

Daniel Melo (ICS-UL, Portugal) daniel.melo@isc.ul.pt

Renato Miguel do Carmo (CIES-ISCTE, Portugal) renato.carmo@iscte.pt

Social capital, the third sector, and local development: which link is missing?

Abstract:

This working paper will focus on the relationship involving *social capital*, the *third sector* and the *local development* interventions that are being developed in the context of European Union regional policies, through the analysis of the case-study of Portugal. First, it introduces a theoretical approach concerning these three concepts, by using the most recent conceptual perspectives in specialized literature. Second, it presents a brief historical study of the evolution of the voluntary associations and its relationship with public institutions and agencies. This framework will give special emphasis to the impact of some regional and local programs and its consequences in the national territory. Finally, we will propose a multi-scalar model indispensable for the interpretation and articulation of these three dimensions.

Keywords: Social Capital; Third Sector; Local Development; Public Policies; Regional Policies; European Union; Portugal.

Introduction

In this working paper we propose a critical analysis of the relations between the third sector and local development politics in Portugal over the last decades and in the light of the concept of social capital. We consider that the questioning around this triade is central in order to evaluate the impact of the public policies and, indirectly, the state of democracy in a given country, in a deep and relevant fashion. Although the third sector is a relatively wide social space, we will focus on associations with a civic and socio-cultural nature, namely on those which are exclusively dedicated to the communitarian intervention and to local development¹.

To that effect, the text presents a previous theoretical intervention to define the fundamental dimensions of the concept of social capital and their main implications. This is followed by its verification in the Portuguese case, starting with a historical contextualization that considers the impact of the change of regime to the relationship between the state and the social society as well as in the configuration of the associative

¹ We have adopted a wide definition of *third sector*, which identifies it with the civil society, i.e., the sector situated between the state sphere and the domestic sphere. The *voluntary associativism* corresponds to the third sector, except the component of private initiative with mainly lucrative purposes (see Maloney & RoBteutscher, 2007: 56-57 and *passim*, and Franco et al., [2005]: 5-7). In this sense, our meaning is closer to the concept of *third system*, because it doesn't exclude the mutualities and the cooperatives, although these also seek profit (but not as a priority) (see Moreno, 2007: 71).

space. After that, we will supply a general view on the evolution and implantation of the associations for local development in the Portuguese territory.

Finally, we will analyse the most significant potentialities and impediments resulting from the action of these associations focusing on their multiple and diverse levels of intervention, from the local level to the relations that are established with the state and with the European institutions and programs.

Associativism, Social Capital and Local Development

Two sociologists are behind the concept of social capital, P. Bourdieu (1980) and J. Coleman (1990). Although their concepts are relatively distinct, both conceived social capital as an important resource for relatively circumscribed individuals or groups, resulting from the level of inter-connectivity of the relations and social networks. Bourdieu (1980) specifically mentions the possession of a *durable network of relations of inter-knowledge and inter-recognition*. In this sense, the social capital is based on a timely persistence of the networks that feed from the reciprocal relations based on the communion of certain norms and values. Meaning, the individuals interact according to the expectation of experiencing personal, social or economic gain from belonging to that network.

Both authors consider that one of the fundamental conditions to create social capital comes from the density of the relations developed inside a particular group. This means, up to a certain point, that the closure of the relations around a particular group would generate the interconnections necessary for the achievement of a certain benefit (either the fulfilment of a project, the obtaining of a service or goods, the access to certain privileges, etc.).

One of the first studies to call attention to the importance of bondings and networks for the obtaining of certain social purposes was elaborated by Granovetter (1973). The novelty of his analysis is due to the fact that he demonstrated that in many concrete situations the networks that really make a difference are precisely the most weakest and not the closest or most dense. Through the analysis of social mobility, the author observed the importance of the weak bonds as a fundamental factor for the obtaining of a job, mentioning its decisive role in achieving certain intentions or to fulfil certain aspirations. Granovetter's study and its dissemination among the several social sciences was an essential contribution to widen the scope of social capital outside the most restrictive social groups where close inter-individual relations dominate.

Beyond the social networks, the concept of social capital embodies another determining component: *trust*. Without this feature, a relatively stable platform of credibility and reliability in the interactions between the different social agents that allows or makes easier the recursion of the reciprocal relations would not be possible. According to Nooteboom (2007: 37), *trust* may be defined '(...) as the expectation that a partner will not engage in opportunistic behaviour, even in the face of short-term opportunities and incentives, in the absence of control'. Without the belief in mutual trust between the different social actors, there can hardly be built social networks that are lasting enough to be reflected in the continued increment of social capital.

Through Putnam (1993, 2000), the concept of social capital has gained other meanings that transcend the presuppositions initially defined by the two sociologists. Since then, this is used to characterize the level of civic participation and commitment of communities, regions and even countries. Based on two different types of social capital (bonding and bridging), the author has established a series of differentiating factors: *bonding* represents a type of exclusive capital that identifies a centrifugal dynamic (from the inside out), in the sense of reinforcement of the social identities and maintenance of the homogeneity between people who live in similar situations (family, friendship, neighbourhood...); *bridging* has a more inclusive character, of a centripetal nature (from the outside in) because the social connections are able to mobilize and attract individuals and groups from different backgrounds and social contexts between whom aren't normally created strong relations (Field, 2003).

According to Putnam (1993, 2000), one of the most expressive indicators of the high level of social capital within the regions and countries depends, above all, on the associative capacity of its populations. In his two main studies, the author stresses the importance of the connections of a horizontal character as one of the main motors for the creation and sustainability of high levels of social capital. This is conceived as a sort of accumulated stock that, on one hand, is the result of a cultural heritage as if it were a national treasure that depends on the historical trajectory of the communities and, on the other hand, is incremented through the networks developed among the several institutions and organizations, namely the voluntary associations.

This perspective that emphasizes the value of the historical heritage and its repercussion in the associative capacity of the populations was particularly criticized by a group of authors (Evans, 1996; Harriss, 2001; Heller, 1996, Woolock, 1998), who defend, with greater or lesser tenacity, a concept of a multi-level type in which interact

different horizontal and vertical articulations. Thus, according to these authors, beyond the existence or not of a consistent associative base, the balanced construction of social capital should include the transversal connection of social networks among citizens, communities – of course – but, also, between them and a group of public agencies and/or of private organizations. According to this view, the state must be seen as a central and active element able to create the necessary environment for the mobilization of particular actions around mobilizing and structuring projects capable of deepening diversified forms of social capital.

Through public-private interdependence are generated sufficiently lasting and consistent synergy forms to promote the necessary conditions for development. The notion of embeddedness (Evans, 1996; Woollock, 1998) is the one that best defines this articulation between several organizations (namely, the third sector/third system), the public agencies and the implication of the local actors in the future of the respective community. According to P. Evans (1996), the existence of a density of networks and high levels of confidence at a micro level can be important, but, in most cases, are insufficient to produce new synergies able to mobilize the communities around specific projects of local and regional development².

In many situations, it is impossible to constitute a positive balance between the functions and the roles of these different agents, in order to create dynamic forms of social capital. This deficit in social capital may be due to different reasons. For example, it may happen that the state doesn't give enough autonomy to the associative activity, imposing models and programs that are excessively directive; but also the inverse, i.e., the fact that the associations and organizations don't act in the belief that they have to be autonomous in the face of an excessive dependency on the public sector, namely in the ability to create networks and partnerships between different scales (inter-regional, national, international) capable of transcending the territorial and contextual boundaries that circumscribe each area of primary intervention.

This notion of social capital that embodies a multi-lever perspective is very close to the modern concept of local and regional development that, in its turn, opposes a traditional vision structured on hierarchical relations (like top-down) between the central state and other agents, namely the local development associations (ADL). Currently, local development is understood to be a process that fundamentally promotes

² About the difficulties of a rural community from Alentejo to create social capital dynamics see Carmo (2007).

relations of bottom-up type in which the several organizations and associations play a central part in potentializing a heterogeneous group of human, social, cultural resources, etc., in order to stimulate the civic participation and commitment of the populations around projects and actions of socio-economic dynamics (Pike et al., 2006).

This new paradigm looks at territory as one of the nuclear factors of intervention, i.e., it is from local contexts and their needs and shortages that action strategies are built in order to involve the local actors – as irreplaceable elements – in the several animation and rehabilitation initiatives for their communities. In this regard, many authors (Harriss et al., 2004; Fung & Wright, 2001) have been focusing the importance of ‘territorializing’, or, if we want, of ‘localizing’ development politics, in order to take into consideration the specifics of the context (demographic and economic composition of the communities, the environment, the natural and social risks, etc.), and don’t simply result from a mere uniformed settlement of guidelines, norms and regulations defined from above (from the central institutions).

The multi-level sense of local development is essential to empower the different agents (individual or collective, local or institutional), so that the different projects and implemented actions result from an ability to establish connections at different levels. From this perspective, we can say that the local development process is intrinsically complex and, thus, can hardly represent a simplified consequence of a process.

As defended by P. Evans (1996), to generate these kinds of synergies the state cannot be cast aside, but, on the other hand, it also mustn’t assume too big a part and be excessively centralizing, imposing programs and projects from top to bottom. The state must retain the flexibility to be established in the different territorial contexts in order to advance networks and platforms for the interconnection that include citizens, associations and public agents in a transversal manner, but, simultaneously, should give them the basic conditions that allow some autonomy in face of an excessive dependency on central power.

Decentralization is thus a fundamental requirement for local development policies that have the purpose of producing social capital within communities. However, this shouldn’t mean the stepping aside and the annulment of the state. On the contrary, this decentralization means a change in its role as an agent that, together with other partners, dinamizes a group of resources for the improvement of the living conditions (economic, social, cultural, etc.) of the populations.

The notion of embeddedness contemplates this interactive character (Evans, 1996) which needs to be implemented in public politics in order for the state to no longer be seen as an exterior entity, that imposes certain models and rules, but an institutional partner. The state, besides providing guidelines and supporting the several projects, must give some space to private organizations and to voluntary associations so that these are able to determine their course autonomously and the strategic contents of their programs and actuations.

The Portuguese Associativism: Global View and Relations with the State

The delimitation of the associativism connected with local development is complex. As mentions Moreno (2007: 183), 'The matter is far from being simple given the different nature of the associative entities and, especially, of the different contexts and actuation focal points'. However, and according to the same author, the 'process of interactive and sustainable valorisation of people and territories' must only consider the associative initiatives connected 'with certain decentralization, with a process of strengthening the relational densities with a territorial reference at a micro-regional level'.

This is the mapping that we now lay out in a critical fashion, framing it in a wider context: the idea is to try to better understand the associative and institutional inter-relations, the possible sources of inspiration and the impact of the cyclical points.

According to certain authors (v.g. Durkheim, 1977), the voluntary associations compensated for the void created by the disappearance of the old trading corporations, which, in Portugal, occurred in 1834 (Séren & Pereira, 2000: 443-445), regarding the most socially integrating dimension (and some, also, as socio-professional representation).

Regarding the associativism of a socio-cultural and communitarian nature – understood in a wider sense – it arose in Portugal at the end of the eighteenth century, with some musical groups, followed by voluntary fire-fighters and philharmonic societies. Already under the influence of the French Revolution and the Commune of Paris, of Anglo-Saxon associativism, of socialism and republicanism we see the appearance of mutualities, workers associations, republican centres, catholic philanthropic associativism (also educational) and the more select associations like clubs and cultural-literary circles. Thus, arose the academies and the scientific and/or

professional societies. From the beginning of the twentieth century, we see the biggest associative expansion and consolidation. The first thirty years are a period rich in associative terms, especially for its institutional diversification and consolidation, and particularly for the socio-cultural element. In fact, the republican centres are reinforced by popular universities (in the sector of popular education and cultural divulgation), regionalist associativism³, recreational societies, Sporting clubs, excursion groups, cinema groups⁴, socio-cultural cooperativism, and popular education associations, etc.⁵.

In Portugal, the civil society (and, in particular, the associative sector) has been very much conditioned by the political structure, especially during the 48 years of the dictatorial regime (Silva, 1994; Melo, 2001; Schmitter, 1999; Pinto & Almeida, 2000; Moreno, 2007: *maxime* 133/4). Between 1926 and 1974, voluntary associativism has suffered mistrust and antagonism from the dictatorial state, due to its tendentially democratizing and emancipating character and to the commitment to socio-cultural programs as an alternative to the official ones (Melo, 2001: [325]-374). This has weakened and conditioned its development greatly; the associations of an adverse political nature were forbidden and those of civic nature were closely watched and officially repressed, thus implying the weakening of this sector as well as of the political component implicit in the associativism in general, especially in the areas of claiming, representation and consciousness (*ibidem* and Viegas, 2004: 4-5).

Still, the oppositions count on free associativism as a space of survival, consciousness and approach to the community. In 1949, a federation of socio-cultural associations, of republican origin (FPCCR), estimated the existence of around 3 thousand collectives in the country in 1940, gathering around 2 millions associates in 1948 (Melo, 2001: 337). Of these, around 40 per cent (or around 1200) probably don't have a legal licence, revealing the informality of part of this universe. Another subsector promoted by the oppositions was the subsector of cooperatives, by the influence of currents like cooperativism (as in association). These were deemed hostile and even

³ The oldest one, Club Transmontano (currently, Casa de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro, in Lisbon), celebrated 100 years in 2005 (see Melo, 2006).

⁴ The pioneers are from the 1920s; the majority (68) is concentrated between 1943-65 and had connections to the anti-dictatorial opposition (see specific serie of posts of P. Granja, [Online] Available at: <http://movcineclubes.weblog.com.pt>).

⁵ As an example: Associação Naval de Lisboa (1856, supposedly the most ancient iberic Sporting association); Casa da Imprensa (Lisbon, 1905); Associação dos Escoteiros de Portugal (1913); Federação Distrital das Sociedades Populares de Educação e Recreio (Lisbon, 1924, later called Federação Portuguesa das Colectividades de Cultura e Recreio- FPCCR); Rede de Emissores Portugueses (1926, the most ancient in Portuguese radioamateurism); Liga para a Protecção da Natureza (1948, one of the first environmentalist associations of the world).

pursued by the dictatorship, with the exception of agricultural cooperatives, that were encouraged, but within a climate of strong restrictions to the free market and belonging to statal custody of Crédito Agrícola Mútuo (Moreno, 2007: 133). Despite the serious obstacles, community development is reinforced as an area of intervention, first with the initiatives of members of social Catholicism⁶, then with the local action of international currents as the Graal (namely in the Project of Human Promotion and Evangelization [1963-74], in parish councils from the municipality of Portalegre – Moreno, 2007: 98/9; Beltrão & Hatton, 2007: *maxime* 127-165) and with the post-council Catholicism (Faria, 1997: 220-2). The state and the companies were very timidly involved in trials such as the Plano de Ajuda Rural de Coimbra, the Obra do Bem-Estar Rural from the municipality of Baião, the Experiência Agrícola da Shell Portuguesa in Sever do Vouga and the rural extension in the colonies (Moreno, 2007: 98).

With the revolution of 1974, there is an explosion of voluntary associations, as a consequence not only of cyclical extreme political activism and social mobilization as also of the primordial fact that the legal and political obstacles ceased to exist in regard to association, reunion and expression rights. In the revolutionary phase (1974-76), there appear numerous workers committees and resident associations/committees, practically non-existent until then (Coelho, 1986; Ferreira, 1986; Rodrigues, 1999; Palacios, 2003; Faria, 2006). The organizations of territorial base gain a big impulse and dynamism. The housing becomes the top priority of this movement, given the serious specific needs, but the investment is multiform, ranging from various social equipments to training and education. In this area only (although inter-connected with other dimensions), and within a few months, are created over 150 units in the three most needy cities in terms of housing – Lisbon, Porto and Setúbal (see Rodrigues, 1999: 66).

It is also during the revolution that the popular education associations arise (there were over half a thousand still in 1976: Melo & Benavente, 1978) and we witness an increased relevant diversification of the associations and their purposes. This is a time of reinforcement of the cultural and sporting groups in companies, of the sectarian associations in culture (representation of authors, cinematographers, and theater), and

⁶ With initiatives like the newspaper *O Trabalhador*, the Centro de Estudos e Acção Social for university students (intervening in the district of Curraleira, Lisbon, between 1941-45), the Cooperativa Popular de Portugal, the social Portuguese weeks (Rodrigues, 1990: 51-65, 149 and 170-171). The main mentor of this work, Father Abel Varzim, although ostracised in the ecclesiastic structure, will carry on his actions, creating new communitarian intervention organs in other districts of Lisbon (Bairro Alto and Encarnação).

of groups of friends (now not only regarding lands but regarding cultural spaces, like Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Cinemateca Portuguesa, etc.).

More recently, micro-local and urban (from districts, parish councils or cities) currents of local ⁷, community or socio-cultural development, of social minorities (gays, immigrants, etc.), feminists and of a civic or civic-cultural nature started to consolidate, well represented in the associations for the defence of heritage, consumers and public service (especially in health and in the relationship with the citizen). A part of these organizations integrates the so called social movements or associations that propose a new political agenda (*new politics*). Another associative structure that developed considerably in the thirty democratic years was the network structure; councils, federations, confederations, etc., which had a unique reinforcement in the last decade, at the level of diversification and interchange.

The quantitative evolution of the number of associations since 1974 was impressive, namely in the socio-cultural and recreational sector. Thus, in 1922, there were officially registered 3206 cultural associations in the central region – Portugal- Comissão de Coordenação da Região Centro, 1992: XXIX). According to Morais (1997: 83 and 67), in the end of 1993 there were 749 cultural associations in the municipality of Porto (the majority, 650 units, was concentrated in the city of Porto). The most recent official statistic, for 1995, shows the existence of around 3300 associations in the country, involving around 1 million associates (Portugal- INE, 1998). However, less than 1/3 of this value corresponds to active participants (around 300 thousand individuals). The feminine presence is still out of proportion, under 40 per cent of the total. The movement is especially concentrated along the coast and here, in the North and Center. The associations are, on average, more numerous in the regions of Lisboa & Vale do Tejo, Alentejo and Algarve. These institutions create jobs (professionalization of the staff, payment to monitors, guides and teachers) or paid labour (in construction, assembling of shows) and are economical agents (transaction and lease of goods and services).

The 1997 inquiry into the social attitudes of Portuguese people (integrated in the International Social Survey Programme), confirms the preference of the Portuguese for recreational, cultural, environmental and social solidarity collectives (Cabral, 2000: 95).

⁷ The local development initiatives in the country arose in the 1960/70s, connected with the Christian movements, with the socio-cultural associations and with the political-sindical associations. However, only after the revolution of 1974 do they have the conditions for their expansion, namely at the level of their own institutionalization. For this matter see Albino (2004: especially 11-15).

However, it will be the associations connected with welfare services that are most supported at an official level, at least at central state level (Franco et al., [2005]).

The community project European Values Study also presents data for Portugal relating to 1990 and 1999. In this period, there was registered a reduction of associative belonging, a tendency only contradicted by the development associations in the Third World and peace movements. The decline is especially visible in the alignment associativism (unions, political parties and professional associations). Although Portugal presents the lowest associative rates, we are facing significant values: 34 per cent of the questioned people say they have been associativists since 1990, this number falling to 25.6 per cent in 1999⁸. The European average is always superior to 50 per cent, being lower in the setentrional countries. The explanation for this difference is based on political impediments (dictatorships and consequent weak civic participation), socio-economical factors (lower living standard) and others (greater dependency on the state; cf. *idem*: 236-238). Two explanatory factors strongly ignored by the literature have also to be considered: 1) the significant instrumentalizing of the associativism by the political power (parties, municipalities, etc.), connected with the revolutionary process and the construction process of the country, but that has led to the withdrawal of many citizens from a stronger civic and associative participation; 2) regarding the latter, the occupation of public space by the agendas of the institutionalized political power and the media mainstream, sacrificing agendas of a more civic, cultural and social nature.

In parallel, a recent study reveals that the third sector occupied around 4.2 per cent of the active Portuguese population in 2002 (almost 250 thousand workers), a value that is close to the average of the 38 countries in the inquiry by Johns Hopkins University, 70 per cent of these being paid. Both data prove the relevance of this sector in Portugal (Franco et al. [2005]: 6). Its socioeconomic relevance is thus dissociated from the deficit in associative participation.

We highlight a historical constant of the Portuguese twentieth century: The incapacity of the central state in recognizing in a more consequent and effective way the contribution made by the associative movement to the socio-cultural and economic development of the country. However, it is important to highlight the invaluable support given to voluntary associativism by the local authorities, their main partner, especially

⁸ Cf. Delicado, 2003: 232-235. For a recent general characterization of the Portuguese voluntary services see Delicado, Almeida and Ferrão, 2000, and Franco et. al., [2005].

after the revolution of 1974 and the widening of the activity of the social and cultural branches. In fact, the third sector/third system is a privileged partner (and almost constant) of the municipal cultural entities, which is confirmed by the most recent national enquiry from Observatório das Actividades Culturais (Gomes et al., 2006: 47). As for obstacles: Among the reasons pointed out by around 20 per cent of these answering entities for the absence of partnerships, we highlight the lack of institutional clarification/monitoring, which may be linked to the deficit in mediating structures able to stimulate the interchange between different cultural agents (*idem*: 49-50).

Such statements presuppose the necessary consolidation of public politics – including at the level of wider participation, of partnerships and institutional networks – and, simultaneously, present a pressing challenge to politicians, militants, associativists and citizens in general: The thought about the still reduced comparative level of the expenditure in culture (either compared with other sectors or internationally) and its positive correlation with political-sectarian left (cf. official data in Neves, 2000), means that the farther left we go on the political spectrum the bigger the investment in this sector.

An already incontestable European official study from 2003, developed in the 28 countries of the European Union with the collaboration of 35 civic organizations, has proven the territorial scope of some of the obstacles mentioned and others (under financing; lack of transparency regarding interlocutors, procedures and decisions, deficits of recognition and information, etc.), maybe not only connected with the usual political deadlock but also with the dark side of the bureaucratic state⁹. One of its main conclusions is the statement of the disfunctionality that currently exists between the state and voluntary associativism. While the constitutional framework stipulates its role as diverging from the classic principle of associative freedom, in practice its lab our has been based for a long time on the principle of ‘horizontal subsidiarity’, implying the cooperation between citizens, their institutions and the state institutions for the prosecution of public interest¹⁰. Simplifying, we might say that, in this relation, the state doesn’t recognize much of the activity of partners, because it tends not to come up to the necessary financial, logistic or monitoring effort.

⁹ The study mentioned here was conducted by the Active Citizenship Network (2003) and is an indispensable reading for associativists, politicians and scholars, given its wide range.

¹⁰ The associative network ANIMAR was the Portuguese representative in the study, which was presented in the European Colloquium Associations, social economy, third sector, civil society: the European debate (Paris: 27-29/4/2005; minutes at <http://www.crida-fr.org>; abridgement by Moro, 2005).

Local Development Associations “Stuck” to Territorial Duality

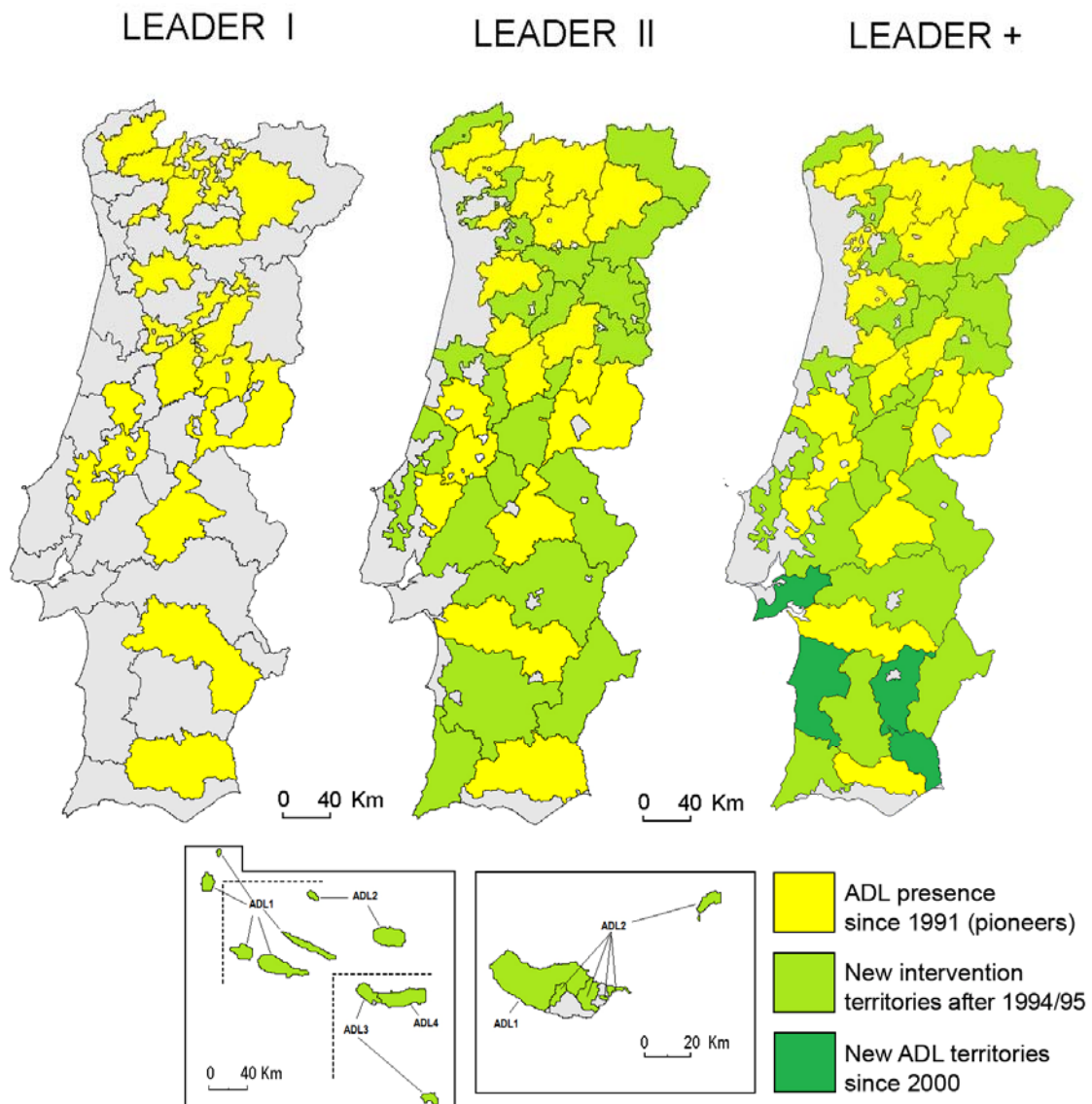
When we introduce the matter of local development, we notice that the conceptual delimitation of the associations dedicated to it (the so called ADL: local development associations) have a circumscribed boundary: It includes the associations that are primarily dedicated to local development, having to necessarily have that purpose inserted in their articles of association. Its leap in Portugal happens after the adhesion to the European Economic Community, in the early 1990s, and is basically due to the possibility of these associations having recourse to communitarian funds connected with rural development¹¹ or to initiatives from other entities, like LEED Programme (Local Economic and Employment Development) and from the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation and the European Confederation of Junior Enterprises (JADE), supported by the International Labour Organization- ILO (Monteiro, 2004; Moreno, 2007: 145-146). The map in Figure 1 proves this connection between the ADL of rural scope and the community politics/funds. Besides, and as attested to by authors like Pierre Coulmin, Jackeline Mengin and Gérard Masson, the birth itself of the European politics for local development is associated with the rural context, both from British pressure (see European regional politics since 1972-75) and from French pressure (decentralization laws from 1981; see Moreno, [2003]: 28 and 2007: 96). Furthermore, the strong impact of the communitarian regional politics has led to superiority over the national politics in regards to territorial politics, to cohesion and development, without, however, being able to avoid the rivalry (intra-national) being stronger than cooperation and that the selective co-optation was stronger than the institutionalized representation (Balme, 1995: 288 and 303).

The latest data (see Fig. 2) indicate around 400 specific units (or local developments initiatives) in Portugal (ap. inquiry by ANIMAR from 1998-99 cit. by Monteiro, 2004: 190). This process makes us wonder if the consecration of ADL in Portugal is intimately connected with a certain concept of development dictated from above and that subdivides it in to rural development and urban development. Thus, this segment of ADL has been excluding from the context of local development a greater variety of associations in its midst. We are referring specifically to 4 segments: 1) the socio-cultural associations (3300 units officially registered in 1995; 10 thousand

¹¹ As the European Regional Development Fund (created in 1975), the EQUAL Initiative (funded through the European Social Fund) and, especially, the LEADER Initiative (European Union Community Initiative for Rural Development).

estimated by Malheiro, 1996; 18 thousand in 2001 ap. FPCCR – see Moreno, 2007: 186); 2) the cooperatives (currently over 3200 units, ap. data from 2006); 3) the IPSS-Instituições Particulares de Solidariedade Social (social solidarity non official institutions) (with around 3500 units in 1998); 4) other associations of a territorial base (namely part of the resident committees, of development associations in urban context, etc), as well as certain NGO, namely the ones related to development.

Fig. 1: Evolution of the Local Development Associations (and initiatives) in Portugal according to LEADER European Programme zones (1991-2007)

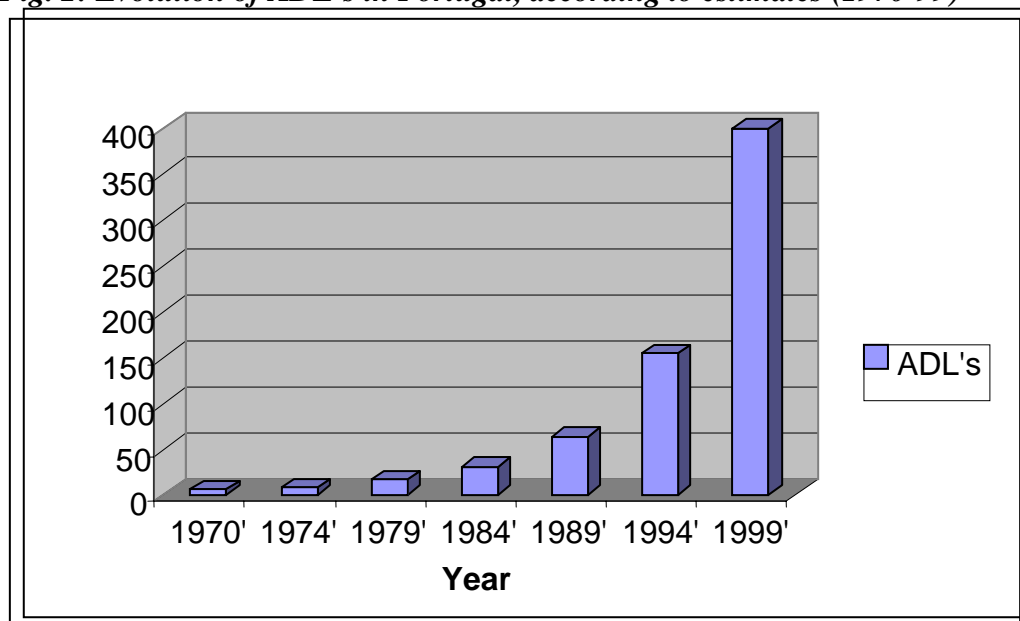


Source: adapted from Moreno, 2007: 140 (nb: in this map, ADL includes partnerships with public organizations in local development projects).

A significant part of these entities promote activities with a focus on personal and communitarian qualifications (teaching/training, reading and editing, cultural

divulgarion, defence of the cultural and natural heritage, housing, social services, territorial cohesion, etc.). Its amplitude, timely persistence and territorial dispersion pose the question of its incontestable contribution to local development, which has not been taken into account by specialized literature (or it has been, but in the perspective of communitarian development and territorial cohesion: see Costa, 1999 and Trindade, 1986). This is due, partly, to the difficulty in circumscribing those activities (v. g. Moreno, 2007: 188), but also to the tendency, already mentioned, of articulating the local development only with associations for local development in a rural environment.

Fig. 2: Evolution of ADL's in Portugal, according to estimates (1970-99)



Sources: Malheiro, 1996; Melo, 2001: 337; Monteiro, 2004: 190 and 193; Moreno, 2007: 186.

It is a fact that, since LEADER II (1994-95), the intervention territory of ADL has changed. Thus, ADL have now a smaller area of intervention but have expanded their global area beyond the interior territory, even reaching some areas of the more urbanized coastline (Moreno, 2007).

The concept of local development was formally forwarded by program JADE (from ILO), financed by the United Nations Development Programme and the European Science Foundation (at the Portuguese level, through the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional). From the long course that was organized (1987-89) came highly motivated people to work in projects of endogenous qualification and partnership promoters in the local socioeconomic environment (Moreno, 2007: 146).

The withdrawal of the structural funds from ECC in 1998 reinforces the new guidelines for less favoured areas, thus stimulating the expansion of ADL. However, only with PIC LEADER, in 1991, is initiated a 'process of promotion for innovation and valorisation of territorial identities and the endogenous resources in a rural environment', directly involving 20 groups of local action (Moreno, 2007: 146).

Complementing the LEADER, the Portuguese state has reinforced the multiple partnerships through program PPDR – Promoção do Potencial de Desenvolvimento Regional (under the scope of the II Community Support Framework, 1994-99). Here – and as actions from the central government concerned in the multiple involvement for ADL, local authorities and regionalized organisms – are highlighted the initiatives of recuperation of the rural centres (RCR) and of historic villages (RCA). The RCA included 83 disperse municipalities, that were equivalent to only 6 per cent of the parish councils and to 2 per cent of the population. RCA included 45 villages from only one region (Serra da Estrela/Beira Interior), with individual investments managed by ADL (Moreno, 2007: 172). It was meant to demonstrate the possibility of recovering the rural world, but according to a 'more polarizing intention' than the initiatives sponsored by LEADER (Moreno, 2007: 174). In general, around 2100 entities were involved, including around 450 associations, 2/3 of which ADL (Moreno, 2007: 175 and 178, tables 10 and 13). This proves 2 tendencies: 1) that ADL were a privileged and dynamic partner of integrated projects, including pilot-experiences in RCA (i.e., more experimental and innovating and, thus, more difficult); 2) that the associative fabric involved (and interested) in the local development actions isn't limited to ADL.

However, the investment (promotion of projects, but also funding) of ADL was bigger in LEADER II (1994-99) than in RCR and RCA (majority of municipalities), which proves that ADL are more in tune with projects that can better empower endogenous dynamics (Moreno, 2007: 175-176). As Moreno mentions (2007: 176) – 'About LEADER II, it is pertinent to reinforce the idea that we privilege social innovation/valorisation through ascendant processes, reinforcing territorial identities, dinamizing networks and sharing knowledge, meaning that less visible and material projects can satisfy purposes'.

Some networks of ADL appeared stimulated by this program, such as INDE (inter-cooperation and development) and Federação Minha Terra (Moreno, [2003]: 31). As a result of LEADER I (1991-93) there appeared the associative network ANIMAR (Associação Portuguesa para o Desenvolvimento Local em Meio Rural), that aimed to

promote local development through the involvement of several agents, not only associations of a rural nature but also urban, public entities, investigators, etc. (<http://www.animar-dl.pt/associacao.php?id=14>; see historic in Albino, 2004: 25-34). This association was committed with the creation of critical mass and more thoughtful and empiric intervention repositories. For this reason it is committed to instruments like MANIFesta, a biennial event of inter-associative meeting, where several specific manifests were launched, plus debates, shows, exhibits and product sales, having had 6 editions since 1994 (<http://www.animar-dl.pt/manifesta/manifesta.php?id=12>). Created in 1993, ANIMAR gathers annually 72 Portuguese associations (<http://www.animar-dl.pt/associacao.php?id=14>) and over 100 individual associates, being also represented in European networks, as was mentioned above. In spite of its influence and relevance, ANIMAR wasn't able to attract the majority of ADL, not even all of a rural nature. This might be a symptom of a certain deficit in expansion and/or crisis in its own application of the local development projects (e.g., deadlock in the change of community support frameworks – framework 2007-13 [QREN]). In this last case, it is the viability of partnerships and of the sustainable development itself that was weakened.

A Multi-scalar Approach

Based on the brief portrait of the associativism in Portugal, we understand that the implantation of ADL was a relatively recent and sudden process, when compared to the general evolution of associativism over the twentieth century. This situation is mostly due to European programs, especially to the various LEADER, that had a decisive impact on the territorialization of an important number of associations, especially in the interior of the country, where the less urbanized areas lie.

They are, mostly, territories of a low or very low density that have suffered accentuated levels of depopulation and population aging. For this reason, the focus on rural development is dominant in most of these associations that lead its activity towards the contribution to the reanimation and dinamization of these depressed spaces.

The intervention sectors are based on two fundamental pillars: professional qualification and training; the support of the dinamization of socio-economical and socio-cultural activities (e.g.: Small companies) with some impact in local communities (Monteiro, 2004: 206). One of the central purposes is to fight the human and social desertification through the promotion of initiatives that, among other factors, increase job offers and allow some kind of repopulation, namely by younger people.

The strong incidence in rural spaces ended up by casting aside the role of cities and villages in the range of several intervention projects undertaken by ADL. In fact, in this big interior territorial strip are also localized some middle sized cities, that present important, but still insufficient, levels of growth, with exceptions, to create a dynamic able to reverse the emptying of the fields and surrounding villages. However, these middle sized cities have reached an appreciable level of growth that is expressed, among other aspects, by the raising of the quality of living (Carmo, 2007).

The nature of this development is mainly based on factors that may become unsustainable over the years. Generally, these are cities with little industry that have grown essentially based on the tertiary economical activities (especially commerce and some tourism) and due to the implantation of certain public services: Hospitals, schools and higher education institutions. For example, the universities and polytechnic institutes had a big impact on local economies and in the respective urban fabric.

Although, in terms of extension, these territories are markedly rural, there is no doubt that an important part maintains socio-economical and spacial mobility relations with some of the most important cities and villages of the respective regional areas (Carmo, 2006 and 2007). The dynamics created by the rural-urban relationship represents one of the determinant strong points for the development of these areas of low density. Besides, this orientating principle of local and regional development is registered in documents coming from the European Commission¹².

However, in the midst of ADL, the interaction between rural and urban is still made above all by associations and partnerships with a philosophy of intervention focused on the rural space, leaving behind a large part of associations that think of territory in urban contexts and in its micro-local, municipal, metropolitan and regional articulations and connections. Community programs like URBAN, JESSICA (or others) might also be a opportunity for the strengthening of these associations. Anyway, currently it still seems to be the political-institutional logic itself that drives towards this kind of duality of intervention. As if rural and urban formed impassable frontiers that separate very distinct and autonomous realities.

As associativism is very sensitive to political-institutional and economical cycles (as we saw in the Portuguese case), this dualism probably made the interactions more difficult, as well as further expansion of partnerships and multi-scale interventions, thus

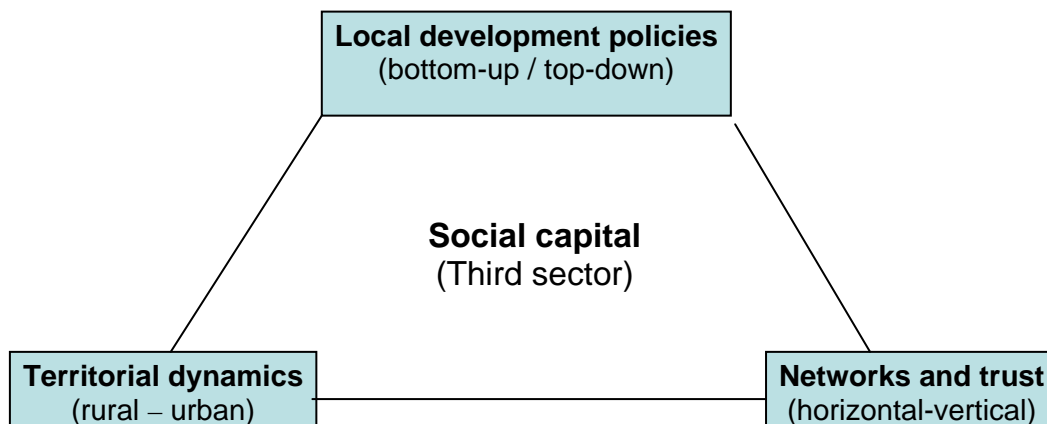
¹² Regarding this matter please see Bengs & Schmidt-Thomé, [2006], and Study Programme on European Spatial Planning, 2000.

conditioning its own ability to be visible and to strengthen the civil society regarding its contribution to a deeper democracy (conciliating representative democracy with participating democracy) and based on sustainable development. In a time and a context in which the differences between the rural and urban life are clearly fading (Carmo, 2007), it doesn't make much sense to perpetuate this territorial demarcation at the level of local intervention programs and projects.

The associativism that promotes local development is at a sort of crossroad between, on one hand, the isolation in certain territories, markedly rural - a factor that makes the establishing of synergies with more dynamic and urbanized areas difficult – and, on the other hand, the difficulty in creating scale from the constitution of federative networks (sectarian, national and international) able to position themselves as a fundamental actor in the negotiation and/or partnership with other instances of political power (state, European Union, etc.). In spite of being very different issues, we can say that both reflect and participate in the same structural difficulty: the creation of social capital. Besides, the profile of existing policies, by separating the rural from the urban, was also a factor of a dualism that weakened the endogenous dynamics and multi-scale. These factors are central to understanding the evolution and the future of the third sector/third system and of the local development policies in Portugal. Without the ability create networks of interest (and trust) that not only share the same problems but also the same purposes, it will be very difficult for the associations to become privileged and relevant actors, either in the relations that they establish with the political institutions (namely the state), or at the level of the different communities with whom they want to develop projects of a local and regional nature. But, in this context, and as we saw, the orientation *from above* has been paradoxal and has partly weakened the stronger dynamics.

Local development policies, territorial dynamics and networks (and *trust*) are thus closely connected: on their relationship, more or less successful, depends the ability of the associations to overcome the obstacles resulting from the territorial division. In fact, the dinamization of interchange networks that guarantee some sustainability to the community intervention projects results, largely, from the interdependency created between rural and urban spaces, but also from the creation of institutional and inter-associative partnership networks able to create multi-level relations (see Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: The model of a multi-scalar approach



Final Remarks

According to the Putnam concept and to the specific data continued until now, we can say that Portugal has a very low level of heritage in terms of social capital stock's accumulation, especially concerning its impact on civic participation. The literature produced by a variety of historical studies outlines the tremendous negative impact of the dictatorship policies regarding the evolution of the third sector.

This situation requires nowadays a more active role from the state and its public institutions with respect to the relationships that are being developed with the third sector. In fact, this demands a new kind of agency capable of embedding into the communities as a way of giving them back the chance to become more autonomous in local and socioeconomic initiatives.

The associations also need to establish a new sort of horizontal network between them (like federative networks) as a form of getting leverage and more political power and influence in the negotiations that are being developed with the public institutions.

Thus, it should be essential to apply a new model of political and administrative decentralization to enable the promotion of a range of opportunities with the capacity to contribute decisively towards the sustainability of local and regional development policies. This seems to be one of the major problems of the Portuguese political system: the difficulty to (re)create public agencies capable of generating synergies and multilevel connections between distinct actors (like associations, enterprises, municipalities, etc.) placed in different spatial contexts (villages, towns or cities). It is

essential to improve and to reinvent a completely distinct approach, where the state and the third sector can negotiate as partners and not as potential enemies.

References:

- Active Citizenship Network (2003) 'Rethinking the Principle of Subsidiarity', [Online] Available at: http://www.activecitizenship.net/projects/project_rethinking.htm.
- Albino, J. C. (2004) *Contributo para a história do desenvolvimento local em Portugal*, ANIMAR, Vialonga.
- Balme, R. (1995) 'La politique régionale communautaire comme construction institutionnelle', in *Politiques publiques en Europe*, eds Y. Mény, P. Muller & J.-L. Quermonne, L'Harmattan, Paris, pp. 287-304.
- Beltrão, L. & Hatton, B. (2007) *Uma história para o futuro*, Tribuna da História, Lisbon.
- Bengs, C. & Schmidt-Thomé, K. [2006] 'Urban-Rural Relations in Europe – ESPON – Final Report', European Spatial Planning Observation Network, [Online] Available at: http://www.espon.eu/mmp/online/website/content/projects/259/649/file_1182/fr-1.1.2_revised-full_31-03-05.pdf.
- Bourdieu, P. (1980) 'Le capital social: notes provisoires', *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, no. 31, pp. 2-3.
- Cabral, M. V. (2000) 'O exercício da cidadania política em Portugal', in *Trabalho e cidadania*, eds M. V. Cabral, J. Vala & J. Freire, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon, pp. 123-162.
- Carmo, R. M. (2006) 'Cidades médias: do crescimento demográfico à consolidação territorial', *Cidades, Comunidades e Territórios*, no. 12/13, pp. 69-82.
- Carmo, R. M. (2007) *De aldeia a subúrbio*, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon.
- Coelho, M. B. (1986) 'Um processo organizativo de moradores (SAAL/Norte – 1974/76)', *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, no. 18/19/20, pp. 645-671.
- Coleman, J. S. (1990) *Foundations of Social Theory*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Costa, A. F. da (1999) *Sociedade de bairro*, Celta Editora, Oeiras.
- Delicado, A., Almeida, A. N. de & Ferrão, J. (2002) *Caracterização do voluntariado em Portugal*, Comissão Nacional do Ano Internacional do Voluntariado, Lisbon.
- Delicado, A. (2003) 'A solidariedade como valor social no Portugal contemporâneo', in *Valores sociais: mudanças e contrastes em Portugal e na Europa*, eds J. Vala, M. V. Cabral & A. Ramos, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon, pp. 199-256.
- Durkheim, É. (1977 [1893]) *A divisão do trabalho social*, Editorial Presença, Lisbon.
- Evans, P. (1996) 'Government action, social capital and development: reviewing the evidence of synergy', *World Development*, vol. 24, no. 6, pp. 1119-1132.
- Faria, C. V. de (1997) 'Acção urbana dos moradores de Setúbal: reflexões preliminares sobre os movimentos sociais de base territorial', *Anais – Série Sociologia*, no. 1, pp. 211-241.
- Faria, C. V. de (2006) 'A cidade e os movimentos sociais: análise da experiência de Setúbal, 1966-1995', *Economia e Sociologia*, no. 82, pp. 93-117.
- Ferreira, V. M. (1986) 'A cidade e o campo: uma leitura comparada do movimento social, 1974-1975', *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, no. 18/19/20, p. 549-588.
- Field, J. (2003), *Social Capital*, Routledge, London.
- Franco, R. C., et al. ([2005]) *The Portuguese Nonprofit Sector in Comparative Perspective*, Universidade Católica Portuguesa and Johns Hopkins University, [Lisbon].

- Fung, A., Wright, E. O. (2003) 'Thinking about empowered participatory governance', in *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*, eds A. Fung & E. O. Wright, Verso, London.
- Gomes, R. T., et al. (2006) *Entidades culturais e artísticas em Portugal*, Observatório das Actividades Culturais, Lisbon.
- Granovetter, M. S. (1973) 'The strength of weak ties', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 78, no. 6, pp. 1361-1380.
- Halpern, D. (2005) *Social Capital*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Harriss, J. (2001) *Depoliticizing Development*, Anthem Press, London.
- Heller, P. (1996) 'Social capital as a product of class mobilization and state intervention: industrial workers in Kerala, India', *World Development*, vol. 24, no. 6, pp. 1055-1071.
- Malheiro, J. (1996) *Associativismo popular*, Câmara Municipal de Almada, Almada.
- Maloney, W. & Roßteutscher, S. (2007) *Social Capital and Associations in European Democracies*, Routledge, London/ New York.
- Melo, A. & Benavente, A. (1978) *Educação popular em Portugal 1974-1976*, Livros Horizonte, Lisbon.
- Melo, D. (2001 [1997]) *Salazarismo e cultura popular (1933-1958)*, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon.
- Monteiro, A. (2004 [2002]) *Associativismo e novos laços sociais*, Quarteto, Coimbra.
- Morais, J. C. P. de (1997) *Poder local e associativismo cultural*, Universidade do Porto, Porto, Master thesis in Sociology.
- Moreno, L. (2003) *Guia das organizações e iniciativas de desenvolvimento local*, ANIMAR, s. l..
- Moreno, L. (2007 [2002]) *Desenvolvimento territorial – de um sentido ocidental às orientações coesivas para um meio rural inovador: caminhos e caminantes*, Pluridoc (e-book), Lisbon.
- Moro, G. (2005) 'As organizações de cidadãos na Europa e o seu relacionamento com os poderes públicos', *O Direito de Aprender* [Online] Available at: <http://www.direitodeaprender.com.pt/troca.php?no=23>.
- Nan, L. (2001) *Social capital*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Neves, J. S. (2000) *Despesas dos municípios com cultura*, Observatório das Actividades Culturais, Lisbon.
- Nooteboom, B. (2007) 'Social capital, institutions and trust', *Review of Social Economy* vol. 65, no. 1, pp. 29-53.
- Palácios Cereales, D. (2003) *O poder caiu na rua*, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon.
- Pinto, A. C., Almeida, P. T. (2000) 'On liberalism and the emergence of civil society in Portugal', in *Civil Society before Democracy*, eds N. Bermeo, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham/ Boulder/ New York/ Oxford, pp. 3-21.
- Pike, A., et al. (2006) *Local and Regional Development*, Routledge, London.
- Portugal- Comissão de Coordenação da Região Centro (1992) *Associações culturais da região Centro*, Coimbra, Comissão de Coordenação da Região Centro and Delegação Regional da Cultura do Centro.
- Portugal- INE (1998) *Associações culturais e recreativas*, INE, Lisbon.
- Putnam, R. (2000) *Bowling Alone*, Simon & Schuster, New York.
- Putnam, R. (1993) *Making Democracy Work*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Rodrigues, D. (1990) *Abel Varzim*, Rei dos Livros, Lisbon.
- Rodrigues, M. (1999 [1997]) *Pelo direito à cidade*, Campo das Letras, Porto.

- Serén, M. do C. & Pereira, J. M. (2000) 'O Porto oitocentista', in *História do Porto*, eds L. A. de O. Ramos, Porto Editora, Porto, pp. 376-521.
- Schmitter, P. C. (1999) *Portugal: do autoritarismo à democracia*, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon.
- Shuller, T., et al. (2000) 'Social capital: a review and critique', in *Social Capital*, eds S. Baron, J. Field & T. Schuller, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Silva, A. S. (1994 [1991]) *Tempos cruzados: um estudo interpretativo da cultura popular*, Edições Afrontamento, Porto.
- Study Programme on European Spatial Planning (2000) 'Final Report', [Online] Available at: http://www.mcrit.com/spesp/SPESP_REPORT/SPESPDOCA/chapter%201%20-%20april.pdf.
- Trindade, M. B. R. (1986) 'Do rural ao urbano: o associativismo como estratégia de sobrevivência', *Análise Social*, vol. XXII, no. 91, pp. 313-330.
- Viegas, J. M. L. (2004) 'Implicações democráticas das associações voluntárias: o caso português em perspectiva comparativa europeia', *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, no. 46, pp. [33]-50.
- Woolock, M. (1998) 'Social capital and economic development: toward a theoretical synthesis and policy framework', *Theory and Society*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 151-208.