

## **Cultural Identity and Terraphilia**

***Zoran Roca***

Territory, Culture and Development Research Center, Lusófona University, Portugal

***Maria de Nazaré Roca***

Research Centre for Geography and Regional Planning, Nova University, Portugal

### *Introduction*

Over the past two decades the Portuguese academic, political and media discourses have advocated topophilia, or “the affective bond between people and place, or setting” (Tuan 1990: 4), in order to curtail mistreatment, profanation, degradation, waist, etc. of the uniqueness of places and regions and, at the same time, to strengthen and/or (re)affirm local cultural authenticity, or distinctiveness and identity as a development resource for places and regions. Major argument has been that people should not only be sensitized about, but also engaged in the protection of natural environment, cultural heritage and other distinct features of the geographic space of residence, work and leisure (Albino 1997). Progress in the encouragement of topophilia can be evidenced, for example, in the integration of sustainable development principles in basic education curricula and Local Agenda 21 projects, in the flourishing of local/regional museology, in the revitalization of historic urban nuclei and other built heritage, and in the advocacy of the use of local natural, economic and cultural resources for the development of the lagging rural areas (Roca 1998; 1999; 1999a), as well as for the revival of the spirit of regionalism (Oliveira and Roca 2005).

It should be borne in mind, however, that topophilia changes as localities and regions become “produced” and “contradictory spaces” (Lefebvre 1991), affected by “deterritorialisation” (Barel 1986), or by “detraditionalization” (Giddens 1994; Heelas 1999), if not yet by the “end of territory” (Badie 1995), or “annihilation of space by time” (Harvey 2003). Furthermore, topophilia alters with the emergence of “global sense of place” (Massey 1991; Rose 1995) and/or “contested spaces” (Massey and Jess 1995). In spite of “continuous salience of places as settings for social and economic existence, and for forging identities, struggles, and strategies of both a local and global nature” (Amin and Thrift 1994), topophilia also changes as localities and regions become “networked” and “receptive to innovation” (Todtling 1994), “on” and “of the minds” (Agnew 1999), “claimed” (Haartsen et al. 2000), “recomposed” and “articulated” (Benko 2000), “re-affirmed” (Roca 2004), or indeed “re-territorialized” (Haesbaert 2004) in the context of globalized economy and culture.

It has been amply evidenced that these kinds of changes have affected cultural identity of many places and regions of Portugal. In fact, in spite of the efforts to encourage topophilia, the loss of cultural identity has been on a constant increase in many spheres of life: from the progressive reduction of ecological and demographic sustainability of rural areas, to the deterioration of social and economic fabric and autonomy at the local level, often accompanied by chaotic land use, blatant visual pollution and indeed conflicts between rural and urban lifestyles, and a fierce competition for physical and social space between local(ized) and global(ized) agents of economic and cultural change. The most notorious examples of such alterations are, for example: substitution of the traditional terraced vineyards and of the mixed cropping patterns by the modern, more productive and profitable, thus “more competitive”, agricultural production techniques; adoption of consumer models that favour concentration of

commercial activity at the expense of traditional retailing; abandonment of social values such as inter-generational solidarity and growing solitude and exclusion as commonly assumed social patterns; loss of demographic vitality through ageing and emigration, and the consequent reconfiguration of the spatial distribution of settlements (Ferrão 2002; 2004; Roca 2004).

Why is there a growing distance between the claims in favour of territorial identity as a local development resource on one side and, on the other, the anti-identity reality and, thus, the fading of topophilia? What could be done to stop this tendency? Policy-relevant answers and solutions to such questions call for empirical records and taxonomies of the changing local identity features affecting topophilia, for recognition of attitudes and deeds among the agents of local change, and, ultimately, for endowing the concept of topophilia in terms of a pro-active, developmental perspective. To this end, in this presentation we bring forward research findings obtained over the last decade from, first, a countrywide survey on the perception of the local identity-globalisation interface in rural Portugal and, second, a regional case study on the topophilia-terrabilia interface and local development. "Terrabilia" has been a concept recently coined by our research team and defined as "affective bond between people and territory that encourage local development intervention" that complements the notion of topophilia as its "pro-developmental extension" (Oliveira et al. 2010).

#### *Local identity-globalisation interface*

The need to care about cultural and features of local identity has been accepted as the *conditio sine qua non* for further development of the Portuguese economy and society, especially in rural areas, in the context of globalisation, or, as Albino suggested, "local identity must be operationalised into a development resource ... The strategy of local development should be based on the appreciation of the ancestral typicality as a means of encouraging further evolution of new local innovations" (1997: 113).

In order to reconcile local development needs, potentials and contexts with globalized conditionalities, a comprehensive appreciation of the origin and nature of the identity features of geographical localities (places) and areas (regions) is required. The problem, nonetheless, is that the concept of local identity has not been an analytical category. "Local identity" can indeed imply a great diversity of meanings, such as "unique properties" of places and regions, their "characteristics and particularities", "natural and cultural heritage", "endogenous potentials" and "comparative (dis)advantages". Most often the actual content, scope and value judgements behind such generalisations tend to remain subjectively driven, unclear and biased, thus inadequate for the development policy and strategy design, or for development planning and project formulation purposes that should normally derive from empirical records of verifiable facts.

If it is unclear what the identity of a place and region means in practical and verifiable terms, that is, beyond the generic and subjective designations, how can one determine what aspect of identity needs to be strengthened, preserved, diversified, or made more competitive, so that it becomes a factor of development? Furthermore, how to monitor and evaluate changes in local identity, against which reference thresholds? Which quantitative benchmarks should be used to distinguish, compare, or predict desirable from unwanted changes in local identity? And, even if the nature of local development issues at stake and the needs for change were identified, who are the legitimate "guardians" of local identity, that is, which institutions or individuals are capable, or entitled, to cope with forces of globalisation locally?

Shortly after the last turn of the century, in the framework of our research project on the effects of globalisation and local development in Portugal, a ground-breaking attempt was made

to detect the presence and nature of the changing local identity features in rural areas and to gain insight about the role of development stakeholders in that change. To this end, an exploratory, countrywide survey on knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) of local development agents in relation to local identity and globalisation was carried out. A KAP questionnaire was conceptualised in a way that enabled recording perceptions of a fairly wide range local identity features and issues, as outlined hereunder.

### ***KAP Survey***

The objective of the KAP survey was to examine the local development stakeholders' representations of the identity features of territories on which they operate, of local changes attributable to globalisation, and of the roles individuals and institutions play in valorising, or not, the specific identity features as local development resources. The working definition of "local identity" in the questionnaire was that "it represents a set of cultural, social, economic, technological and other specificities of a territory that make it different from other territories". Such broad, value-free, designation was introduced in order to maximise conditions for the spontaneity of answers from different stakeholders and, thus, for bringing more light to the issue of "whose identity or identities are we talking about, and who determines the regional identity of an area" (Groote et al. 2000: 2). Likewise, in parts of the KAP questionnaire focussed on global effects on local identity and development, the notion of "globalisation" was generically introduced as "a growing interdependence, at the world level, of tendencies, problems, values, life-styles and decisions". It was hoped that it would minimise possible respondents' perceptions of the "global" as everything that is "not local", in view of the fact that "depending on the degree of inclusion-exclusion of each place in the world economy, 'global' can refer to the next city and region or the actual economy and society" (Hadjimicalis 1994: 241).

In order to facilitate response on such complex concepts and issues, the questions were closed, with multiple-choice answers, and the concept of local identity was presented in an extensively disaggregated manner. A step-wise process of disaggregation consisted of itemisation of local identity features, and creation of a roster of local identity components. The finally obtained roster consisted of seventy-five components that mirror major traditionally salient and recently emerging identity features of rural Portugal. In the KAP questionnaire, all these identity components were clustered in three spheres - socio-cultural, socio-economic and techno-economic. The KAP questionnaire was intended for local and regional development experts and activists (LDAs) in rural areas. Out of ninety-two addressed, responses were obtained from seventy-four LDAs, mostly senior professional staff in local development agencies in the interior parts of the regions North, Centro, Alentejo and Algarve.

### **Findings**

#### *On local identity*

Asked to express their views on the importance of local identity in development of the area in which they operate, LDAs unanimously supported the idea that "to care about local identity must be a priority in the local development interventions" and a large majority agreed that local identity "must become competitive in order to enable local development". Likewise, a majority shared the view that "a strong local identity is an essential prerequisite for local development" and also favoured (though not so explicitly) the idea that "adequate valorisation of local identity is hardly possible without the intervention of locally recruited local development agents."

On the other side, large majority of LDAs disagreed with allegations such as that "it does not make sense to worry about local identity in the era of the globalisation" and that "conservation of traditional values, arts and crafts impedes the modernisation of local economy

and society.” A less firm negative response was recorded on the suggestion that “it is worth sacrificing the traditional local identity if that would help increasing the economic prosperity of a local community”.

The LDAs reacted much less unanimously in supporting or rejecting the suggestion that "the strength of local identity has to do with the capacity to resist external influences". An even greater disagreement was on the idea that “underdevelopment reflects the persistence of negative characteristics of local identity”. The most controversial issue, however, seems to be whether "the persistence of negative characteristics of local identity has to do with internal or external factors", on which approximately equal shares of affirmative, negative and neutral response were obtained.

Requested to portray the area in which they operate by indicating the level of presence of the components of local identity, the majority of LDAs ranked as highest the traditional events, traditional cultural landscape, constructed rural heritage and traditional culinary art. A sizeable share of medium ranks (20-40% of responses) was attributed to a wide diversity of salient identity components such as traditional modes of conviviality, use of traditional public places, traditional arts and crafts and presence of collective memory and conservative localism, but also to a wide range of newly emerging features such as the presence of national and international tourists, degradation of cultural landscape, penetration of urban lifestyles in villages, public investments in local culture, production of local journals and positive cultural image of the area of LDAs' operations. The lowest importance (less than 10% of responses) was attributed to components such as the religiousness of the youth, xenophobia and multiethnic conviviality, while environmental conscientiousness still does not make part of the local cultural identity.

Regarding the socio-economic sphere of local identity, most LDAs attributed highest ranks to two most notorious features of contemporary rural Portugal: the aged population and exodus of the youth. Not surprisingly, given the faded spirit of entrepreneurship in lagging rural areas (Barreto 2000), insecure employment was ranked third, followed by the medium presence (15-30% responses) of a mixture of "well established" features such as, *assistencialismo* (spirit of passive dependence on external assistance), unemployment, rural-urban development gap, traditional solidarity relations, on one side and, on the other, new phenomena such as consumerism, growing social inequalities and pluriactivity. The weakest presence (less than 10% responses) LDAs attributed to several identity feature that are most usually considered as strategically important for social progress, such as educational attainment, entrepreneurial spirit and incentives to retain youth.

Regarding the techno-economic dimension of local identity, no component was considered outstandingly present by the majority of LDAs. The highest ranks (over 30% responses) belong to identity features that reflect the still prevailing traditional economic structure, i.e., subsistence agriculture and small, atomised commerce, but also some important elements of progress, such as recent investments in domestic water supply and solid waste collection. Medium ranks (10-30% responses) belong to such diverse components as the SMEs and micro- enterprises, alternative tourism and leisure industry, as well as the use of old industrial technology and environmental problems such as water pollution, and forest and soil degradation. The minimum presence (less than 5% responses) was ascribed to features that are usually regarded as symptoms of progress and innovation in rural areas, such as modernisation of agricultural technology, external demand for local agricultural products, increased external investments (both national and foreign) and organic farming. Finally, the LDAs consider that the adoption of new information/communication technologies is not at all a local identity feature.

### *On globalisation*

The only globalisation-related argument on which the majority of the LDAs expressed their absolute support is "that it is necessary to challenge globalisation at the local level", while on other issues their reactions diverged in all directions. While extremely opposite attitudes were expressed on the issue of whether globalisation of communication technologies is beneficial only to the elites, the two allegations that provoked greatest divergence and indeed scepticism (neutral answers) among the LDAs are that "globalisation of markets and competitiveness can contribute to the affirmation of small-scale economy" and that "globalisation is more in favour than against the objectives of local development". Finally, on the issue of whether "globalisation creates ever-greater opportunities for social and economic development in the peripheral regions" a near majority expressed affirmative views, but this issue provoked also important shares of neutral and negative reactions.

Regarding the effects of specific manifestations of globalisation on Portuguese society and economy, the LDAs showed greatest unanimity in denouncing the effects of globalisation of consumption patterns and lifestyles.

A less strong, but clear unanimity was shown also in praising globalisation of communication technologies and of civic conscientiousness and critical citizenship. A greater inclination towards positive than negative stand was revealed regarding globalisation of financial capital and investments, as well as of markets and competitiveness.

In contrast to the above, the views of LDAs diverge very much regarding effects of globalisation on the geographic area in which they operate. While the majority praises the globalisation of communication technologies and of civic conscientiousness and critical citizenship, there is an important share of neutral views on these issues. On the other side, while no LDA considers local effects of globalisation on consumption patterns and lifestyles as "very negative", there is a great deal of divergence between those who support and those who are uncertain or have "more negative than positive" views towards this phenomenon. Greatest level of uncertainty and indeed division among the LDAs was recorded regarding local effects of globalisation of financial capital and of markets and competitiveness.

It seems that, in general terms, more positive than negative effects of globalisation on the socio-cultural sphere of identity have been felt in areas in which LDAs operate, particularly regarding the components such as environmental conscientiousness, cultural production, private sponsorship of local culture, presence of international tourists, external cultural image and public investments in local culture. Most LDAs attributed negative effects to only two components, namely traditional modes of conviviality and collective memory. Among other more negatively than positively affected components are cultural landscapes (both, well preserved and degraded), traditional public spaces and traditional events. Equal shares of LDAs consider penetration of urban lifestyles in villages as positive and negative effect of globalisation.

Regarding the socio-economic sphere of identity, the LDAs indicated a much smaller number of positively than negatively affected components. The majority of LDAs reported positive effects only on the creation of new employment opportunities, higher educational attainment, people's entrepreneurial spirit and presence of professionals from other regions. The overwhelming majority attributed negative effects to a wide diversity of traditional and recently emerged components such as the exodus of the youth, consumerist spirit, insecure employment, rural-urban inequality, people's indebtedness, social crises and conflicts (drugs, crime), social inequality, unemployment, pockets of poverty and traditional solidarity relations.

Finally, the LDAs attributed more positive, neutral and unknown, than negative effects of

globalisation to identity components in the techno-economic sphere. Most of them associated positive effects to alternative tourism and leisure industry, the role of financial institutions, adoption of communication and information technologies, as well as to technological modernisation of industry and agriculture. Most negatively affected seem to be traditional commerce, micro-enterprises, old industrial production and agriculture, both subsistence and commercial. The unknown effects are attributed mostly to recently emerging features, bringing new dynamics to local economy, such as the big enterprises, supermarkets, organic farming and tourism and leisure industry.

#### *On development stakeholders*

The LDAs reported that, at the time of the survey, their activities were mostly (over 30%) related to the revalorisation of old features of socio-cultural identity, such as traditional arts and crafts, traditional events and modes of conviviality and collective memory, as well as to the raising of local people's self-esteem, and cultural production. It was also recorded that concentration on tradition-related identity components was very similar to earlier concluded interventions in which LDAs participated. Major change occurred only regarding the people's self-esteem, which is currently more represented. The least amount (less than 10%) of the LDAs' current engagement had to do with components such as multiethnic conviviality, xenophobia and conservative localism. It is worth mentioning that over 50% of LDAs expressed their preference for participating in future development intervention in which exactly these identity components, in addition to the revalorisation of cultural landscape and increasing environmental consciousness, would be highly prioritised.

The socio-economic identity components are more present in the current activities of LDAs than the socio-cultural ones, the highest-ranked being the creation of new employment opportunities, promotion of people's entrepreneurial spirit, reduction of unemployment, incentives to retain youth, improving professional qualification, and promotion of pluriactivity. It was also recorded that in their earlier activities LDAs were less oriented to the socio-economic sphere and that the focus was quite different, i.e., none of the currently highest-ranking components was a priority in their earlier interventions. As to the future, most LDAs expressed greatest interest in participating in local development interventions in which social cohesion, rural-urban inequalities, consumerist spirit, care for the elderly and exodus of the youth, would be addressed.

Regarding the techno-economic sphere most LDAs currently participate in interventions that promote alternative tourism and leisure industry, micro-enterprises and SMEs, commercial agriculture, as well as communication and information technologies. Similar to the socio-economic sphere, the priorities of LDAs are nowadays different from the past interventions, when traditional features such as small commerce and subsistence agriculture were mostly dealt with. Records also showed that, in the future, most LDAs would like to intervene in the areas of the techno-economic sphere that have been underrepresented (less than 15%) in both past and current activities, such as different forms of environmental degradation (forests, soil, air, water), modernisation of agriculture and industry, attraction of external financing and marketing of local products.

When requested in the KAP questionnaire to qualify the role of different local individuals as local development stakeholders in relation to the socio-cultural sphere of identity, LDAs pointed to local political leaders as the only outstanding "promoters of cultural linkages and exchange" with the outside world. Furthermore, most of the LDAs considered students, return migrants and highly skilled professionals as local stakeholders who "easily adopt external cultural innovation", while small merchants, small and medium farmers, small and medium industrial entrepreneurs

and retirees are the most notable among those who "do not adopt easily external cultural innovation". Among those who "oppose external and glorify local culture", the most frequently highlighted were the new residents from other countries.

Regarding the institutional stakeholders, most LDAs consider that true "promoters of cultural exchange" are only local and regional development agencies, local governments, modern civic associations, cultural institutions and secondary schools. While just the Catholic Church and social assistance institutions "do not adopt cultural innovation easily", there are no great differences among other institutions in respect to the preservation of the socio-cultural sphere of local identity.

#### *Topophilia - terraphilia interface*

An intensive field research on LDAs knowledge, assessment and practice (KAP) regarding territorial identity as development resource was carried out in 2008 and 2009 in the Oeste (a NUTS III, NW of the Lisbon Metropolitan Area), a region where the pro-identity rhetoric and aspirations based on environmental, economic and cultural competitiveness have been placed high on local development agendas. The research aim was to record the incidence of topophilia and detect the character of terraphilia among the LDAs. The assumption was that the emergence of terraphilia, a concept that amalgamates topophilia and a pro-developmental approach (Oliveira et al, 2010), can reveal the strength and transparency of the LDAs' resolve to (re)affirm local identity. The conceptual-methodological framework applied in this research was the Identerra Model (Roca & Roca, 2007).

On the basis of the macroscopic (desk) studies of the region as whole, four contiguous counties of the Oeste were selected as the study area for the field research. The participatory research method was based on KAP Workshop protocols designed specifically to detect and record the level and nature of the match (interface) between the experienced (topophilia) and sought (terraphilia) aspects of the subjective dimension of territorial identity, as defined in the Identerra Model.

#### ***KAP Workshops***

A KAP Workshop is based on phased collection and processing (content analysis) of primary information obtainable from individual and group statements, discussions on the sense of belonging to a territory, and group appraisals of the experienced and sought qualities of the constituents of the natural environment, and of social, economic and cultural structures and dynamics. The initial recording of the participants' profiles and their definition of the concrete local identity features - such as those of natural and built environment, social customs and habits, arts and crafts - is followed by retrospective and prospective diagnostics of the "most important" positive ("desirable") and negative ("unwanted") features and of their classification in terms of duration ("traditional" vs. "recent"), stability ("vanishing" vs. "resistant") and the participants' feelings ("optimism" vs. "pessimism") about their evolution. Furthermore, local, regional, national and/or supranational institutional and/or individual responsibilities are attributed to the changing positive and negative qualities of the specific territorial identity features. In the final stage, the KAP Workshop participants bring forward proposals that stem from their previous retrospective and prospective diagnostics and prioritisations of problems at stake and from consensually reached definitions of policy solutions, concrete actions and relevant development agents.

The socio-demographic characteristics, professional profile and work experience of forty-seven KAP Workshop participants from the selected counties of the Oeste guaranteed a collection of data based on a high level of familiarity with a wide range of territorial identity features and

responsible attitudes toward local development issues. The main findings are summarized hereunder.

## **Findings**

### *Diagnostic and prospective attitudes*

In responding to the question “Which are the most important elements that characterize your county?”, the participants specified a wide range of landscape- and lifestyle-related elements, i.e., from those that are part of the objective traditional (e.g.: windmills, gastronomy and built heritage) and emerging identity (e.g.: new orchards, urban settlements and tourism industry), to the subjective identities (e.g.: distressed/improved urban environment, traditional/modern social relations, and fragile/competitive economy). After having identified two aspects that, in their opinion, most positively and most negatively affect their county of residence, and to classify them as “traditional” or “recent” and as “resistant” or “vanishing”, they declared their “pessimism” or “optimism” regarding the future evolution of these aspects. The open-ended responses were classified and their frequencies recorded in accordance with the landscape- and lifestyle-related territorial identity features (Nature, Society, Economy and Culture) of the Identerra Model.

The participants’ definitions and assessments of priority positive and negative identity features of their counties can be synthesized as follows:

- the responses are more unanimous about positive identity features, while the negative ones are very diverse and hard to define in concrete terms – which is a general indication of a high degree of topophilia shared among the participants;
- the assessment of the natural environment is predominantly positive, although some threats are differentiated between the more urbanised counties (e.g.: pollution, car traffic) and the more rural ones (e.g.: waste depository in the Cadaval county); this should be paid attention to by future local development policies;
- the social issues, frequently referred to as stemming directly from the activity of local agents, clearly emerge on the positive side when related to community cooperation and assistance networks, but also on the negative side when related to the rural settings marked by strong social control (e.g.: resistance of small communities to some aspects of social modernisation);
- the economy is, no doubt, the identity element subject to strong individual and collective disagreement; on one side, the weak bases of local economies emerged as negatively assessed features from the point of view of both unemployment and low quality of the entrepreneurial structures; however, on the other side, the components of economic infrastructure, such as those that improved accessibilities and potentials for the development of tourism industry, are positively assessed;
- regarding cultural features, such as, first, the attachment to the legacy of the rural milieu, intrinsic qualities of local people and gastronomic tradition, and, second, the elements of built heritage that in every county constitute important spatial fixes, the former ones are assessed rather negatively though with some hesitance, while the latter ones are eulogized in such a manner that a high level of topophilia mentioned above is actually reconfirmed.

### *Experienced identity & development features*

The consensual group responses revealed that the common denominators of the positive priority territorial identity & development features of the participants’ counties are (i) landscapes and historic heritage, (ii) natural landscapes, (iii) quality of life, and (v) rurality. As the negative

features the groups consensually prioritized (i) economic development, (ii) social development, (iii) infrastructure and public services, (iv) human capital development and traditional productive activity, (v) social and economic development, and (vi) associativism.

The content analyses of the collected information have shown that there is a high level of correspondence between the experimented subjective identity (topophilia) and the objective identity established on the basis of the indicators used in the previous macroscopic analysis, based on the available statistical data. Qualities of the landscapes and of the cultural-historical heritage and the preserved rurality that amalgamates specificities of natural and cultural landscapes and lifestyle patterns are the most prominent among the positive territorial identity aspects. Among the negative ones, weaknesses of the development process, low levels of human capital development and inadequate accessibility to public services are highlighted.

#### *Sought identity & development features*

The components of the experienced identity features, reported by the groups as consensual priorities were object of further group discussions aimed at the formulation of specific action proposals for the maximisation of positive and minimisation of negative identity aspects. Every proposal for action was accompanied by the groups' suggestions as to which development agent should be engaged. The responses referring to action proposals and development agents were classified according to the character of the envisaged action and the institutional framework, respectively. All consensually defined positive and negative territorial identity and development priority issues are intersected with the groups' proposals for actions. Also, the proposed actions are intersected by groups' suggestions regarding the agents to be engaged in the concretization of such actions. This entire exercise (i.e., the KAP Workshop and data processing) enabled to detect the incidence and nature of terraphilia amongst the participants.

Considering that the sense of terraphilia increases with the capacity to formulate proposals to solve the weaknesses and to maximize the defined strengths, it was possible to assess the intensity of terraphilia based on the numbers and kinds of priority issues and on the typology of suggested actions for the solution of these issues. It was also possible to delineate actions considered most pertinent/relevant for resolving the weaknesses and maximizing strengths, as well as to identify agents that should implement these actions and could, at the same time, become targets of some specific actions aimed at raising their levels of terraphilia (e.g.: activities of territorial marketing, or at least the sensitization for their involvement in some actions through pointing to their specific problem solving capacities).

#### *Conclusions*

The countrywide survey on the perception of the local identity - globalisation nexus in rural Portugal showed that the LDAs are quite unanimous in supporting the common pro-identity rhetoric, but disagree on specific, tangible and more subtle topics and dilemmas, such as, for example, whether local factors, and not only global ones, cause and perpetrate negative identity features and underdevelopment, and whether to accept the trade-offs between modernisation and tradition, at the expense of the latter, in the name of social and economic progress. Most LDAs are very critical towards their local communities, pointing to the strong presence of identity features such as *assistencialismo*, low self-esteem, local conservatism, lack of entrepreneurship and low educational attainment, i.e., symptoms of deep rooted socio-economic passivity and stagnation. It is, therefore, not surprising that the LDAs expressed greatest mutual disagreement, and indeed scepticism about the prospects for (re)affirmation of local identities as a means of increasing competitiveness of local culture and economy.

It seems that "glocalization" has not yet significantly contributed to local identities.

According to the LDAs, the traditional local “fixes” and “horizontalities”, related to cultural values, lifestyles, social institutions and economic structure, still dominate over recently emerging identity components synonymous to global “flows” and “verticalities” (Santos, 1994), such as consumerism, international and alternative tourism and leisure industry, rururbanization, integration of external professionals and secondary residents. Likewise, very weak presence of components such as commercial agriculture, external investments, modern industrial technology and big firms show that ‘networked regions’ and local “embeddedness” of global economic agents (Agnew 2000; Todtling 1994) are still not a reality. More, the LDAs' assertion that telematics is not yet notable as an identity component of rural Portugal corroborates similar findings from other peripheral countries and regions (Ilbery et al. 1995).

All of the most strongly present identity components related to cultural traditions, human resources and structure of economy seem to have been more negatively than positively affected by globalisation. In fact, LDAs point to imminent loss of certain features that are commonly considered as “uniquely Portuguese”, thus representing potentially competitive local development assets (Albino 1997; Benko 2000), such as the traditional cultural landscape, traditional events and habits and collective memory.

On the other, more reassuring side, some moderately present local identity components - such as commercial agriculture and external demand for local products, international tourism, local cultural production and, potentially linked to all those, creation of new employment opportunities - seem to be much more positively than negatively associated with impacts of globalisation. Furthermore, it is encouraging that currently very weakly present but desirable, dynamic, innovative and/or potentially competitive identity components - such as environmental conscientiousness, people's self-esteem and entrepreneurial spirit, professional qualification, incentives to retain the youth, modernisation of agricultural technology, organic farming and external investments, as well as adoption of telematics - also seem to be much more positively than negatively associated with globalisation.

Regarding the role of LDAs, at least two features need to be stressed. First, compared with the past, the current development interventions in which LDAs participate are more focused on the alleviation of negative and assimilation of positive social and economic effects of globalisation. Second, LDAs expressed readiness for future active engagement in activities addressing exactly those local identity features that are negatively affected by globalisation and, at the same time, are underrepresented in their current interventions - such as the care for cultural landscape, external image, rural-urban cohesion, people's consumerism and indebtedness, exodus of the youth, adoption of telematics, promotion of external demand for local products, introduction of organic farming and prevention of forest and soil degradation. In a way, this is in line with the expectation that ‘territorial mobilisation’ will emerge in defence of local priorities against globalisation (Hadjimichalis 1994).

At the local level, the KAP Workshops in the Oeste region showed that the operationalization of the concept of topophilia into terraphilia facilitates recordings of development agents' knowledge and assessment of manifestations of territorial identity, their quests for change, and their capacity to envisage viable policies and actions that promote affirmation of local identity as a development resource. Furthermore, the detected presence of terraphilia could be used as a lever between topophilia (experienced subjective territorial identity) at present and a new, development-driven objective (factual) territorial identity in the future. In other words, there is all reason to believe that the enhancements of landscape- and lifestyle-related features of today's problematic territorial identity features could be achieved through the materialization of terraphilia of LDAs and its promotion amongst other development stakeholders.

Last but not least, it is worth stressing that to study development agents' knowledge, attitudes and practice in a given territory in the framework of topophilia and terraphilia concepts may be fundamental for the orientation of planning processes. This is especially important in Portugal where public participation has been explicitly reinforced in the planning legislation only recently, since 2007. In this context, more research is needed aimed at further disaggregating and inventorying diverse components that constitute one's affection to specific territorial settings (topophilia) and keenness to promote territorial development (terraphilia). This, in turn, can yield tangible results that can help more efficient focussing and implementation of development policies based on the affirmation of local identity as both a development objective and a resource.

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