

The Alternative Path of Strategic Tourism for Alcobaça: Legacy and Sustainability

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Abstract:

The Cistercian Monastery of Alcobaça – a World Heritage site – is the prime monument in the local area, and is visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. This flow of tourists alone represents an enormous potential and an outlook for the creation of a network-based tourism model that is able to stimulate a distinctive and complementary set of cultural attractions. This network, although informal, is largely already operational, and is composed of important natural and cultural features.

This article takes as its starting point the statement that there is no formal, operational tourism model contributing to Alcobaça's heritage brand that uses the Cistercians as its reference point. Using a deductive method, the paper's primary goal is to carry out a theoretical reflection on the theme of cultural tourism as a strategic element for the very preservation and sustainability of legacy and heritage.

This study aims to frame the still controversial and under-conceptualised relation between the recognition of an area's historical value and the path to future sustainability of material and immaterial heritage based on tourism models as mechanisms for building identity and, at the same time, disseminating culture.

This article reviews the historical background that has strengthened the unique Alcobaça "brand" so that it comprises the extent of the territory as a founding, strategic element for preserving cultural heritage and, ultimately, local development. An understanding of these two factors – historical (and immaterial) and territorial (material) – determines the formation of a sustainable way based on a tourism model that takes cultural heritage as its main bond.

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It can be concluded that by following this path, tourism services can form vital leverage for Alcobça to affirm its political and economic position. In this context, the idea of territory takes centre stage and, by preserving and revitalising heritage and socio-cultural manifestations, it can create a compendium of identity that should be easily recognised inside and outside the area through a distinctive chain, a unique brand, which includes the tourist value of the product as well as historical features.

Keywords: Cistercians; Alcobça; Tourism; Heritage; Destination Management

Resumo:

O Mosteiro cisterciense de Alcobça, Património da Humanidade, é a primeira referência monumental local, sendo anualmente visitado por centenas de milhares de turistas. Este fluxo, por si só, representa um enorme potencial e perspectiva a constituição de um modelo turístico de estrutura reticular (rede), dinamizador de uma oferta cultural diferenciadora e complementar. Esta rede, em grande parte já operacional, ainda que sob uma existência de natureza informal, é constituída por importantes polos de feição ambiental e cultural.

Deste modo, o presente artigo parte da constatação da inexistência de um modelo turístico formal e operatório potenciador da marca patrimonial alcobacense que tem como referência Cister. Assumindo uma metodologia dedutiva, o trabalho tem como objetivo primordial o estabelecimento de uma reflexão teórica sobre o tema do turismo cultural enquanto elemento estratégico para a própria preservação e sustentabilidade da herança patrimonial.

Este estudo pretende enquadrar a relação ainda controversa ou pouco concetualizada sobre o reconhecimento do valor histórico do território e a via da sustentabilidade futura do património material e imaterial a partir de modelos turísticos que sejam, simultaneamente, mecanismos de agregação identitária e disseminação cultural.

O artigo passa em revisão os antecedentes históricos que potenciaram a “marca” singular de Alcobça, de forma que se compreenda a dimensão do território enquanto elemento fundador e estratégico para a preservação da herança cultural e, em última instância, para o desenvolvimento local. O entendimento destas duas dimensões, histórica (de feição imaterial) e territorial (compleição material), determinam a constituição de uma variante de sustentabilidade baseada num modelo turístico que assume o património cultural como o seu principal vínculo.

Conclui-se que, por esta via, o préstimo turístico constitui uma alavanca vital para a própria afirmação política e económica alcobacense. Nesta equação, a noção territorial toma

centralidade, alcançando, pela preservação e dinamização das manifestações patrimoniais e sócio-culturais, um compêndio identitário que deve ser reconhecido facilmente de forma endógena e exógena através de uma cadeia diferenciadora, uma marca singular, que dá, para além do porte histórico, o valor turístico do produto.

Palavras-chave: Cister; Alcobaça; Turismo; Património; Gestão do Destino

Resumen:

El monasterio cisterciense de Alcobaça, Patrimonio de la Humanidad, es la primera referencia monumental local, siendo visitado anualmente por cientos de miles de turistas. Este flujo, en sí mismo, tiene un enorme potencial y perspectiva la creación de un modelo de turismo de estructura reticular (red), dinamizador de una oferta cultural diferenciadora y complementar. Esta red, ya en gran parte operacional aunque de manera informal, se compone de importantes centros de índole cultural y ambiental.

Así pues, este artículo tiene como punto de partida la constatación de la ausencia de un modelo de turismo formal y operativo potenciador del valor de la marca patrimonial "Alcobacense" cuya referencia es la orden de Cister. Suponiendo una metodología deductiva, el trabajo tiene como objetivo principal la creación de una reflexión teórica sobre el tema del turismo cultural como un elemento estratégico para la correcta conservación y sostenibilidad de la herencia patrimonial.

Este estudio pretende encuadrar la relación aún controvertida o poco conceptualizada sobre el reconocimiento del valor histórico del territorio y el camino de la sostenibilidad futura del patrimonio material e inmaterial a partir de modelos de turismo que sean al mismo tiempo mecanismos de agregación de la identidad y difusión cultural.

El artículo revisa los antecedentes históricos que potenciaron la "marca" única Alcobaça, de manera que se entienda la dimensión del territorio como un elemento fundador y estratégico para la conservación del patrimonio cultural y, en última instancia, para el desarrollo local. La comprensión de estas dos dimensiones, histórica (de índole inmaterial) y territorial (con carácter material), determinan la constitución de una variante de la sostenibilidad sobre la base de un modelo de turismo que asume el patrimonio cultural como su vínculo principal.

Llegamos a la conclusión de que, de esta manera, el turismo es un estímulo vital para la propia afirmación política y económica alcobacense. En esta ecuación, la noción territorial toma centralidad alcanzando a través de la preservación y promoción del patrimonio y las manifestaciones socioculturales un compendio de identidad que debe ser fácil de reconocer de

forma endógena y exógena a través de una cadena diferenciadora, una marca singular, que da más allá de la posesión histórica, el valor turístico del producto.

Palabras Clave: Cister; Alcobça; Turismo; Patrimonio; Gestión del Destino

1. Introduction

Cultural tourism provides an opportunity for full sustainable development as long as there are cultural assets that encourage people to visit and maintain the inflow of people. It also requires public policy, civil society actions and private initiatives to be strategically connected under the common umbrella of culture. Alcobça has the ability to make culture a determining part of its way of life, thanks to its historical background as a town of monuments and its own particular identity.

The aims of this research focus on interdisciplinary study and the assessment of cultural heritage in connection with cultural tourism. However, they also include connections with places' sustainable development and interaction, in the sense of integrated development with other economic activities and aspects that help create a product, based on the three pillars of sustainability: economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability. The research is based around the following:

a) An approach to culture as a product, with "cultural tourism" and "heritage tourism" understood as synonyms. The research deals with a primary area of study: heritage tourism and the planning and development of tourism within the scope of heritage attractions.

b) The study will be cross-referenced with social memories of cultural heritage as a metacultural symbolic representation of identities, from a socio-anthropological perspective, discussed as social constructs.

c) It also aims to study the processes arising from inserting the tourism system into cultural policies and managing heritage with a view to "marketing culture", i.e. the way in which the consumption of cultural tourism influences the production, form and location of cultural attractions, strategic cultural momentum and the imposition of the tourism system.

d) The study also attempts to reflect on the design of public policies that involve historical and cultural heritage. This reflection is based on concepts and a model for analysing public policies that boost cultural tourism through on-the-ground knowledge of the Alcobça case study.

We therefore propose a reflection on the implementation of a cultural tourism model and stakeholders' awareness of the new challenges brought by cultural distinction through heritage. Starting from this analytical basis, this article reflects on the theoretical considerations behind the construction of a distinctive, viable cultural tourism model. With this issue at its heart, the first part of the study discusses the historical idiosyncrasy that has anchored and guided the Alcobaça brand and then deals with issues of territory, development and tourism from the perspective of opportunities and risks. Cultural tourism is therefore understood as a compendium of several integrated natural, cultural, social and economic resources, which requires a wide-reaching, multi-case analysis (Beni, 1998). The conclusions of such analysis must include an interdisciplinary reflection arising from the intersection of several subjects, namely anthropology, history, economics, management, sociology and other sciences (Jafari, 1990).

2. The unique Alcobaça brand: design and destiny

The emblematic legacy of Alcobaça's identity now calls for dynamic, flexible cultural management and programming based on local development in which tourism emerges as a stimulating factor of renewal and sustainability. Preserving Alcobaça's heritage therefore to a great extent involves actions to reconcile historical and cultural heritage with local forces (local authorities, businesspeople, associations...) by integrating identity values that define the territory. This perspective becomes effective from the moment that meaningful urban regeneration policies gain momentum (e.g. monumental heritage, museums, historic centres, cultural centres, theme parks), thereby reconciling memory with society's changing destiny (Ribeiro, *et al.* 2011).



Figure 1. Monastery of Alcobça

Source: Virgolino Ferreira Jorge

In this line of action, the focus is on making use of heritage and cultural assets and putting them at the service of society to create revenue and employability, while at the same time acting to conserve them and pursuing a research and knowledge policy that is indispensable to strengthening social structure and identity.

Alcobça has a historical base that singles it out from the rest of the country. Portugal's self-assertion in medieval Europe actually involved the donation of monastic estates in Alcobça to the Cistercians. This granting of land confirmed the Order's international expansion (along with its religious ideals) and demonstrated the monarchy's interest in being in the good graces of Bernard of Clairvaux and his network of influence on Christianity and the papacy. It was, in fact, a question of tracing a path to get the religious institution to recognise the kingdom, which would open doors to a new central political role. The generous donation of 440 km² of land was legitimated by political and diplomatic reasons which brought together the king's benevolence with Europe's recognition of the Portuguese state (1179).

Alcobça's dominant position in the long term was reflected in a set of dynamics that had the Monastery at its heart. The scholar Joaquim Leite de Vasconcelos (1980: 500) never tired of publicising the region's specific features and advantages, thanks to the prolific work of the "farming monks" and their ability to order, manage and administer the land (the Cistercian monastic estates in Alcobça, in the author's opinion, stood out among the lands at the heart of Estremadura west of the Tagus). Furthermore, this view had already been discussed and

defended by illustrious travellers (diplomats, traders, politicians and men of leisure who in the 18th century regularly visited the Monastery and the monastic estate). William Morgan Kinsey assertively highlighted the advantages of the monks' farming knowledge, which was reflected in the productive landscape, in contrast with the general state of abandonment in which the rest of the country found itself (1829: 440). But other visitors, including William Beckford (2009: 29) and Giuseppe Gorani (1992: 159), had already underlined the exemplary nature of the region's material progress under the protective cloak offered by the Abbey.

Monasteries were undoubtedly national projects, created by political and religious powers, which over time became monuments and anchors for identity. For Alcobaça, this aspect was enhanced by the building's material, spiritual and symbolic power. It stood out as the largest and richest monastic landowner in Portugal, as the head of the Independent Congregation of Portugal (1569), and became the royal pantheon, among other things. James Murphy, another illustrious traveller who was part of the elitist Grand Tour, described Alcobaça's appeal to travelling foreigners due to its intimate relationship with the Portuguese monarchy and the fact that the monuments represented the St. Bernard of Clairvaux design and the new architecture that he called "modern Norman Gothic" (1998: 86-87). Memories of the Grand Tour highlight references to the cultural mapping of the landscape, the artistic, architectural and sculptural monuments, the majesty of the Gothic church and the Baroque design, and the historic tombs of Pedro and Inês. This caught the eye of all the travellers who, as well as visiting the capital and surrounding areas, temporarily extended their tour to let themselves be enchanted by Alcobaça, Batalha and Tomar. Interestingly, at a time marked by industrialisation and political and economic liberalism, which produced a deep divide in development levels, national identities emerged in search of cultural legitimacy among the people, thus leading to journey reports that lean towards the ethnographic (Maduro, 2012: 150-151). But the Grand Tour, which was encyclopaedic in nature, also predetermined the path of the journey, leading to some locations being visited repeatedly, making way for meticulously and constantly improved tour routes and guides in the following century.

Not even the extinction of the religious orders in Portugal (1834) would diminish the Monastery's monumental appeal, despite the fact that the building was now considered to be a symbol of leisure characteristic of the Old Regime and the society of dignities. 17th-century visitors continued to go to Alcobaça, however, and they would routinely describe the area, restoring some of the preconceived ideas of the educated elite that came before them, although the cultural settings defined different priorities and perspectives for analysis (which we can

confirm in travelogues by Lichinowsky – 1842, Raczyński – 1846, Bégin – 1852, Rattazi – 1879, Vignerón – 1882, Bergman – 1889, Lavigne – 1890, Madame Adam – 1896, Galois – 1898...).

A citizenship movement began to emerge among the intellectuals of the constitutional monarchy that intended to safeguard the monumental and artistic heritage that was understood to represent the nation, in other words, the heritage that unarguably represented universal/civilisational attributes and, at the same time, was bestowed with historical ties. This movement had Alexandre Herculano as its leading figure and he was the historian that best understood that built, monumental heritage cements and raises up a people's cultural heritage (Custódio, 1993: 34-71).

The Monastery therefore continued not only to fascinate but was the place's determining feature, imposing itself as a historical monument and a virtuous celebration of the past. The emblematic assertion of the nation state began and this solidified a feeling of belonging to a homeland. This outpouring of romantic, historicist awareness, tied to the recreation or reinterpretation of times gone by, validated the building's past and gave visibility to the community's values (Custódio, 2011: 79-81).

But it was not until the Republic was founded that a classified heritage inventory was drawn up and legislation was passed that aimed to protect properties from neglect or abandonment. With the advent of the military dictatorship and the New State, a centralist policy emerged from which heritage was not excluded. With the formation of the Directorate-General for Buildings and National Monuments, the interventionist state began to carry out a thorough historiographic review that took form in political action for restoration. The nationalistic ideology, or one that glorified the homeland, appropriated monuments and exploited them, although this bond did not stop them being propagated and advertised, bringing the population closer to higher levels of recognition and identity.

The changing ideology and culture in the context at the time led to work being carried out from the period of the constitutional monarchy until the first decades of the New State. Restoration updated the image of the Monastery (purging it of Baroque ornamentation in order to recover Gothic purity, i.e. a supposed initial authenticity, following a clearly dated reading) and helped reconfigure the way in which it was seen; the monument and its meaning were strengthened regardless of this, however. With identity and belonging defended, although under the ideological banner of a resurgence in nationalism based on celebration and memorialism, the monument remained, nonetheless, frozen in time. In actual fact, the monument viewed as or reduced to a symbol is restricted to the building itself and is disconnected from the areas of belonging and meaning. The land that had the Monastery as a

reference point is, in particular, forgotten, thus removing the opportunity for an integrated view that would provide a better understanding of the past. The rural heritage of the monastic institution was affected, in fact, by the heavy weight of time; bonds that could not only enrich the discourse but also define the Monastery in space began to fade away. Only after the 25th April Revolution did heritage begin to form bonds locally, something which heritage defence associations were able to achieve to varying extents. Local awareness grew but this momentum was not enough to raise the region up around the fundamental monument. Although democratic openness stimulated the adoption of ideas such as ecomuseums and intelligent relations with heritage in networks, the ability to make successful projects locally was limited and conflicted with the dominant idea of heritage uncoupled from the economy, employability and development (Silva *et al.*, 2015).

Although inseparable from the majestic and erudite scale of the Abbey, the singular nature of the Alcobaça area today reminds us of the gradual replacement of monastic austerity and strictness with a different, more worldly (although no less eloquent) dimension, led by the brilliance and expressiveness of the wealth of industrial heritage related to manufacturing and trade. It should be noted that Alcobaça's socio-economic history helped develop a culture of technology – of which water was the greatest exponent – a legacy which formed a proto-industrial movement and agriculture based on capitalism (Maduro, Mascarenhas, Jorge, 2015). This data confirms the innovation and economic efficiency of the land in Alcobaça, a model that was led by the Cistercians for a long time. In the 18th century, it gained a new impetus: reconfiguring Man's relationship with the landscape, changing and taming the courses of the rivers, building a new map of the forests, encouraging the colonisation of the high moorlands with fields of olive trees, drying and working the lands that the retreating sea had left vacant for plants from the new world, spreading the irrigation system throughout the fields, mobilising techniques that furthered the land's productivity, encouraging a reorganisation of the land, increasing commerce, and beginning, ahead of time, what could be called "monastic capitalism"; in short, stoking the fire of sustainable economic development (Maduro, 2011).

Historical research confirms, in fact, that there was an important industrial presence in the Estremadura region with the remnants of textile and ceramics manufacturing sites that had been undeniably important to the geo-economic context since the 18th century. It also reveals the spirit of innovation and socio-economic development which, despite being based on the monastic technical and cultural legacy, was not exclusive to the Cistercian context (Guerreiro, 2015: 105-120).

Throughout the 20th century, the urban Alcobaga brand was extensively shaped by industrial activity. The agricultural Alcobaga of the surrounding parishes was heavily rivalled by an urban, industrial Alcobaga, composed of large and medium-scale factories and workshops (Tainha, Moreira and Gouveia, 1979). Nonetheless, as we can see today, the urban situation in Alcobaga has been gradually worn away in the face of the representativeness and attraction of the Monastery. Indeed, institutional policies and investment in heritage have not had the same kind of reach in safeguarding distinctive heritage in nearby areas.

One example of this is the importance of hydraulic systems as assets that justify the classification of the Monastery of Alcobaga as World Heritage, described as "*an example of a great Cistercian establishment with a unique infrastructure of hydraulic systems and functional buildings*" (UNESCO, 1989). Considering the justification, the implementation of the hydraulic system itself conveys a (unitary) rationale for preserving and promoting heritage that is the same as the rationale used for the monastery. Nevertheless, the surrounding area has not seen the same investment and monitoring, corresponding to a clear bankruptcy in surrounding areas that are dominated by an urban landscape peppered with heritage, economic and cultural references in ruins or on their way to becoming ruins.

The example of the urban perimeter of Alcobaga shows the need to integrate and, as a result, make use of places. It is important, then, to avoid taking only a marginal view of the town that has surrounded the Monastery for centuries, while also developing autonomously and often out of synch with the monument. It is also necessary not to fall into intervention programmes and administration positions that work against its inhabitants, who have protected the monuments for centuries against successive neglect; instead, it is important to empower and encourage, following an integrated, sustained development strategy.

Alcobaga's singular heritage brand, although benefiting from recognition by UNESCO, remains outside the design and destiny of regional sustainability. This separation requires remedial measures. The "heritage brand" should, therefore, be envisaged as a whole, in which the notion of "Alcobaga as a cultural town" takes a central position; it is a cultural town thanks to the Cistercian features but also due to new policies that bring the critical mass of civil society together with political power and those involved in the cultural economy. This situation requires investment and development policies sustained by new cultural attractions that intersect to generate synergies and maximise audiences. This is the case, for example, for programming and network management initiatives (such as the "Stories of the Centre" Project, which connects heritage/leisure spaces in different municipalities), the growth in renewed attractions (thematic tours, museum centres, cultural events), thereby achieving a new level of tourist attractiveness

(Maduro, Guerreiro, Oliveira, 2015). A new discourse and practice may emerge from this undertaking to understand and explore territorial and cultural resources in a register of sustainability and development for Alcobaça as a destination.



Figure 2. Oil mill of Ataija

Source: Jorge Barros

3. The strategic purpose of legacy: territory and cultural development

The importance and specific nature of Alcobaça's cultural heritage demands programming and management with strategic purpose. This requirement is evident and an urgent need. There are two relevant aspects here that must follow their paths together, even though we know they represent two situations that are at times difficult to reconcile: the acclaimed "culture of development" led by political decision-making bodies and the "cultural development" practised by local stakeholders. Work to defend the strategic purpose of legacy requires values, concepts and action practices to be included that require knowledge of the territory. The work's aims should be favourable to an assessment that balances the people's aspirations with those of the promoters. To this regard, interaction with other stakeholders, players and the community is essential.

A conscious, up-to-date impact assessment, showing positive flows and warning of negative flows, is therefore fundamental. It is true that the formation of a cultural development policy, necessarily connecting worlds that are not always easy to reconcile (culture/economy) by implementing the rule of sustained development, carries with it some risks that may call into

question intrinsic values of conservation and recognition of cultural heritage. For that reason, it is important to understand how these rationales are organised and operate (Guerreiro, 2010).

The territorial model has its own advantages: it boosts cultural momentum based around a primordial economic, strategic and identity-related resource (the territory itself), in that it generates competitiveness and stimulates the *place* and, moreover, favours a closer relationship between culture and the different local economic activities, whether they are directly connected to heritage and tourism or not, such as industries linked to leisure. Naturally, an up-to-date idea of the territory will be fundamental to understanding this strategic aspect of legacy. The notion of *place* should not, therefore, be understood merely as an unmoving abstraction that floats over everyday life, resisting the economic, social and cultural forces that come from globalisation (Cresswell, 2006). In truth, with globalisation, *places*, instead, largely tend to extend beyond the perimeters surrounding them and become a constituent part of globalisation itself. One piece of data that confirms this statement is the exponential rise in the speed of social flows and spatial mobility that condition any type of bond to places (whether by identity or simply by social acquaintance). This appears to be particularly influenced by conditioning factors generated by (global) tourism and culture flows within the local identity space (Carmo, 2008). In this case, competitiveness takes on a determining role for territories' future sustainability, and this is what has changed in recent years in four fundamental ways, as Aragonez and Alves (2012) point out:

- Competitiveness happens at global level;
- Competitiveness between companies provides an increase in innovation;
- Innovation is born of information dynamics intersecting with codified knowledge and technical knowledge;
- Globalisation of the markets and an increase in competition contribute to expanded organisational capacities for the territory and enhance regional dynamics.

The involvement of all stakeholders is beneficial to building a network, promoting the region's creative and participative base. The strategy to follow is based above all on expanding participative models that aim to promote a notion of well-being and sustainable development (Cedrais, 2006). A gradual transformation of the territory supported by a cultural development policy, with a view to form an extensive intangible network of the region's "living" heritage, is a justifiable alternative that presents itself alongside the characteristics of local geography. The

local geography possesses a vast array of resources of historical, ethnographic, archaeological and environmental interest, to mention only the most obvious.

Regeneration of the town's urban areas based around their cultural heritage is recurrently presented as a strategy to follow in the context of local development policy. The iconoclastic force exerted by the monastery is well known; it is an overly unifying temptation that requires everything to revolve around its sphere of influence. Nevertheless, cultural development in the region is not limited to urban areas, confined to the historic centre of Alcobaça, but instead extends a long way beyond it, to the furthest outskirts, to the rural environment, where a significant portion of heritage has yet to be studied and made available and is even at risk of being lost. The joining of forces here should always be considered to be enormously useful. Today, new challenges facing regional and local policy have been identified, and it is necessary to move forward with action, taking measures so that public and private institutions and organisations can enhance and contribute to competitiveness and productivity while at the same time preserving their heritage (Aragonez and Alves, 2012).

Promoting the territory was always one of the main goals for social and political organisation, mainly thanks to the significant influence that it exerts on ways of life and the impact it has on the notion of growth and local development. This explains why some municipalities (such as Alcobaça) have recently invested in policies directed at the territorial market (Aragonez and Alves, 2012). These public policies are gradually making way for a new notion of territory, linked to a feeling of wider community ("territory of citizenship") which is characterised by new social groups that are part of a perspective that is more transversal and heteronomous and therefore focuses less on traditional attributes and the standardisation of socio-economic and cultural activities (Guerreiro, 2015).



Figure 3. Alcobaça Wine Museum

Source: António Cruz



Figure 4. Alcobaça Pottery Museum

Source: António Cruz

4. The tourism alternative: management and sustainability

The state-market functional dichotomy is clearly present at the current time, which does not exclude the development of alternative models, but instead involves the stimulation of partnerships between state, public bodies on one side, and commercial private bodies, on the other. At the heart of this is the cultural democratisation model itself, which directly brings

together types of public policy that include the promotion of spaces for participation and socio-cultural expression (Barbieri, 2015). During this process, the “marketing” role that the label “heritage” represents and which is invested in a network of relations and reference points is an important one (Esperança, 1997). The problem lies in the co-existence of two distinct and perhaps antithetical essences within the same world of symbolic assets, which may lead to two modes of production and movement through opposing programming rationales (the cultural rationale of heritage opposing the economic rationale of tourism). For that reason, it is important to understand how these two rationales are organised and operate.

This gradual commercialisation of culture, heavily led by aggressive territorial marketing policies, cannot fail to elicit preventive measures for heritage, above all when they focus their attention on encouraging cultural tourism. The different stakeholders (public bodies, companies and the population) have to share these principles and maintain the resulting behaviour, which means investing in education and raising public awareness. Underlying this, is the concept of sustainable tourism, so it is worth remembering the six principles of the ICOMOS Cultural Tourism Charter (1999):

- Domestic and international tourism is among the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange and conservation should provide responsible and well managed opportunities for members of the host community and visitors experience and understand that community's heritage and culture, at first hand;
- The relationship between Heritage Places and Tourism is dynamic and may involve conflicting values. It should be managed in a sustainable way for present and future generations;
- Conservation and Tourism Planning for Heritage Places should ensure that the Visitor Experience will be worthwhile, satisfying and enjoyable;
- Host communities and indigenous peoples should be involved in planning for conservation and tourism;
- Tourism and conservation activities should benefit the host community;
- Tourism promotion programmes should protect and enhance Natural and Cultural Heritage characteristics.

Since the beginning of the new century, international heritage bodies have begun to recognise the economic dimension of historical and cultural heritage. At this point we should remember: the *Vienna Statement*, issued at the 4th Annual Meeting of the European Heritage Heads Forum, which acknowledges that investment in heritage is a successful sustainable solution to cope with the economic recession by recognising its economic, environmental and

socio-cultural dimensions (EHHF, 2009); the *Brussels Charter*, recognising the role of cultural heritage for the economy (ICOMOS, 2009); and even the *Valletta Principles*, directed towards safeguarding and managing historic urban areas, which highlights, among other things, the importance of planning and sustained management for historic centres (ICOMOS, 2011).

It is important to pay attention to the relation between cultural tourism and territory, which is not limited to the relation between cultural tourism and *place* (Juanchich, 2007). Territorial identity, heritage and tourism flows all enter into consideration when seeking a definition for this relationship. Mónica Morazzoni, in her book *Turismo, Territorio e Cultura* (2003), suggests establishing different levels of definition based on four different types of cultural tourism region:

- Potential tourist region: the tourism flow is still marginal, and new products need to be created using culture and heritage, i.e. by creating and adapting cultural attractions/services for tourist clientele;
- Expanding tourist region: cultural tourism attractions/services already exist, but increase exponentially in volume and are diversified in accordance with the growing demand, above all, in regard to the capacity to receive tourism flows (hotels, camp sites, restaurants);
- Mature tourist region: territories that already have a tourist product associated with their image and have stable tourism flows. The demand for the territory is growing, but less intensely than during the expansion stage. There is a well established market in which the local supply of services is successively and eternally reorganised.
- Saturated tourist region: the territory's power of attraction falls and flows may be diverted to competing territories. Demand, rates and investment levels fall and the tourism flow, territorial "brand" and cultural attractiveness are downgraded.

A conscious, up-to-date impact assessment, showing positive flows and warning of negative flows, is, therefore, fundamental. One of the safeguards is an assessment of small projects driven by small groups or by the community itself, often "crushed" in favour of big initiatives that bring together public investment and the interests of economic stakeholders. Another risk can be identified in the creation of measures that end up causing already established values, important for places' memories, disappear. These values may include traditional activities or the free movement of people and goods in historic centres, which is essential to preserving their original energy.

According to Morazzoni's (2003) definition, Alcobaça's territory remains a potential tourist region and, for that reason, needs to link potential natural and cultural sites following an

operational dynamic rationale so that they become functional sites that contribute to strengthening the tourism and culture sector. In other words, it needs to bring together high-quality, diversified attractions with competitive prices, which is a rationale that can only be achieved by properly managing resources and improving complementary services (goods and services organised in a network), thereby improving the population's quality of life and boosting existing services regarding external demand. In turn, the infrastructures created should take on the battle to educate and raise awareness about local culture in the search for solutions to make resources viable, in accordance with a strategy to create a hierarchy of attractions.

It is indispensable to achieve a framework of reference for the structuring principles of balance (best practices) that includes cultural actions and economic solutions applied to the integration and revitalisation of heritage within the scope of commercialisation (Benhamou, 2004). This model implies the recognition of tourism as a path of fundamental importance, both as an intangible factor of sustained development (boosting cultural industries, goods and resources) and as a contributor to other, similarly intangible factors that create social well-being, cultural progress and economic prosperity. This recognition is therefore based on the understanding that Alcobaça's heritage is a founding part of a *cultural cluster* integrated into a process of growth and development (Guerreiro, 2015).

It is important to perform a systematised analysis of the tourism attractions/services on offer to understand the Alcobaça's situation. Using an inductive method based on the notion of territory, it is necessary to first establish the (heritage) attractions that form the main component of the tourism services on offer that, in turn, stimulate demand in the market by enhancing attractiveness and, in the background, create resources to form a consistent tourism product. This requires a range of specific basic infrastructures to support tourist activity itself. The analysis demands scrutiny of the tourist products in terms of quality and sustainability from the perspective of integration and upgrading for the different components of the heritage on offer.

Let us assume an understanding of tourism as one of the largest economic activities in the world, and one which emerges as an activity for the future (World Tourism Organisation, 2008). In this respect, public policy views the tourism sector as an activity that can help solve some of its economic and social problems (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). But there are significant risks in these activities since they are not anchored in sustained development strategies (Costa, 1996). Tourism development without a concern for planning and rationality may culminate in decline for the territory (Butler, 1980). Forming a model based on planning may, therefore, constitute an essential tool for promoting sustainable tourism development.

For Alcobaça, as far as investment is concerned, cultural heritage has a significant position and requires integrated policies to be followed, i.e. connections between central or local policies and sectoral policies. This opportunity involves symmetrical positions at regional and local levels as regards the cultural promotion of heritage, strengthening both its relationship with the territory and linking it with a diversified cultural product based on the programming and management of infrastructure networks. These networks include three centres of influence, with the Monastery of Alcobaça as a unifying and disseminating core:

- Historic centre: formation of cultural circuits and areas bringing together spaces for leisure, regular cultural events and roaming projects (some of which already exist, such as the International Exhibition of Conventual Confectionery and Liqueurs or the *Cistermúsica* music festival, or are being prepared, such as the Gastronomy Festival); following the research lines of Mason and Paggiaro (2012), it is also believed that gastronomy essentially denotes an experience formed of foods, wine and landscape, linking values and customs to products and how they are made (Richards, 2015); revitalisation of industry and commerce with particular focus on a policy to certify and promote quality local and regional products (farming, fruit growing, ceramics, cutlery);
- Surrounding area: The Wine Museum (refurbished and renovated museum that houses the most important wine production collection in Portugal); the Ceramics Museum (resizing the current Raul da Bernada Museum and other local spaces, such as the Pereira de Sampaio Faience Museum, thereby giving expression to one of the cornerstones of Alcobaça's identity); the Talking Machines Museum (currently being installed, includes one of the most important collections of radio and telecommunications equipment in Portugal); the Arts Warehouse (an excellent space for cultural programmes, integrated into the national contemporary art circuit);
- Periphery: The Monastery of Cós (monument of public interest – Cistercian heritage); the Museum of the Monastic Estates of Alcobaça (intersecting the notions of "collection"/"territory"/"community", with a museum programme dedicated to the monastic estates of Alcobaça, providing information on the features of the relation between the region and the Monastery, which has lasted for centuries and crosses municipal borders, with a network of museums); intervention and interpretation of the landscape, including the preservation of landscape elements by following a new, integrated approach (such as the upgrading of riverside areas of the River Alcoa and information centres on the natural and cultural features of the Serra de Candeeiros).

One of the positive effects that come out of the model proposed here may be the contribution to regional development. This idea leads us to Cunha's (1997: 287) finding that *"no economic sector guarantees the close connection that should exist between regional development and national development other than tourism, in that the economic and social effects of tourism found in a region spread to the country as a whole"*. The same is demonstrated by the World Tourism Organisation (1998), which shows that the benefits of tourism are based not only on its ability to generate wealth in the area where it operates, but also on the contribution it makes to regional balance. Therefore, tourism is the activity that can best make internal use of local (natural, historical or cultural) resources, since it follows the specific features of each area, which is only feasible when there are local and regional values that guarantee a calling for tourism (Cunha, 1997; Fazenda, Silva and Costa, 2009). It is, then, a factor that can boost local economies but it requires a planning policy based on a model that promotes sustainable tourism development.



Figure 5. Power plant Museum of Alcobaça

Source: Alberto Guerreiro

5. Conclusion

Tourism is a multifaceted activity, which has economic features that include dynamic mechanisms for regions' growth and development. In turn, the territory is itself a piece of cultural apparatus. Strengthening a territorial "brand" should, therefore, recognise that cultural apparatus and have an essential strategic purpose to foster policies to enhance sustained development and planning based on a tourism model that is consistent and distinctive. In light of this, there is a need to formally create a cultural tourism model for Alcobaça, with stimulation of the economy and regional development as priorities. This model should recognise that the repercussions of cultural tourism activities are not restricted to the pulse of the economy, since maintaining levels of cultural attractiveness demands the preservation and upgrading of the visited spaces. In essence, this model should encourage a virtuous cycle of compromise between the local economy and the region's historical legacy and heritage, reinvigorating the bonds between identity-based awareness and responsible citizenship.

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