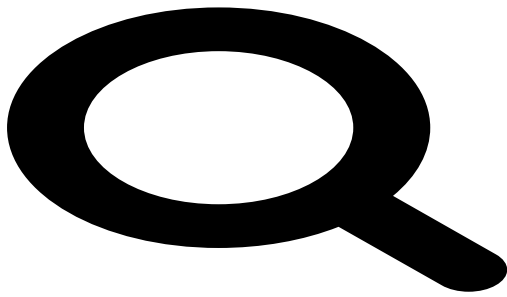


CULTURAL CAPITAL: CORNERSTONE?

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Se He usually writes and cites the relevance of human capital as a key and essential factor for the proper functioning of economies, especially in times of economic crisis, and when we ask ourselves what we did wrong to be in difficult situations now. But, in addition to this factor, necessary for human development, and taking into account that the solution in Spain is not so simple, it is pertinent to point out the importance of cultural capital.

Economists like D. Throsby or L.C. Herrero include the concept of cultural capital within the production function of the economy. Then, the income or wealth of an economy would be determined by technology and its relationship with the other inputs of the production function. These are physical capital, labor force, human capital (to which Rivas was referring), natural capital (a set of free resources from nature, sometimes non-renewable), social capital (quality/quantity of social networks of a society), and the variable that concerns us, cultural capital, which refers to tangible and physical elements, made by people, present or accumulated, that respond to an aesthetic, symbolic and intellectual sense, and that are susceptible to depreciation and even loss.

Thus, it will be a social necessity to consider natural capital as a productive factor when human beings consider environmental sustainability, or consider social capital when relationships between people are multidirectional, partly due to network interconnections. In the same way, culture becomes a prominent point when it is considered as a qualitative variable that transcends the educational variable in a context of leisure civilization and globalization.

Culture, in addition to being the candy of political leaders due to its high profitability of image, has short-term effects associated with consumption, and long-term effects mainly related to urban revaluation, governance, education, social cohesion and indirectly with the expansion of the symbolic capacities of the human being related to motivation or "wanting to be".

Specifically, culture stimulates tourism, which generally implicitly carries a sense of cultural identity. It stimulates creativity, which affects the social fabric and other branches of the economy and creates an extra nuance that certifies a plus in quality for cities. If Spain is to return to being part of Europe's decision-making axis, it will be necessary to attract and retain educated people or what Richard Florida calls the "creative class."

You can start by promoting productive development associated with cultural industries, detecting clusters or local production systems. Spain is more than bullfights and wine, and it has a powerful heritage-related heritage.

[An interesting example that appeared in the press this week is that of the Catalan chef Ferrán Adrià](#), who this semester will teach at Harvard, relating his gastronomy and research to the possibilities of researchers at that prestigious university center. It will also feature other figures of Spanish gastronomy such as Joan Roca, Carme Ruscalleda or the chocolatier Enric Rovira.

For mixes, also mention the aesthetic combination of the famous theater group La Fura dels Baus with the Basque chef Andoni L. Aduriz.

Public administrations must sharpen creativity to promote and influence alternative development possibilities, valuing the natural advantages already given to make them effective possibilities of success, but without forgetting the rest of the agents, especially the private ones. Perhaps one of the guidelines of the new economic development policies can be supported, like any great structure, on a cornerstone that combines culture and technology.

Photo: Francisco Diaz

There are no comments yet.