appropriation launched by the public administration and can therefore give rise to a territorial discourse not necessarily identified in the community.

The cultural policies that derived from these new urban neoliberal relations manifested in large and impressive infrastructures (that is, emblematic architectural projects) or in large events; in both cases, urban spaces considered *gloplaces* were produced¹⁸. In this work we will pay attention to the tangible dimension of cultural policies: megaprojects that, according to Bianchini (1999), must be capable of synthesising and representing the connections between the natural, social, cultural and economic environments and daily work and leisure routines, the local rituals, environments and atmospheres, as well as the feeling of belonging of the people. The success of these unique buildings would depend on whether, since their origins, they have sought to become new urban icons, while redefining the social fabric of the space. Indeed, tangible and intangible go hand in hand if the intention is to achieve a change of image that initiates a new form of *competitive planning*. And it is precisely the competitive dimension that invites us to reconsider cultural policy in strategic terms, to comply with the *entrepreneurial turn*¹⁹ of cities and that sees entrepreneurial urbanism as its main ally.

In recent decades, European cities have witnessed the proliferation of these types of cultural projects²⁰, also defined as *flagship projects*²¹, that is, emblematic and cultural architectural projects, financed mainly by the public sector, and which are designed by accredited and renowned architects through which the intention is to catalyse a process of economic regeneration, urban development and socio-cultural cohesion. With regards to Spain, one of the main objectives of these projects has been to turn them into new territorial tourist attractions, capable of transforming the image of the city²², while posing a great challenge for planning, by having to include these large facilities in urban plans and facing a budget reduction for other institutions and cultural activities. It is worth mentioning the cases of Meier's modernist MACBA (Contemporary Art Museum of Barcelona)²³, Gehry's Guggenheim Museum of Bilbao²⁴, or Calatrava's Valencia's City of Arts and Sciences²⁵, among others,

¹⁸ Hernández I Martí *et al.* 2014; Linheira *et al.* 2018.

¹⁹ Harvey 1989.

²⁰ Evans 2003.

²¹ de Frantz 2005; Vila Vázquez 2016.

²² Moix 2010; Rius-Ulldemolins, Rubio Arostegui 2016.

²³ Smith 2005.

²⁴ Keating, de Frantz 2004; Plaza 2000.

²⁵ Hernández I Martí *et al.* 2014.

all of which have been widely studied as their “entrepreneurial and cultural turn” has meant new policies, but also new social discourses of international repercussion.

In general, the cultural infrastructures generated because of these new urban planning paradigms have served to highlight (and perhaps “re-create”) the cultural prominence of the city, while promoting a renewal of urban tourism; in fact, it must be considered that, in this neoliberal and competitive society, the effects of urban regeneration plans extend far beyond urban limits, affecting national and even global discourses²⁶. Consequently, on several occasions iconic monuments have assumed a symbolic value affirming or “reimagining” places²⁷. Therefore, to project an image that breaks with tradition and with the historical past of the city, and closer to a progressive development²⁸, these megaprojects of urban regeneration are characterised by impressive and ultra-modern architectural elements, with highly debated visions, complicit in the creation of the city’s new tourism and identity icons²⁹.

At present, culture has come to play a central role in the design of European policies, as a series of central themes have been established to promote European cultural cooperation, including the protection of cultural heritage, the socio-economic value of culture, the promotion of gender equality and diversity, and measuring the positive effect of culture. Although these policies refer to different scales, the urban scale is still the privileged one as it is the mirror of broader dynamics. There is no doubt that European cultural cooperation begins on a closer scale, in which, as it appears in the new *European Cultural Agenda*³⁰, it is necessary to promote the economic dimension supporting creativity based on culture in the fields of education and innovation, as well as for jobs and growth. Artistic thinking is valued, promoting favourable ecosystems for cultural and creative industries, supporting access to finance, the capacity for innovation, the fair remuneration for authors and creators and the inter-sectoral cooperation, while fostering the necessary skills in the cultural and creative sectors, including digital, business, traditional and specialised skills.

However, the trajectories of these actions have been and will be different, depending on their functions and the responses of the community; there are successful cases and less visible ones, which have readjusted their initial project, physically and functionally reorganising the space, as in the case study presented below.

²⁶ de Frantz 2005.

²⁷ Dempsey 2012; Rius-Ulldemolins 2014; Rubio, Rius 2012.

²⁸ Bianchini 1999.

²⁹ Linheira *et al.* 2018; Prytherch 2006; Rius-Ulldemolins, Rubio Arostegui 2016.

³⁰ European Union 2018.

3. *An Historical Review of the City of Culture*

In 1999, the first public references to the project of the CoC appeared, with the launch (by the regional government) of an international ideas contest, to which twelve proposals from renowned architects were submitted, and was subsequently won by the American architect Peter Eisenman. In July of the same year, the regional government approved the *Sectoral Plan for the Galicia City of Culture*³¹, and in December, the Foundation for the Galicia City of Culture was established. From that moment on, the Foundation has managed both the construction works and the activities carried out in the buildings once completed, and almost exclusively with the financial support of the regional government, as part of the General Budget of the Autonomous Region of Galicia³². In February 2001, the first stone of the complex was laid. In order to contribute to diversify the sources of financing of the CoC, and therefore to guarantee its economic sustainability, in 2008 the private *Fundación Gaiás Cidade da Cultura* was created, made up of fifteen private companies and institutions, which would be endowed with a founding capital of 23 million euros, 49% of which would be contributed by the *Fundación Pública Cidade da Cultura de Galicia*, and which would be used to cover the cultural activity of the venue³³. The two foundations, public and private, merged in 2015³⁴. Ten years later, in January 2011, the first two buildings were opened to the public. After years of modifications, interruptions and delays, in 2020 the urbanisation and humanisation works on the outdoor area, which had begun in 2010, were concluded, made up of a surface of 14 hectares³⁵.

The complex, which was initially projected to have six buildings (a Library, Newspaper Library, Music Theatre, Museum, Central Services building and New Technologies building, with an initial budget of 108 million euros³⁶) underwent several changes since its inception, both in the names of the buildings and in their functionality, including a profound redefinition of their uses in 2005, when the Newspaper Library, the Library and the Museum were already under construction (fig. 1). This strong redefinition of the project, presented in 2006, derived from the arrival to the Galician government of a left-wing coalition which was very critical of the initial plan, and was supported by a consultation with the main Galician agents and cultural institutions³⁷. In

³¹ Xunta de Galicia 1999.

³² Fundación Cidade da Cultura 2016.

³³ Cidade da Cultura 2012; Reínero 2020.

³⁴ Reínero 2020.

³⁵ Xunta de Galicia 2020.

³⁶ Bermúdez 2018.

³⁷ Linheira *et al.* 2018.

the *Strategic Plan for the City of Culture 2012-2018*³⁸, these various transformations of the project were justified because of the economic situation adaptation processes, the prevailing cultural policies, and the evolution of the role of cultural containers. The project, promoted by Manuel Fraga, President of the regional government between 1990 and 2005, was included in the Galician strategic planning documents, as it happened in the *2010-2014 Galicia Strategic Plan Horizon 2020*³⁹, among whose strategic actions was the launch of the CoC, and was conceived as a “link between Europe and America”⁴⁰, which would be reinforced by the Lavacolla airport in Santiago; with the aim of spreading the Galicia brand internationally⁴¹. In the *2015-2020 Galicia Strategic Plan*⁴² promoting an innovation strategy of the Galician cultural and creative system from the CoC, was identified as a strategic challenge. And in the *2021-2030 Galicia Strategic Plan*⁴³, recently presented, the continuation of the CoC project endorsing entrepreneurship, technology and the programming of Galician culture has been identified as a priority challenge. Since its inception, this project has been surrounded by multiple controversies, mainly related to the opacity of its motivations, size, budget and content, which increased throughout the construction phase⁴⁴. These controversies, widely disseminated through the regional press, as well as nationally and internationally, and fuelled by the exponential increase in the initial budget, led to the creation of a negative image of the complex, associated with the waste of public funds⁴⁵, and which contributed to the interruption of the works in 2005, with the change of political parties in the Galician government. The Popular Party returned to the Galician government in 2009, but the construction works were again paralysed at the end of March 2013, and two of the projected buildings, the “Opera House” and an “International Arts Centre”, were never built. In 2011, The Guardian’s Giles Tremlett reported on the opening of the CoC in these terms: “Spain’s latest architectural extravagance was finally opened to the public today amid complaints that the massive new City of Culture in Santiago de Compostela is a huge and expensive white elephant (...) Others see the complex of six buildings in Galicia as a monument to the vanity of the region’s former rightwing premier, Manuel Fraga, and an anachronism at a time of austerity”⁴⁶ (fig. 2). At present, the Complex is comprised of four

³⁸ Cidade da Cultura 2012

³⁹ Xunta de Galicia 2010.

⁴⁰ *Ivi*, p. 54.

⁴¹ *Ivi*, p. 40.

⁴² Xunta de Galicia 2016.

⁴³ Xunta de Galicia 2020.

⁴⁴ Linheira *et al.* 2018; Vila Vázquez 2016.

⁴⁵ Bermúdez 2018; Dempsey 2012; López Silvestre, Álvarez Cebrián 2007.

⁴⁶ Rasch 2014, p. 164.

completed buildings, namely the Centre for Creative Entrepreneurship (CEE), the Library and Archive, the Museum and the Centre for Cultural Innovation (CCI) (fig. 3). The last building to be completed is the Fontán Building, inaugurated in 2021, and which replaces the originally planned Opera Theatre. The Fontán Building is a multifunctional building conceived to contribute to the integration of the 3 Galician public universities (Santiago, A Coruña and Vigo), hosting the headquarters of several unique research centres, including the Research Centre on Cultural Heritage (CISPAC: Centro de Investigación Singular de los Paisajes Culturales) and the Institute of Heritage Sciences (IN-CIPIT: Instituto de Ciencias del Patrimonio), dependent on Spanish National Research Council (CSIC: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas)⁴⁷. The CoC, which since its opening has received more than 6 million visitors⁴⁸, stands out for its location on Mount Gaiás, 4 km away from the historic centre of the city of Santiago de Compostela, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985 (fig. 4). This eccentric location, and the barriers to permeability between spaces imposed by the road and rail network have demanded the creation of integration strategies between the complex and the city of Santiago⁴⁹. In 2008, a linking project through a cable car was proposed but was never initiated as it was negatively reported by the Spanish Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), due to its great visual impact. This report warned of the dangers of excessive tourism specialisation for the authenticity of the city⁵⁰. In this way, other more sustainable initiatives have emerged, among which the Galicia Forest stands out, made up of native species arranged through trails with gentle slopes between Mount Gaiás and the Sar neighbourhood, or the Lake Park, located on the slope of Mount Gaiás near Mount Viso (fig. 5). Also, since February 2019 there has been direct access to the complex from the A-9 highway, the North-South backbone of the Galician Region, which also offers a fast connection with the city's international airport.

⁴⁷ Xunta de Galicia 2021.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ Concello de Santiago 2016.

⁵⁰ ICOMOS 2008.

| | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Visitors | 830,212 | 1,152,380 | 555,609 |
| Access to the web | n.d. | n.d. | 228,147 |
| Visitors to the Museum in person | 72,969 | 129,004 | 60,779 |
| Participants in guided tours | | | 12,466 |
| Participants in educational tours by videoconference | 20,760 | 22,145 | 3,748 |
| Visitors to cultural activities | 171,653 | 191,308 | 75,804 in person 30,582 online |
| Cultural activities | 156 | n.d. | 102 |
| Exhibitions and recreational and educational activities | | 35 | 24 |

Tab 1. Indicators related to the City of Culture (Source: Annual Reports. Authors' own work).

Table 1 shows the evolution of a set of selected indicators that have been introduced to prove the increase in the number of visitors in one year (2018-2019), but also the capacity of adaption shown as a consequence of the pandemic that, while cancelling or reducing in person activities, engendered a tradition of online ones.

4. Methodology

At a methodological level, two different qualitative techniques have been combined, that is, content analysis and in-depth interviews. Regarding the first technique, the primary sources have been analysed. More specifically, strategic and planning documents, reports and activity audits, projects and investments, related to the CoC and prepared by the relevant institutions. The objective of the review of these primary sources, produced mostly at a regional and local-urban scale, has been to identify and assess the changes related to the conception and evolution of this project. In fact, these primary sources have been approached from a qualitative interpretive methodology, according to which a categorisation system of the elements or dimensions of the investigated variables has been established⁵¹. The information presented responds to the objectives of the research, and for this reason a reading filter has been adopted prioritising the aspects that help to understand the multifaceted change that the CoC has undergone. It is necessary to clarify that it has not been possible to analyse data before 2018 because the activity reports of the CoC (starting in

⁵¹ Creswell 1998; Denzin, Lincoln 1994; Vasilachis 2006.

2016) only publish visitor data from 2018, and also because, in addition, they present different methodologies that limit their comparison.

Said contributions have been completed by conducting and analysing interviews undertaken to verify political efforts, highlighting the desired future project that the community has and the new urban settings. The interviews conducted have sought to know the opinion of a series of actors selected for their connection with the CoC project, as well as for being key actors in the institutional, associative and political life of Santiago de Compostela. The objective of eleven in-depth interviews has been to know the opinion of the interviewees about a possible change in the perception of the utility and role of the CoC in relation to the city of Santiago de Compostela. In those cases in which this change was perceived, the interviewees were asked to specify what elements have motivated the change, and its direction. As can be seen in Table 2, the eight in-depth interviews adopted the semi-structured format and were conducted between September 15 and December 2, 2021 (tab. 2). The interviewees have been selected insofar as they work in sectors of interest for the cultural management and policy-making of Santiago Compostela, or they are academics and specialists on topics such as urban management and planning, tourism management, use of space, and, equally relevant, they have witnessed the evolution of the CoC.

| Interviewee | Profile | Date |
|---------------------------------|---|------------|
| Mercedes Vázquez Bertomeu (MVB) | Member of San Pedro Neighbourhood Association “A Xuntanza”. It is a historic neighborhood outside of the former walled city and entrance of 3 pilgrimage routes to Santiago. | 20.10.2021 |
| Iago Lestegás (IA) | Resident of Santiago de Compostela, architect and doctor in Geography and Spatial Planning. He has published several papers on tourist housing and touristification in Santiago de Compostela. | 20.10.2021 |
| Xerardo Pereiro Pérez (XPP) | Lecturer of Social Anthropology at the University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro (north of Portugal). Although he works in Portugal, he is one of the few Galician social anthropologists specialized in tourism and works regularly in interdisciplinary networks with academics from University of Santiago de Compostela. | 24.10.2021 |
| David Reinero (DR) | Journalist for the online news website praza.gal. DR is an investigative journalist specialised in surveillance of power, who has extensively analysed the cultural policies and public facilities developed by the regional government (Xunta de Galicia). As the capital of Galicia, Santiago is one of the main places of analysis and study of DR pieces. | 23.10.2021 |
| Xosé Allegue (XA) | Chief Architect of the Santiago de Compostela Consortium, that is an institution in charge of planning and rehabilitation of the historic centre of Santiago de Compostela. | 26.10.2021 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------|
| Marta Lois González (MLG) | Lecturer of Political Science at the University of Santiago, currently a member of the city's local government. MLG has been responsible for the management of the area of tourism between 2015-2019. | 29.10.2021 |
| Pablo Sánchez Quinteiro (PSQ) | Music critic in various specialized magazines (Bachtrack, Codalario, mundoclasico.com). PSQ covers information on the main classical music concerts in Galicia, especially in A Coruña and Santiago de Compostela. | 30.10.2021 |
| Marcos Lorenzo Gallego (MLG) | Culture officer in Ferrol Council, MLG has been project coordinator in the Galicia City of Culture. He was also an independent technician and published several reports about the start of cultural sector in Santiago de Compostela. | 2.11.2021 |
| Miguel Anxo Rodríguez González (MARG) | Lecturer of Contemporary Art History at the University of Santiago de Compostela. He researches on art market and cultural economy. | 19.11.2021 |
| Jorge Linheira (JL) | Cultural Technical Infrastructures responsible in Pontevedra Municipality. He was as independent technician, and he wrote several essays and books about the state of the culture in Galicia and Santiago de Compostela. | 24.11.2021 |
| Ana Isabel Vázquez Reboredo (AIVR) | Manager of the <i>Fundación Cidade da Cultura</i> . She is responsible for designing, programming and managing the CoC complex. She is the first manager after the completion of the construction of the whole of the buildings. | 2.12.2021 |

Tab. 2. Interviews conducted and qualified opinions within the framework of this research (Source: authors' own work).

5. Results: The Urban Imagery Associated with the City of Culture

This section presents the results of the investigation pointing out the repositioning of the imagery of the CoC. The first section contains the results of the analysis of the strategic documents of the CoC, in which an evolution of its definition and objectives has been reflected upon. This is followed by a section in which the results of the interviews are discussed.

5.1. Evolution of the Definition and Objectives of the City of Culture

The CoC was conceived with the objective of becoming a hub of cultural expression, capable of reaching the entire European population and with a global impact⁵². This project is not an isolated example in Spain, but responds

⁵² Palmeira de Lucena 2012.

to the model of use, by cultural policies in recent decades, of large cultural infrastructures as tools for urban development and as a symbol of globalisation of the city's brand⁵³. The different strategic documents drawn up from the beginning of the project give an account of the image and the aspirations that were intended for the CoC. This is seen both in the CoC's own strategic plans, and in the different strategic documents of the city of Santiago, and also on a regional scale, given the magnitude and scope of the project.

The Table 3 presented below is the result of the content analysis of the documentation that, for easier reading, is categorised into three information elements: strategic document, image of the CoC and objectives of the CoC. This historical-programmatic reconstruction shows a progressive, and intentional, evolution of the image of the CoC over the decades. Table 3 analyses the strategic documents prepared at three scales: first, the documents related to the CoC; secondly, the strategic plans of the city of Santiago de Compostela, and the conceptualisation of the CoC in the urban context; and, finally, the plans drawn up on a regional scale, where the expected role of the CoC in the Galician sphere has been reviewed.

| Strategic Document | Image of the CoC | CoC objectives |
|--|--|--|
| 2006 City of Culture Usage Plan | Visual icon of Galicia in the 21st century | Galician cultural activity driver |
| 2012-2018 City of Culture Strategic Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic project for Galicia: social, economic and cultural development. - Cultural industry engine: creation, production, distribution and commercialisation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positioning the CoC internationally - Engine of change towards a new production model in Galicia based on culture, creativity, innovation and external connections. |
| Galicia City of Culture 2nd Strategic Plan (2021-2027) | CoC as a manufacturer of cultural content for all of Galicia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the cultural sector, internationalisation - Integration of the Galician public university system |
| Strategic Marketing Plan for Tourism: Santiago de Compostela, 2004 | <p>CoC as a future project that presents good opportunities for the city</p> <p>CoC as a new high-capacity and high-quality facility</p> | Good integration between the CoC project and Santiago's old city |
| 2007 Santiago de Compostela Strategic Plan | CoC as the central element of a city of knowledge | Exploit the CoC to achieve greater international visibility |

⁵³ Linheira *et al.* 2018.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 2009-2015 Santiago de Compostela Tourism Strategic Plan | - | Integration of the CoC with Santiago's old city |
| 2014-2020 Santiago EDUSI (Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development) Strategy | City of Culture as an intercultural node of Galicia | Integration of the City of Culture in the urban fabric |
| 2017-2022 Santiago de Compostela Tourism Strategic Plan | Identification of the CoC as a main tourist attraction for the City, and as a resource driver | Introducing new ways of connecting the City of Culture, even recovering the cable car project CoC as a complement to the MICE cultural and tourism offer |
| 2010-2014 Galicia Strategic Plan Horizon 2020 | Link between Europe and America | Extend the Galicia brand internationally |
| 2015-2020 Galicia Strategic Plan | Driving force for innovation in the Galician cultural and creative sectors | Develop an interdisciplinary program of contemporary cultural action |
| 2020-2030 Galicia Strategic Plan | Supporter of Galician culture entrepreneurship, technology, and programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration in the cultural life of Galicia, adapting its spaces to cultural production and not the other way around. - Host to various entities and coordinating bodies. |

Tab. 3. Vision and objectives of the City of Culture in the different strategic documents at local and regional level. (Source: Cited strategic documents. Authors' own work).

In the first place, in relation to the strategic documents of the project, we can say that both in its initial conception, defined in the architecture contest call, and in Peter Eisenman's winning proposal, a grandiose, singular complex was sought to showcase Galician culture to the world, with the aim of combining tradition and modernity through cultural innovation⁵⁴. Even after the change of government that had originally conceived the project, in the uses presented in 2006 Redefinition Plan, the objective of achieving international relevance was still maintained with the aim of placing the CoC among the largest cultural infrastructures in the world⁵⁵.

The 2012-2018 *City of Culture Strategic Plan*⁵⁶ acknowledged the continuous controversies that surrounded the complex, and therefore the need to evaluate both the perception of society and the degree of knowledge of the CoC inside and outside Galicia. And in what can be interpreted as an attempt to move away from the controversies generated by the CoC in its initial phas-

⁵⁴ Linheira *et al.* 2018; Prytherch 2006; Rius-Ulldemolins, Rubio Arostegui 2016.

⁵⁵ Estévez 2006.

⁵⁶ Cidade da Cultura 2012.

es, it introduced a change in the name of the project with the incorporation of the Gaiás toponym, which refers to the location of the complex, and so, in the plan, the CoC is renamed Gaiás – Galician City of Culture. In this plan, the need to place the CoC on the international scene, and to make it an engine of change towards a new productive model in the region based on the development of cultural industries, still persists. In the new strategic plan for the period 2021-2027, recently presented, the use of the toponym is consolidated naming it the *Second Strategic Plan of the Gaiás*⁵⁷. For the preparation of this second plan, consultations have been carried out aimed at integrating the opinion of Galician, Spanish and European cultural and creative industry experts, and the vision of citizens through online surveys. In the documentation related to the preparation of the Plan, internationalisation and the promotion of the cultural sector are still challenges to consider, while making the CoC a manufacturer of cultural contents for all of Galicia⁵⁸. The second plan also works on the objective of integrating university research in Social Sciences, represented by the Fontán Building, inaugurated in 2021⁵⁹.

Additionally, in relation to the strategic documents of the city of Santiago de Compostela, a World Heritage Site, the CoC has been considered a project capable of generating positive synergies within the city since the *2004 Tourism Marketing Strategic Plan*⁶⁰. From its inception, the local government has supported the project and has defended its universalist scope⁶¹. Therefore, strategic planning efforts have been directed especially towards integrating the complex in the city. In this sense, *the 2007 Santiago de Compostela Strategic Plan* (Plan Estratégico de Santiago de Compostela)⁶² advocated the promotion of its international visibility, considering the CoC a central element of a knowledge city. This objective was also one of the highlights in the 2009-2015 Plan. In the current *2017-2022 Santiago de Compostela Tourism Strategic Plan*⁶³, the CoC is considered a tourist attraction that acts as a driving force of the city, with the capacity to draw sustainable tourist flows, and one of the thirteen identified main tourist attractions, although when carrying out an evaluation of the objectives achieved in the previous 2009-2015 plan, it highlighted the insufficient results achieved in relation to the integration of the CoC and the old city centre.

Finally, in the three regional strategic plans drawn up since 2010, the CoC has been considered a driving force for the Galician cultural and creative industries, fostering cultural entrepreneurship in the region, and linking and

⁵⁷ Fundación Cidade da Cultura 2021a.

⁵⁸ Fundación Cidade da Cultura 2021b.

⁵⁹ Fundación Cidade da Cultura 2021a.

⁶⁰ Turismo de Santiago de Compostela 2004.

⁶¹ La Voz de Galicia 2006.

⁶² Concello de Santiago 2008.

⁶³ Turismo de Santiago de Compostela 2016.

disseminating Galician culture not only in Europe but also in America. The objectives have moved towards greater specification and, as the project has been progressing, and buildings completed and inaugurated, the objective has moved from “internationally disseminating the Galicia brand” in the *2010-2014 Plan*⁶⁴, to “developing an interdisciplinary program of contemporary cultural action” in the *2015-2020 Plan*⁶⁵, to achieving greater integration in the cultural life of Galicia and adapting host various entities and coordinating bodies.

We have seen the image and the objectives that the CoC project has been generating in these documents on a different scale. Even so, some of the project documents, including the most recent ones, suggest a lack of interest in prioritising citizens. As an example, in the process of citizen participation carried out for the elaboration of the *2014-2020 DUSI (Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development) Strategy of Santiago*⁶⁶, available in an online questionnaire for the entire population, it was concluded that the citizens of Santiago did not find the CoC objectives interesting enough. This lack of interest may be related to the fact that the works were still being carried out in 2016, the date of preparation for this strategy, but also to the need for greater integration of the CoC and the old city centre, which has been included as a priority in all documents (tab. 3). Even so, the participatory process carried out in July 2019 for the *2021-2030 Strategic Plan of Galicia*⁶⁷, also confirmed the lack of interest in dealing with the subject of the CoC by the people participating in the Culture working group⁶⁸. This situation seems to reflect that there are still concerns about the cultural investments made in the CoC and their impact on the rest of the investments in Santiago and in Galicia, and that efforts need to be redoubled for citizens to integrate the project into the urban imagery.

5.2. *Repositioning of the City of Culture*

The controversy generated by the CoC project has sometimes been presented as a result of divergent perceptions of the role of Galicia in the international cultural scene⁶⁹. Together with this issue, and over two decades, a negative image of the project grew, induced by multiple modifications in the initial plan, delays, budgetary imbalances, interruptions, and political controversies,

⁶⁴ Xunta de Galicia 2010.

⁶⁵ Xunta de Galicia 2016.

⁶⁶ Concello de Santiago 2016.

⁶⁷ Xunta de Galicia 2020.

⁶⁸ Xunta de Galicia 2021.

⁶⁹ Dempsey 2012; Figue 2012.

which – widely disseminated by the national and international press – conditioned the image of the complex and the perception by citizens⁷⁰.

As mentioned in the methodology, in order to investigate the nature, scope and details of the supposed change in perception about the CoC, a number of relevant people in different fields (academic, political, artistic, etc.) were interviewed. An attempt was made to achieve a plural vision sufficiently illustrative and explanatory about the changes in the perception of the CoC in recent times.

The first questions related to the existence of a change in image in the CoC in recent years, and to the meaning of that change. Most of the interviewees agreed that this change in image has occurred, and positive elements have been identified in this change, although opinions differ on their orientation and intensity. For AIVR: “the change has occurred”; she places great emphasis on the initial difficulties with which the project started: “the first years were turbulent, with many controversies, of always being a little in the centre of different controversies on different issues, and also with an important political focus”. The polarization that the debate on the CoC still awakens can be seen in the fact that there are interviewees who do not consider that the change has taken place. This is the case of IL, who stated that “there is still a negative view of the CoC, which is still seen as something unnecessary, with attempts to fill it with content at all costs”, and XA, for whom “the public opinion on the CoC has not improved much, and anyone with judgment can see the contradictions”. In relation to this, the culture technician JL indicates that the situation right now is more positive, since: “there are more and more people from the cultural sector who freely express their opinion against this cultural infrastructure”.

Regarding the meaning of the image change, most of the interviewees agreed that there were positive elements to this change, although in some cases negative elements were identified, too. Firstly, we point out the words of MVB who affirmed that “the CoC acts as a cultural focus”, but at the same time said that “the activities are not perceived as contributing anything new to the cultural life of the city”.

As JL affirmed that: “all this explains that in recent years there have been people and political parties that have asked that the Xunta [the government of Galicia] stop allocating more economic resources to the CoC”. DR is more positive, indicating that “as more activities are carried out, there are more people who are attracted by the offer. The previous stage, in which a negative image was projected, has been passed”.

For AIVR, the current situation is clearly positive, and there is a break with the previous one “once the driest phase, which is the construction phase,

⁷⁰ Cidade da Cultura de Galicia 2012.

finished, people have perceived that the complex is finished, and that more focus is being placed on the cultural part. The site is perceived as finished and integrated and with a friendlier aspect by including the natural and landscape part, and especially after the pandemic, when we all turned to nature and free space". An idea gains strength in the manager's speech once the material development phase of the continent is over, it is time to bet on immaterial aspects, that is, on content and cultural programming: "I think that all that perception of the end of the work allows us to see a cultural part that was in operation but was somewhat overshadowed by the entire urban part. Now the contents can be viewed more and more".

For XP, both the general public and people in the culture sector have chosen the "pragmatic" approach. As he indicated: "it has gone from a total opposition to the CoC to a pragmatic adaptation: we have this and we have to take advantage of it, make the most of it. The CoC was made with public money, and something has to be done, because other alternative solutions could be worse". MARG, from an optimistic position, said that "at least you can see that the work is finished. People appreciate that the excessive spending has been stopped". However, it is important to highlight the feeling that it is necessary to take advantage of the opportunities that the CoC offers. For the music critic PSQ "with its greatness -especially architectural- and with its limitations, the CoC is already seen as a great opportunity for the present and future. From the world of music, the CoC would be the perfect environment to develop a stable program of chamber music -something non-existent in Galicia- with renown soloists and groups". In the music field, the CoC should risk more and offer more specialised and coherent cultural programming, since the opposite already exists: "the CoC could fill other shortcomings that Galicia has, such as the lack of groups specialised in baroque or contemporary music, which would find an iconic setting in the CoC, like Casa da Musica in Porto".

However, some of the interviewees indicated that the change has not been positive. They stated that the change has been negative due to the lack of innovative and coherent programming. For ML, "there is an anxiety of space, you have to do things, but without a great strategic orientation in cultural terms. There is no clear cultural strategic vision. It is more evident in the field of creative entrepreneurship, but not in the field of cultural programming". Particularly interesting was the local drift of the CoC's programming that MLG highlighted. A programme, in his opinion, directed to a greater extent at the inhabitants of Santiago de Compostela. However, despite this more local orientation, MLG assures that citizens still perceive the CoC as something external, not connected, that does not constitute a reference in Santiago de Compostela.

Regarding the third question, which tried to delve into the factors that led to the change, the end of the works was the most immediate. Journalist DR affirmed that "before they talked about works, projects and advertisement. But

now they carry out activities and communicate”. A similar opinion was held by MARG, who highlighted the “social relief” produced by the completion of the works. Also, PSQ pointed out that “in recent years, after the construction phase and recurrent political and media debate, the CoC has become a consolidated part of our cultural infrastructures”. This approach was supported by MLG, culture officer, who affirmed that the image of the CoC has changed because “there has been an architectural change with respect to the initial project, with the withdrawal of the two buildings that were in the middle, and the decision to build the Fontán Building”.

Another identified change agent has been the use of the CoC as a mass vaccination centre in the Covid-19 pandemic, increasing its visibility. This is the opinion of MLG who pointed out that the image of the CoC has changed in the last year “because it has been a mass vaccination centre”. An interesting nuance was provided by XP, who noted that “people developed a new opinion of the CoC after going through there for the Covid-19 vaccination. There was a certain distance between the CoC and Santiago and Galicia in general, and this has improved”. The anthropologist pointed out the fact that a good part of the younger population has been able to get to know the CoC visiting it at least twice to get vaccinated. He also mentioned that in recent times the positive connotations of the space increased due to its greater use in the population’s day-to-day life: the library is increasingly used by young people to study; families with children stroll through the lake park; recreational areas and playgrounds around the parks are used. It seems that there is more activity than before and that at last the space “is alive”.

The CoC manager herself values very positively the role of the vaccination centre that Gaiás played in the pandemic: “at a time a health crisis like the one we were in and having facilities like the ones we have he did a very positive job”. For AIVR, the vaccination was totally compatible with normal activity and entailed direct contact of new audiences with the complex: “we did not lose cultural activity, but we gained an audience that we did not have before. There were many people who came here for the first time to get vaccinated; they were happy to be vaccinated, so after that, they went up to the Museum to see the exhibitions, took brochures, etc.”.

From the analysis of the interviews, it can be deduced that another of the factors that has promoted change has been the importance of identifying the Galician government, and specifically, the Department of Culture, with the CoC project. According to DR, the regional government: “makes a patrimonial appropriation of every activity carried out at the CoC”. MLG and MARG indicated something similar, highlighting the recent use that the regional government has been making of Gaiás as a venue for multiple acts and events. However, perhaps the central point of this analysis of what elements have contributed to changing the image of the CoC is precisely the programming of activities that take place there. It is here where we find a greater divergence of

criteria, although everyone noted that many more activities have recently been carried out, and that they have diversified. For PSQ: “from the outside, a new pragmatism is palpable on the part of those responsible for the CoC, who are open to all kinds of proposals. I think that with a much larger budget, in line with the investment that the CoC entailed, and with qualified managers, with a good international background, an attractive, stable and multidisciplinary program could be developed that would be a benchmark at a national and international level”. This positive reading of the CoC, although critical, opens up new possibilities to imagine a program closer to the original idea that inspired the project: an international centre of cultural excellence. The effort of programmers in diversifying the activities carried out has been recognised, but a greater economic contribution by the regional government has been demanded, which would allow the creation of stable human resources structures, capable of guiding and leading a stable and solid project.

Although the increase in the number of events scheduled has been acknowledged, one of the most widespread criticisms has been the lack of cohesion of the programming and its local nature. For MLG: “the CoC has rather become a space for the promotion of creative industries that work around a creative purpose, while the cultural project has been losing steam and centrality. MARG, for his part, stated that “there is the perception that the CoC is consuming too many resources that could go to other areas, and also there is a critical perception among the artistic community of what the programming of the CoC is like, as it looks like there is no project behind it. It seems that they just want to carry out a lot of activities”.

This supposed approach based on quantity and not so much on quality linked with MLG’s idea that “the CoC has been transformed into a leisure space, a recreational area for the people of Santiago, one more sociocultural centre, but larger than the others”. Something similar was noted by MVB, who indicated that “the activities are more typical of a sociocultural centre than of a culture centre of reference in Galicia”.

For AIVR, ten years after the inauguration, a new time has begun, and the Second Strategic Plan indicates a new roadmap. The new strategy of the CoC is to generate its own content and disseminate it to all cities and towns in Galicia as: “now we have reached the moment when we believe that these contents can come out of Gaiás”. The key is turning Gaiás into a breeding ground for cultural companies, which create content to spread throughout Galicia: “we believe that we are at that moment and that we are a kneecap of the cultural sector in Galicia, an important part that turns this entire complex that we want to disseminate, and that the work is seen throughout Galicia”.

In relation to this idea, and from what was pointed out by XP, it can be said that the CoC has taken on a new meaning as a physical space with a program targeting a very specific audience: families with children. In a city like Santiago de Compostela, in which the weather is an adverse factor, and in which

there is a strong demand for cultural activities for families, the CoC has been able to position itself by offering programming adapted to these needs. AIVR assumes that the presence of the youngest is essential, not only in the present moment, but in relation to the future. It is conceived as a strategic bet.

This change in direction takes the CoC away from the initial idea of being a cultural centre of reference in the national and international context, as pointed out by MARG, and has placed it in a much more pragmatic situation, at the service of the citizens of Santiago de Compostela and their daily needs. In any case, at present the door seems to be opening to a greater diversification of the functions of the CoC, which now include tourism, culture, university, that of a technopolis and a new and unexpected one: the “City of Children” which seems to follow Tonucci’s⁷¹ postulates regarding the importance of having free public spaces to develop children’s games and that children play in free and open urban environments.

5.3. *Results*

As far as the management is concerned, the *II Strategic Plan of the City of Culture* is seen as an essential document that will strengthen the identification of Gaiás not only with Santiago de Compostela, its insertion territory, but with all of Galicia. The commitment to the fusion between technology and culture (with the creation of a digital art centre), the emphasis that will be given to the formation of an ecosystem for the creation of cultural companies and the desire for the CoC to function as a true keystone of cultural creation in Galicia will mark a new turn, once the construction phase of the complex is over.

From the analysis of the interviews, it can be concluded that there has been a change in the perception of the CoC. There is no unanimity in classifying this change as positive, but there is an affirmation that a new stage in the development of the CoC has begun, and that elements which are well valued by society can be identified. The factors that have led to this change are related in the first place to the end of the works, with the conclusion of a project that had remained unfinished for two decades. Added to this is the strengthening of the institutional role of the Galician government in the CoC. In fact, the Gaiás has become an icon, which aims to set in motion a powerful system of identification and attachment that serves as an amplifier for successive cultural policies, responding to the demands of urban marketing⁷², and therefore the regional government has actively incorporated it into its institutional image.

⁷¹ Tonucci 2005.

⁷² Bianchini 1999; Tibbot 2002.

Another interesting aspect has been the vaccination campaign during the Covid-19 pandemic, which has been carried out in Gaiás, and thanks to which many people have visited the CoC, discovering the place first-hand. In this way, vaccination has meant a “humanisation” and a social internalisation of the CoC. The stories of Gaiás as “the city of health” and a safe space provided by the *Welfare State* against the pandemic have gained strength in recent months. The vaccination campaign made it possible to link Gaiás and the concepts of efficiency and planning in the same narrative, creating a positive image of the CoC and its management in a very clear way, breaking with the stereotypes of the early years. Also, the revaluation of uncrowded natural environments and open spaces should be highlighted, something that the CoC offers, presenting itself as an alternative to the city centre, thanks, among others, to the Galicia Forest, the Literary Garden, the Lake Park, the climbing wall or the skate park of the Theatre Garden, spaces that the public has rediscovered in recent months, not to mention the artistic interventions that enrich them, making them more attractive. These changes are linked to the third idea: the creation of an increasingly dense and varied program, where special attention is devoted to programming aimed at families with children and young people.

Finally, we must not forget the concepts of *greenwashing* and *research washing*, exemplified in the case study. In fact, the institutional policy of the regional government granted crucial importance to the creation of the Galicia Forest and the construction of a new building dedicated to research, the Fontán Building. Indeed, environment and research are basic pillars that generate consensus today. Especially interesting is the commitment to academic research, which gives the CoC a new meaning. It can be affirmed that scientific research is the new religion of the twenty first century and constitutes an effective introduction for the visitors who arrives at the CoC and the first thing they see is the new Fontán Building, named after Domingo Fontán, a person of science and one of the most brilliant Galicians of all time.

Conclusions

The CoC is considered a beneficial asset for Santiago de Compostela, but unlike what has happened in other Spanish cities, where large architectural projects have been able to transform the image of the city by becoming important tourist attractions⁷³, the CoC has not constituted an element of urban transformation, nor has been a central element in local policies, as opposed to

⁷³ Moix 2010; Rius-Ulldemolins, Rubio Arostegui 2016.

what has happened with other similar projects⁷⁴. In Santiago, the CoC is not regarded as an urban regeneration project, as is the case in other European cities⁷⁵, both because of its location in the periphery of the city far from the historic centre, and because of the special nature of Santiago de Compostela as a World Heritage City. Therefore, based on the interpretations of Tibbot (2002) and Evans (2003), we can affirm that the CoC has not undergone a process of collective identification with the city of Santiago, due to the strength of the other existing and consolidated cultural places of interest, fundamentally linked to the Way of St. James.

In the case of the CoC, the ability to synthesise and represent connections of different nature⁷⁶ is still under way, therefore it cannot yet be considered a new urban icon. The path of appropriation of the CoC by the citizens of Santiago de Compostela has been parallel to the change of image, which has benefited from the end of the works and the positive effects derived from efficient access, a varied program, or a space for families and young people; and that has stopped prioritising its universalist approach.

The diachronic approach that has been adopted in this work to analyse and categorise the perception of the CdC by the citizens of Santiago confirms a progressive rethinking of the original cultural space of the CoC. As seen in the presentation and in the analysis of the interviews carried out, the term change can be expressed in many ways, reinforcing the magnitude and complexity of an initial project, which has been resizing its aspirations. Thus: “Changing so as not to die” has meant reacting to the criticisms of this megaproject from different areas, with a pragmatic approach of the space that has implied a physical and functional reorganisation of the buildings. From a tangible and intangible point of view, efforts have been made to achieve a repositioning in the citizens urban imagery, trying to evoke what Bianchini (1999) stated about the need to make these megaprojects communicate with the different environments (natural, social, cultural and economic, etc.), in order to increase Santiago de Compostela and Galician citizenship awareness. Some of the tangible changes indicated on the previous pages refer to the construction of new buildings, new spaces (indoor and outdoor) and new road connections. These transformations result in intangible changes, some of which are the incorporation of new functions to the initial project, and the production of new special discourses that are contributing to a new urban imagery.

Despite its multiple negative impacts, the pandemic caused by Covid-19 has been an opportunity to strengthen and reinforce the usefulness of this urban space, given the already existing cultural, recreational, administrative

⁷⁴ Miles *et al.* 2000; Scott 2010.

⁷⁵ Bianchini, Parkinson 1993; Vila Vázquez 2016.

⁷⁶ Bianchini 1999.

and university functions, as has happened in other cultural megaprojects in Spain. The “healthcare” functions have been added, since one of its buildings (the Eisenman Room) has been a vaccination centre for a considerable part of Galicia (differing from its initial use).

It is evident that the CoC is a polysemic space, with a processual, dynamic meaning and in continuous transformation. As indicated in the introduction, the objective of this research has been to analyse and reconstruct the evolution of the urban imagery associated with the CoC and the possible role of the pandemic in this process. We believe that in addition to having fulfilled the initial purpose when trying to reconstruct the strategic and political decisions related to the CoC, it has paved the way to new research lines that will reveal many more narratives that we hope to be able to analyse in future research.

References

- Balsas C.J.L. (2004), *City Centre Regeneration in the Context of the 2001 European Capital of Culture in Porto, Portugal*, «Local Economy», 19, n. 4, pp. 396-410.
- Belfiore E. (2002), *Art as a Means of Alleviating Social Exclusion: Does it really Work? A Critique of Instrumental Cultural Policies and Social Impact Studies in the UK*, «International Journal of Cultural Policy», 8, n. 1, pp. 91-106.
- Bermúdez S. (2018), *Santiago de Compostela and the Spatial Articulation of Power: From the Cathedral to the Cidade da Cultura*, «Abriu», n. 7, pp. 47-58.
- Bianchini F. (1993), *Remaking European Cities: The Role of Cultural Policies*, in *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The West European Experience*, edited by F. Bianchini, M. Parkinson, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 1-19
- Bianchini F. (1999), *Cultural Planning for Urban Sustainability*, in *Culture and Cities. Cultural Processes and Urban Sustainability*, edited by L. Nyström, C. Fudge, Stockholm: The Swedish Urban Development Council, pp. 34-51.
- Bianchini F., Parkinson M. (1993), *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The West European Experience*, Manchester: Manchester University.
- Brenner N. (2004), *Urban Governance and the Production of New State Spaces in Western Europe 1960-2000*, «Review of International Political Economy», 11, n. 3, pp. 447 -488.
- Cidade da Cultura de Galicia (2012), *Plan Estratégico 2012-2018*, <<https://www.cidadedacultura.gal/es/system/files/downloads/2012/09/plangaias.pdf>>, 20.10.21.
- Concello de Santiago (2008), *Plan Estratégico de la Ciudad de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela (Santiago de Compostela Strategic Plan)*, Santiago de Compostela: Santiago de Compostela City Council.

- Concello de Santiago (2016), *Estrategia de Desarrollo Urbano Sostenible Integrado de Santiago De Compostela 2015-2025. Programa Operativo de Crecimiento Sostenible de Ciudades 2014-2020*, <https://proxectoseuropeos.santiagodecompostela.gal/sites/portalproxectoseuropeos/files/32mb_-estraxia_dusi_santiago_de_compostela.pdf>, 20.10.21.
- Connolly M.G. (2011), *The ‘Liverpool model(s)’: cultural planning, Liverpool and Capital of Culture 2008*, «International Journal of Cultural Policy», 19, n. 2, pp. 162-181. doi: 10.1080/10286632.2011.638982.
- Creswell J.W. (1998), *Qualitative Research Inquiry and Research Design. Choosing among Five Traditions*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Ltd.
- De Frantz M. (2005), *From Cultural Regeneration to Discursive Governance: Constructing the Flagship of the “Museumsquartier Vienna” as a Plural Symbol of Change*, «International Journal of Urban and Regional Research», 29, n. 1, pp. 50-66.
- Dempsey K. (2012), *Galicia’s Hurricane”: Actor Networks and Iconic Constructions*, «The Geographical Review», 112, n. 1, pp. 93-110.
- Denzin N.K., Lincoln Y.S. (1994), *Introduction: Entering the Field of Qualitative Research*, in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by L. Given, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Ltd, pp. 1-17.
- Estévez, J.L. (2006), *El bipartito llevará hasta el final el proyecto de la Cidade da Cultura*, «El País», <https://elpais.com/diario/2006/12/27/galicia/1167218289_850215.html>, 28.11.2021.
- Evans G. (2003), *Hard-branding the Cultural City. From Prado to Prada*, «International Journal of Urban and Regional Research», 27, n. 2, pp. 417-440.
- European Union (2018), *A New European Agenda for Culture*, EUR-Lex – 52018DC0267 – EN – EUR-Lex (europa.eu), <<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/document/new-european-agenda-culture-swd2018-267-final>>, 28.11.21.
- Figue S. (2012), *Ciudad de la Cultura: Modernity and Architecture in Santiago de Compostela*, «Consilience: The Journal of Sustainable Development», 8, n. 1, pp. 34-49.
- Fundación Cidade da Cultura (2016), *Contas anuais. Exercicio 2016*, <https://www.cidadedacultura.gal/gl/system/files/downloads/2020/03/Contas%202016.pdf>>, 20.20.21.
- Fundación Cidade da Cultura (2021a), *Expertos gallegos, nacionales e internacionais, consultados en la elaboración del II Plan Estratégico del Gaiás*, <<https://www.cidadedacultura.gal/es/noticias/expertos-gallegos-nacionales-e-internacionales-consultados-en-la-elaboracion-del-ii-plan>>, 25.10.21.
- Fundación Cidade da Cultura (2021b), *60 expertos y 600 encuestas para el Plan Estratégico de la Cidade da Cultura 21-27*, <<https://www.cidadedacultura.gal/es/noticias/60-expertos-y-600-encuestas-para-el-plan-estrategico-de-la-cidade-da-cultura-21-27>>, 25.10.21.

- García B. (2004a), *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration in Western European Cities: Lessons from Experience, Prospects for the Future*, «Local Economy», 19, n. 4, pp. 312-326.
- García B. (2004b), *Urban Regeneration, Arts Programming and Major Events: Glasgow 1990, Sydney 2000 and Barcelona 2004*, «International Journal of Cultural Policy», 10, n. 1, pp. 103 -118.
- García B. (2008), *Política cultural y regeneración urbana en las ciudades de Europa Occidental: lecciones aprendidas de la experiencia y perspectivas para el futuro*, «RIPS», 7, n. 1, pp. 111-125.
- Gray C. (2007), *Commodification and Instrumentality in Cultural Policy*, «International Journal of Cultural Policy», 13, n. 2, pp. 203-215.
- Harvey D. (1989), *From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism*, «Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography», 71, n. 1, pp. 3-17.
- Hernández I Martí G.M., Albert M., Gómez Nicolau E., Requena M., eds. (2014), *La cultura como trinchera. La política cultural en el País Valencià (1975-2013)*, València: Universitat de València.
- ICOMOS. Comité Nacional Español (2008), *Informe de ICOMOS España sobre la construcción de un teleférico entre la Estación, la “Cidade da Cultura” y el centro histórico de Santiago de Compostela*, <<http://www.coag.es/websantiago/pdf/informeteleferico.pdf>>, 15.10.21.
- Jessop B. (2004), *Multi-level Governance and Multi-level Metagovernance*, in *Multi-level Governance*, edited by I. Bache, M. Flinders, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 49-74.
- Kearns G., Philo C., eds. (1993), *Selling Places: the City as Cultural Capital, Past and Present*, Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Keating M. (1988), *The City that Refused to Die. Glasgow: the Politics of Urban Regeneration*, Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.
- Keating M., de Frantz M. (2004), *Culture-led Strategies for Urban Regeneration: A Comparative Perspective on Bilbao*, «The Guggenheim Bilbao Museum: art, politics and the city, Special Issue, International Journal of Iberian Studies», edited by N. Arruti, 16, n. 3, pp. 187-194.
- Kong L. (2000), *Culture, Economy, Policy: Trends and Developments*, «Geoforum, Special Issue on Cultural Industries and Cultural Policies», 31, n. 4, pp. 385-390.
- La Voz de Galicia (2006), *El alcalde plantea una Cidade da Cultura «universalista»*, <https://www.lavozdegalicia.es/noticia/santiago/2006/03/03/alcalde-plantea-cidade-da-cultura-universalista/0003_4568362.htm>, 25.10.21
- Linheira J., Rius-Ulldemolins J., Hernández G.M. (2018), *Política cultural, modelo de ciudad y grandes infraestructuras culturales: análisis comparativo de la Cidade da Cultura de Santiago de Compostela y la Ciutat de les Arts i les Ciències de Valencia*, «RIPS», 17, n. 1, pp. 153-178.

- López Silvestre F., Álvarez Cebrián M. (2007), *Architecture, Landscape and Cultural Industry in Spain (1992-2007): The Cultural City (2001-in Progress)*, «Nordica Geographical Publications», 36, n. 4, pp. 83-97.
- Miles M., Hall T., Borden I., eds. (2000), *City Cultures Reader*, London: Routledge.
- Moix L. (2010), *Arquitectura milagrosa: hazañas de los arquitectos estrella en la España del Guggenheim*, Barcelona: Anagrama.
- Mooney G. (2004), *Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation? Critical Reflections on Glasgow, European City of Culture 1990*, «Local Economy», 19, n. 4, pp. 327-340.
- Palmeira de Lucena F. (2012), *Cidade da Cultura da Galícia: o deslocamento da Catedral de Santiago*, I Congresso Histórico Internacional – As Cidades na História: População (2012), <<https://ch.guimaraes.pt/minutes/1chi>>, 27.11.21.
- Philo C., Kearns G. (1993), *Culture, history, capital: a critical introduction to the selling of places*, in *Selling places: the city as cultural capital, past and present*, edited by G. Kearns, C. Philo, Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Pike A. (2011), *Brands and Branding Geographies*, Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar.
- Plaza B. (2000), *Evaluating the Influence of a Large Cultural Artifact in the Attraction of Tourism: The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Case*, «Urban Affairs Review», 36, n. 2, pp. 264-274.
- Prytherch D.L. (2006), *Narrating the Landscapes of Entrepreneurial Regionalism: Rescaling, 'New' Regionalism and the Planned Remaking of València, Spain*, «Space and Polity», 10, n. 3, pp. 203-227.
- Rasch N.A. (2014), *Cultural representations of Galician identity: Contemporary narratives of Santiago de Compostela and the Camiño de Santiago*. PhD thesis, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.
- Reinero, D. (2020), *A Cidade da Cultura busca rendibilidade para os seus minguantes aforros nun fondo de investimento*, «Praza», <<https://praza.gal/economia/a-cidade-da-cultura-busca-rendibilidade-para-os-seus-minguantes-aforros-nun-fondo-de-investimento>>, 23.10.21.
- Rius-Ulldemolins J. (2014), *La gobernanza y la gestión de las instituciones culturales nacionales: de la oposición entre arte y economía a la articulación entre política cultural y management*, «Revista Papers», 99, n. 1, pp. 73-95.
- Rius-Ulldemolins J., Zamorano M.M. (2014), *Spain's nation branding project Marca España and its cultural policy: the economic and political instrumentalization of a homogeneous and simplified cultural image*, «International Journal of Cultural Policy», pp. 1-21.
- Rius-Ulldemolins J., Rubio Arostegui J.A. (2016), *Política cultural y grandes equipamientos culturales en el Estado español. Los retos de la gestión y gobernanza en el contexto internacional*, in *Treinta años de políticas cultu-*

- rales en España. Participación cultural, gobernanza territorial e industrias culturales*, edited by J. Rius Ulldemolins, J.A. Rubio Arostegui, València: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, pp. 161-184.
- Rubio A., Rius J. (2012), *La modernización de la gestión pública de la cultura. Análisis comparado del caso de los equipamientos culturales de las comunidades autónomas de Cataluña y Madrid*, «Gestión y Análisis de Políticas Públicas», n. 8, pp. 79-92.
- Sánchez Belando Ma.V., Rius Ulldemolins J., Zarlenga M.I. (2012), *¿Ciudad creativa y ciudad sostenible?: Un análisis crítico del “modelo Barcelona” de políticas culturales*, «Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais», n. 99, pp. 31-50.
- Scott A. (2010), *Cultural Economy and the Creative Field of the City*, «Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography», 92, n. 2, pp. 115-130.
- Smith A. (2005), *Conceptualizing City Image Change: The “Re-Imaging” of Barcelona*, «Tourism Geographies», 7, n. 4, pp. 398-423.
- Tibbot R. (2002), *Culture Club. Can Culture Lead Urban Regeneration?*, «Locum Destination Review», 9, pp. 71-73.
- Tonucci F. (2005), *La città dei bambini. Un nuovo modo di pensare la città*, Bari: Laterza.
- Tremlett G. (2011), *Spain’s extravagant City of Culture opens amid criticism*, «The Guardian», <<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/jan/11/galicia-city-of-culture-opens>>, 15.10.21.
- Turismo de Santiago de Compostela (2004), *Plan de Marketing estratégico del turismo de Santiago de Compostela*, Santiago de Compostela: Turismo de Santiago.
- Turismo de Santiago de Compostela (2016), *Plan Estratégico do Turismo de Santiago 2017-2022*, Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela: Turismo de Santiago, <https://www.santiagoturismo.com/files/2018/12/20181218140633_PETCompostela.pdf>, 15.10.21.
- Vasilachis I. (2006), *Estrategias de investigación cualitativa*, Barcelona: Gedisa.
- Vila Vázquez J.I. (2016), *Les flagship projects et leur impact territorial dans les villes européennes. Analyse comparative de quatre cas à Paris*, PhD Thesis: Université Paris I-Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.
- Xunta de Galicia (1999), *Resolución de 30 de julio de 1999, de la Secretaría General de la Consellería de Cultura, Comunicación Social y Turismo*, DOGA. Diario Oficial de Galicia, 9 August 1999, <https://www.xunta.gal/dog/Publicados/1999/19990809/Anuncio13446_es.html>, 15.10.2021.
- Xunta de Galicia (2010), *Plan Estratégico Galicia 2010-2014 Horizonte 2020*, <http://www.conselleriadefacenda.es/plan-estratexico/pdfs/plan_estratexico_version_web.pdf>, 15.10.21.
- Xunta de Galicia (2016), *Plan Estratégico de Galicia 2015-2020*, <<http://www.planestratexico.gal/documents/4752806/4752831/PEG-2015-2020-20161213-Tomo-2.pdf/491c6f68-1c76-47df-87d9-1e9e3cf8c2d7>>, 15.10.21.

- Xunta de Galicia (2020), *Plan Estratégico de Galicia 2020-2030. Resumo dos resultados das mesas de traballo para a identificación de retos e necesidades de cara á realización do Plan Estratégico de Galicia 2021-2030*, <http://www.planestratexico2030.gal/documents/20509601/20509661/Resultados_Mesas_de_traballo_Xullo_2019_PEG-21-30.pdf/f90b997d-1c0b-4225-8752-c4c5f7bd555c>, 15.10.21.
- Xunta de Galicia (2021), *Gaiás, Cidade da Cultura de Galicia. Memoria de actividades. Ano 2020*, <https://www.cidadedacultura.gal/gl/system/files/downloads/2021/08/cidadedacultura_memoria2020_web.pdf>, 15.10.21.
- Zukin S. (1995), *The Cultures of Cities*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Appendix

Fig. 1. Model of the project designed for the City of Culture by Peter Eisenman exhibited in the Museum (Source: the authors)

Spain's extravagant City of Culture opens amid criticism

Peter Eisenman's complex in Santiago de Compostela was commissioned during the boom, and has cost four times more than planned



📷 Galicia's City of Culture, designed by Peter Eisenman. Photograph: Inigo Bujedo Aguirre/View Pictures/Rex Features

Spain's latest architectural extravagance was finally opened to the public today amid complaints that the massive new City of Culture in Santiago de

Fig. 2. *Spain's extravagant City of Culture opens amid criticism* (Source: Tremlett 2011)

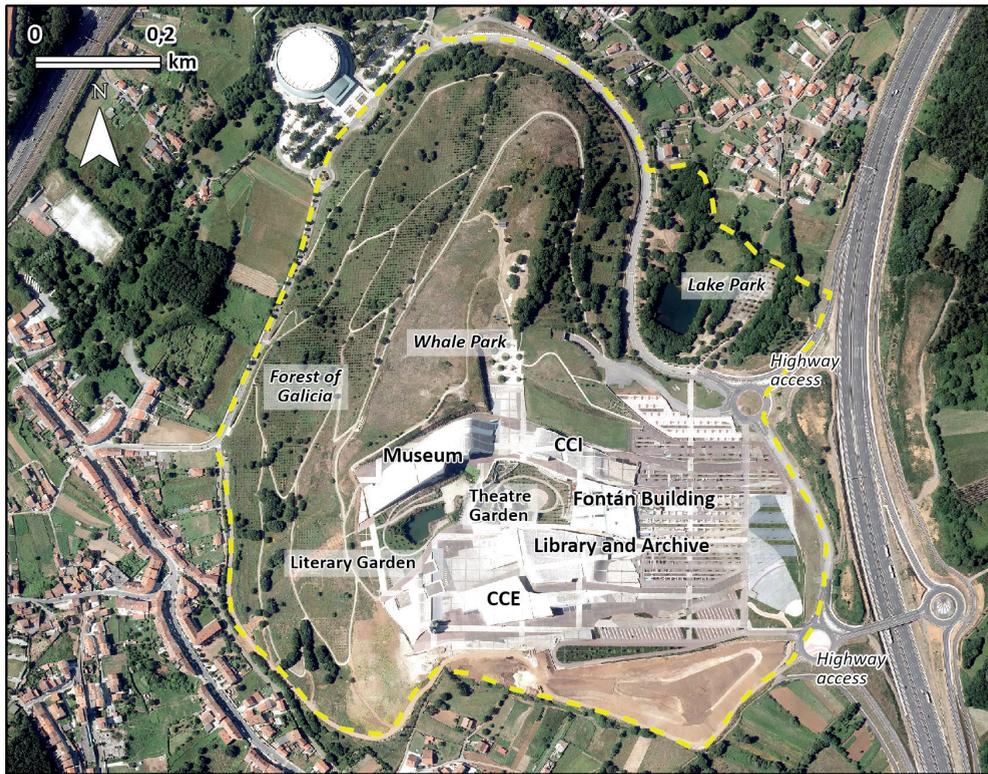


Fig. 3. City of Culture Complex today. (Source: PNOA 2020. Authors' own work)

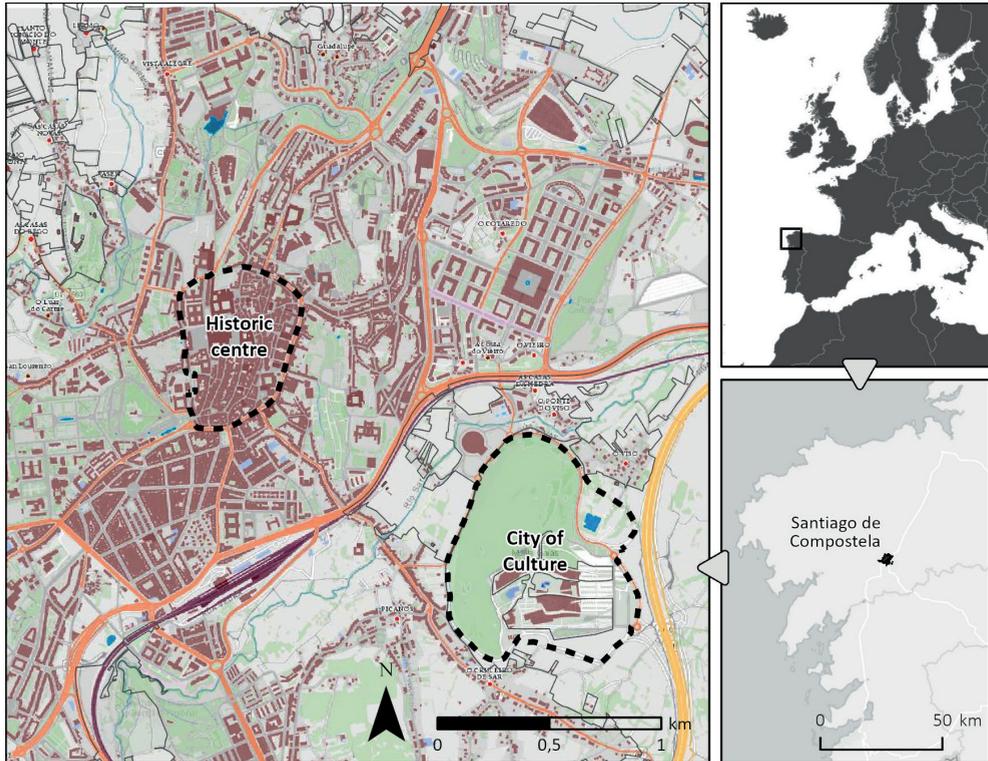


Fig. 4. Map of localization of the City of Culture (Source: SDI Municipality of Santiago de Compostela. Authors' own work)



Fig. 5. View of the historic centre and Cathedral from the Museum (Source: the authors)

JOURNAL OF THE DIVISION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE
Department of Education, Cultural Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata

Direttore / Editor
Pietro Petroroia

Co-direttori / Co-editors

Tommy D. Andersson, Elio Borgonovi, Rosanna Cioffi, Stefano Della Torre,
Michela di Macco, Daniele Manacorda, Serge Noiret, Tonino Pencarelli,
Angelo R. Pupino, Girolamo Sciallo

Texts by

Diego Borghi, Valentina Borniotto, Quentin Brouard-Sala,
Andrea Carnevali, Maria Luisa Catoni, Sonia Cavicchioli, Chiara Cecalupo,
Luca Ciancabilla, Antonino Crisà, Elena Dai Prà, Andrea D'Andrea, Federica
Epifani, Begoña Fernandez Rodríguez, Fabrizio Ferrari, Nicola Gabellieri,
Camilla Giantomasso, Rosalina Grumo, Antonietta Ivona,
Denise La Monica, Rosario Lancellotti, Luciana Lazzeretti, V.K. Legkodu, h,
Ruben Camilo Lois Gonzalez, Lucrezia Lopez, Sonia Malvica,
Patrizia Miggiano, Angel Miramontes Carballada, Enrico Nicosia,
Sara Nocco, Paola Novara, Sharon Palumbo, Miguel Pazos Otón,
Pietro Petroroia, María de los Ángeles Piñeiro Antelo, Fabio Pollice,
Carmelo Maria Porto, Donatella Privitera, Pier Ludovico Puddu,
Katia Ramponi, Antonella Rinella, Marina Sabatini, Ilaria Sanetti,
Nicola Scanu, Giusy Sola, Emanuela Stortoni, Hakan Tarhan,
Yeşim Tonga Uriarte.

<http://riviste.unimc.it/index.php/cap-cult/index>

