CULTURAL POLICY AND POLITICS OF CULTURE IN LITHUANIA. VILNIUS – EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2009, AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL VIEW

Domenico Crisafulli

University of Messina, Via Concezione 8, 98122 Messina, Italia
E-mail: dcrisafulli@unime.it

"European Capital of Culture" is one of the most effective and productive projects of European Union's cultural policy. In 2009 this project was hosted by Vilnius, Lithuania. The designation of Vilnius coincided with the celebration of a national event, the millennium of the name "Lithuania". In 2009 Lithuania was, after 20 years from the fall of USSR, on the international stage of European Union, breaking deeply with its soviet past and consolidating its EU membership. In this context European Capital of Culture's project constitutes a mix between European instances and national rhetoric. While previous anthropological studies focused on the structural organization of the project "European Capital of Culture", in this text more than to analyze and to evaluate the chosen programme, the events included and the costs, my point is to consider the general project in its proper historical, cultural, political and social context. Main subjects/objects of my research are those who give official representation of the events made through official documents and public statements, I mean politicians, bureaucrats, experts, journalists, artists and people involved directly in a different way. I also consider the interpretation and the feeling that common people will get from this event. The base of my research will be to keep the attention on the connection of this cultural event with political and economic field.
I focus on a description of the event VECC and its role considering the general cultural policy of Lithuania and European policy to represent a common European identity based on cultural diversity.

Keywords: cultural performance, national culture, European identity.

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Introduction

"European Capital of Culture" is one of the most effective and productive projects of European Union's cultural policy. Following the wish to create a common European identity among citizens of European Union's member-states, in 1985 European ministers of culture agreed to develop a project that would give to the idea of European culture an official space in each member-state. Since that time the project has developed and on the initiative of ministers of culture has become an official project included in EU's agenda. The main statement written on official website of European Commission's culture department is:

"The European capital of culture is a golden opportunity to show off Europe's cultural richness and diversity, and all the ties which link us together as Europeans. The event is so attractive that Europe's cities vie with each other fiercely for the honor of bearing the title" (European Union Commission).

In 2009 European Union nominated Vilnius, Lithuania, as European Capital of Culture. The designation of Vilnius coincided with the celebration of a national event, the millennium of the name "Lithuania". In 2009 Lithuania was, after 20 years from the fall of USSR, on the international stage of European Union, breaking deeply with its soviet past and consolidating its EU membership. In this context European Capital of Culture's project constitutes a mix between European instances and national rhetoric. European cultural project, elaborated in accordance with national level, is implemented by people that can shape their actions according to multiple conditions and interests. What is implemented enters into everyday social life and opens new space for public debate.

Theoretical approach

According to the models of other nation-states, since its independence, Lithuania has been delineating the benchmarks of its culture, finding those "border guards" (Armstrong, cited in Smith 1986) that will take care of the (re-) constituted Republic of Lithuania.

Several anthropologists have already investigated that the production of symbols (a culture, an history, a flag, a language) is a fundamental step to create a feeling of the community (Gellner 1983; Anderson 1991; Kellas 1991; Smith 1986), they are the way through which a bureaucratic structure represents the idea of nation. Of course, these symbols work only if people accept and recognize them as shared knowledge of the community (Anderson 1991; Handler 1988; Herzfeld 1997; Borneman 1992), it means if they are successful to become part of the common sense at work in the society considered (Herzfeld 2001).

According to this approach, the analysis of national cultural performance is a fundamental step through which we can study how people, as society or culture, define themselves, represent their collective story and eventually change themselves always appearing the same (McAlonn quoted in Herzfeld 2001). The idea is to read the national cultural performance through the looking glass of anthropological analysis of rituals (Herzfeld 2001).

While previous studies focused on the structural organization of the project "European Capital of Culture" (Sassatelli 2002, 2005), in this text about Vilnius – European Capital of Culture 2009 (VECC) more than to analyze and to evaluate the chosen programme, the events included and the costs, my point is to consider the general project in its proper historical, cultural, political and social context.

Method

To investigate the project Vilnius as European Capital of Culture 2009, I started from the analysis of the connections that the event activated among institutions such as European Union, Ministry of culture, Vilnius Municipality, artists' associations, etc. The procedure and the documents elaborated to implement the European project from the Commission in Brussels to the specific national context, in this case Lithuania, let me define the steps that create the formalized structure of the event in which later different actors play their interpretation.

I compare the development of the project "European Capital of Culture" at European level and its specific organization in Lithuania through the institution created for it: VECC institution.

Main subjects/objects of my research are those who give official representation of the events made through official documents and public statements, I mean politicians, bureaucrats, experts, journalists, artists and people involved directly in a different way. I also consider the interpretation and the feeling that common people will get from this event. The base of my research will be to keep the attention on the connection of this cultural event with political and economic field.

I focus more on a description of the event of VECC and its role considering the general cul-

tural policy of Lithuania and European policy to represent a common European identity based on cultural diversity.

Notes about the event "European Capital of Culture" (ECOC) from EU's point of view

The first idea of the event "European Capital of Culture" arrived from a meeting of ministries of culture of all the member-states of European Union.

In 1983 the Greek minister proposed a project for creating knowledge of European cultures within the EC (at that time European Community) member states.

'*At that time, the Greek minister felt that culture was not given the same attention as politics and economics. She told her European colleagues that the voices of artists should be heard as loudly as those of politicians and economists. "Culture, art and creativity are no less important than technology, commerce and economics.*'"[1]

In 1985 the project "*European city of culture*" was established[2]. The cities were chosen on intergovernmental basis and European commission awarded a grant each year for the selected city. In 1999, during German presidency, the project changed the name to "*European capital of culture*"[3]. Also, the selection procedure was changed.

The new procedure is based on a rotation principle, the list of the countries that will host the event is made by EU commission but individual EU member states are able to suggest one or more Cultural Capitals for a particular year, possibly stating preferences. An independent international seven-member Selection Panel examines the candidacies collated each year by the European Commission.

The main statement is:

"*The European capital of culture is a golden opportunity to show off Europe's cultural richness and diversity, and all the ties which link us together as Europeans. The event is so attractive that Europe's cities vie with each other fiercely for the honour of bearing the title.*"[4]

In 2005, considering the enlargement of European Union by new countries, the commission established that there could be two capitals of culture per year from different member-States. In the same document it was established that for 2009 together with the already indicated country, Austria, Lithuania will host the event[5].

The two countries presented their candidacy at the end of 2004. Although European Commission suggested to member-states to organize an internal selection process and to propose more than one candidacy, both selected countries presented only one proposal: Linz for Austria and Vilnius for Lithuania.

Analyzing the ECOC project at European level, the main statement written on official website of European Commission's culture department is:

"The European capital of culture is a golden opportunity to show off Europe's cultural richness and diversity, and all the ties which link us together as Europeans. The event is so attractive that Europe's cities vie with each other fiercely for the honor of bearing the title" (European Union Commission 2009).

It recalls the official slogan of European Union "Unity in diversity", which shows the effort of creating the European identity. In Anthropology, several authors underline how EU failed to give an organic, unitary and pure idea, being always defeated by stronger nationalistic policy of European member-states. Chris Shore outlines how contradictions come on the stage when European Union tries to develop its own cultural policy without disturbing each member-state's national cultural policy (Shore

[1] *<http://www.citymayors.com/culture/eurocities_culture.html>.*

[2] *Official Journal n. C 153 del 22/06/1985, 0002–0002*

[3] *Official Journal L 166 dell' 1.7.1999, 1–5.*

[4] *<http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413_en.htm>.*

[5] *Official Journal L 117 del 4.5.2005, 20–21.*

1996: 104); also Monica Sassatelli writes about how EU has to deal with another sensitive issue, that of fostering the common European heritage without provoking the reaction of national or local cultures that is of the much older respective institutions (Sassatelli 2002: 6). As I wrote above, more than to understand if people feel more the "europeanness" or the "lithuanianness" in describing their identity and to evaluate the success of European goals, I want to investigate how the project is implemented in a specific context, such as Lithuania, to underline which representations work and how they are used by different actors. To do this I want to describe how the European project is developed in official documents in Lithuanian context.

Notes about the event "European capital of culture" from Lithuania's point of view

The designation of Vilnius as Capital of Culture 2009 coincides with the celebration of the millennium of the name "Lithuania", which appeared, as official rhetoric affirms, for the first time in 1009 (in the chronicles of Quedlinburg)[6].

Despite presenting Vilnius in the airport advertisement as "*gateway into a country celebrating millennium*", and despite the project's proposal sent to European Union where the coincidence was presented as one of the reasons to support Vilnius, the two events seem to have had a different developing way. The two official websites had no connection and the programme developed in different directions. Actually, the missing of connection was part of the recent debate that brought to the removal of the former VECC director.

The celebrations of the millennium programme started in 1997 when the President Brazauskas (Lietuvos demokratinė darbo partija – LDDP), Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius (Tėvynės Sąjunga), created the "Directorate for the Commemoration of the Millennium of Lithuania under the Auspices of the Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania"[7].

From the web site we can get that:

The Programme aims at:

- consolidation and livening up of the historical and civic self-awareness of the Lithuanian society;
- making the cultural heritage more topical;
- rendering assistance in the implementation of projects, which are vitally important for the nation;
- adequate introduction of Lithuania and its culture to the world.

The Programme is based on the principles of openness, statehood, purposefulness and universality. It encourages state, municipal and public institutions and organizations as well as all citizens of Lithuania to develop and implement projects devoted to the given anniversary.

To realize these main goals, the website presents three main directions to develop the programme:

- research and publishing projects;
- cultural heritage and architecture projects;
- national and international culture, art and social projects.

From the reading of the programme it is clear about the direction of the event, affirmation of the national cultural heritage to consolidate historical and civic self-awareness of the Lithuanian society, an idea of culture that gets nationalistic or political connotation (Borofsky 2004).

Only recently it has been added on the website:

The millennium of the name of Lithuania urged the capital of the State of Lithuania, Vilnius, to seek the status of the 2009 European Cultural Capital. … The Programme's funds are used to finance those projects, which will attract the guests and our countrymen by the events of

[6] *<http://www.lietuvai1000.lt/index.en.htm>.*

[7] *Decree No. 1293 of the President of the Republic of Lithuania on 8 May 1997.*

modern culture and will make the cultural life of Vilnius close to each citizen of Europe.

It is affirmed that the project of VECC started as ramification of the main project "celebration of the Millennium". In 2003, when Lithuania was not officially a member of the European Union, the government decides about the opportunity to nominate Vilnius to be "European Capital of Culture" for the year 2009.

Prime Minister Brazauskas (*Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija* – Lithuanian Social-democratic Party) and Minister of Culture Zakaitiene (*Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija* – Lithuanian Social-democratic Party) signed the act that included the project "Vilnius – European Capital of Culture" in the general programme of the millennium. In that document it was established to allocate 24 million litas for the project from 2004 till 2009[8].

In the end of 2004 a proposal was elaborated that in April 2005 the positive evaluation of the selection panel would be received and in November 2005 the European Union published officially the decision that for 2009 Vilnius, together with Linz, had been nominated as European Capitals of Culture[9].

If we check the chronology of the procedure described in the VECC' website, we can notice how probably the decision was already on the table of European Union before the official document appeared. In the selection panel report it is explained how from a legal point of view, Vilnius proposal and the assessment of the selection panel will be taken into consideration when the modified Decision of 13 April 2005 will enter into force (scheduled for 11 May), it means when the EU's membership of Lithuania will be confirmed officially.

VECC institution was founded on the 28th of September 2006 by Ministry of culture in partnership with Vilnius Municipality[10].

The aim of the national programme Vilnius – European Capital of Culture 2009 is:

to promote dialogue and tolerance in Europe and other parts of the world, as well as to elevate culture as a virtue in modern society and as the driving force in city development, which will distinguish Vilnius as one of the most modern and dynamic cities in Central and Eastern Europe, known in the world as a contemporary cultural centre of attraction, and one with a unique and apparent identity that is open to new ideas and investments[11].

Culture Live is both the goal of the programme and its name. It is a creative programme which has been kindled by Fluxus movement ideas. This word originates from the Latin language and means "to flow". The movement which coined this name declares that art is in constant flux, a continuous flow which draws everyone in.

VECC's programme looks to be more articulated and complex than celebration of the millennium. According to the documents published on the official website, it is divided into four main groups according to the period:

1. Open History. The winter–spring season.
2. Open Space. The spring–summer season.
3. Open Community. The summer–autumn season.
4. Open Future. The autumn–winter season.

And the events are classified according to eight programmes:

Music Programme; Visual Arts Programme; Theatre and Dance Programme; Media Programme; Literature Programme; Culture (Re)Discovery Programme; Living History Programme; People Programme. Plus the special programme: Millennium of Lithuania and different conferences and special events (one of these special events was the inauguration of New Year).

In the proposal the opening date of the event "Vilnius – European Capital of Culture" was planned to be on 16th of February, together with

[8] *Law n. 971 of 18 July 2003.*

[9] *Official Journal L 305, 24.11.2005, 36–36.*

[10] *<http://www.culturelive.lt/en/vilnius2009/vilnius 2009-organization/>.*

[11] *<http://www.culturelive.lt/en/vilnius2009/vilnius 2009-mission/>.*

the celebration of Lithuanian Independence Day[12].

After millennium, this is another element that shows the wish to connect this international event with national representations of official Lithuanian identity. The aim of the proposal is that:

Day of Restoration of Lithuanian Independence has traditionally been of particular significance in Lithuania, attracting the attention of thousands of people. This long-standing tradition can be utilized for the opening of the Vilnius – European Capital of Culture programme, drawing the attention of a maximum number of both Lithuanian and European people to the opening ceremony of the cultural capital. 2009 would be the first year that the celebration of Lithuania's independence acquires a European dimension. Its motto: "Europe congratulates Lithuania, Lithuania congratulates Europe".

In the same way, together with the official aim, the coincidence of European Capital opening and Independence Day would link Vilnius to European level as Lithuanian town and capital of the Republic of Lithuania.

As the celebration of the millennium claims historical justification of the actual nation of Lithuania linking it with a time, 1009, when nations as we think did not even exist, in the same way, to connect Vilnius as European capital of culture with the celebration of first independence, in 1918, links Vilnius to Lithuania recalling a period when the town was part of Poland. This second element, celebration of Vilnius and commemoration of first independence, can create some dispute. I will clarify this point later.

Comparing the two main goals of the events it is interesting to note how, even if they both propose the involvement of people as basic element, the first one, the celebration of the millennium, underlines the importance of consolidating official Lithuanian culture, especially toward other country, to spread the idea of the uniqueness of Lithuanian culture. It pursues its object through production of books, academic researches, all instruments to consolidate a specific representation of culture. It recalls the idea of static homogeneous culture that can get a nationalistic connotation (Borofsky 2004: 315).

The second, VECC seems to be more oriented to promote cultural production, to underline the concept of "flux", it claims the involvement of people but does not give any direction. It does not look linked to any model of culture or representation. Especially the slogan, Culture Live, sounds very "honest" in showing the production side of culture. Recently the idea of dynamicity of culture found space in anthropological reflection. As Sanjek affirmed in 1991, the culture is "always in creation, it is fluid, interconnected, widespread,… open more than closed, it crosses its own borders, it can change and it can be fixed…"(quoted in Borofsky 2004: 382).

Nevertheless, both events are part of the cultural policy of the State. In February 2008 a special commission has been created to check the coherence of both programmes under one direction.

It is interesting that for both events some special institution has always been created. Instead of using the resources, university, national institute, artists' association, etc. each event got its own managing institution and, in the last example, a third institution to control the previous ones.

One cultural project – three different ideas of culture behind it

In this short description of three projects: the general project of European Capital of Culture, the specific event "Vilnius as European capital of culture" and the celebration of the millennium of the name 'Lithuania', we can note also three different definitions of culture that serve different purposes:

For European Union it is important to underline the richness, diversity and all the ties which link us together. VECC presents culture as a river, an uncontrolled flux that involves

[12] *<http://www.culturelive.lt/images/form/proposal.pdf>.*

everyone. The millennium recalls the common definition of culture of the official rhetoric, the same idea that comes from the establishment of monuments of the first independence and the removal of soviet ones, a uniqueness of culture that is a symbol of a Nation and a nationality. These three different ideas of culture that lay behind the definition of the project of European Union, VECC institution and celebration of Millennium drive the organization of the event and the official meaning attributed to it.

An example of how these three ideas of culture can influence the representation of an event is the "*Valdovų rūmai*", literally Residence of Lithuanian Rulers but translated "*Royal Palace*" in the official website of the millennium. This event is particularly interesting because it started as national project for the celebration of Millennium, then it has been inserted in VECC proposal to European Union and it also attracted the attention and suggestions of European selection panel during selection procedure.

The "*Valdovų rūmai"* is presented as:

"one of the most outstanding projects of the Programme for the Millennium of Lithuania. It is to be the symbol of the long-lived tradition of Lithuanian statehood and national pride, an important historical centre of the international relations, culture, art, law, finances and state administration of Lithuania of the 13th- 17th centuries. The reconstruction is being perceived as the reinstatement of the symbol of the sovereignty of the State and the Nation, as the restitution of the historical truth, which is highly important for the development of the national and civic self-awareness as well as historical memory. It is planned that the Royal palace will become an independent and an up-to-date national institution to nurture and promote culture and its mode of activities will be in line with the traditional methods as well as those, which are tested in the world practice by institutions accommodated in historical residences and at the same time it will make use of all high-tech possibilities."[13]

Valdovų rūmai has been inserted also in the candidacy proposal of the town of Vilnius to European Union. In the document, the palace "will be presented as a political, administrative, cultural, artistic and economic centre of the historical Lithuanian state and a source of the dissemination of European culture and traditions of art, from Gothic to Baroque (the palace was constructed and reconstructed several times between the 13th and 17th centuries, demolished by tsarist Russia in the early 19th century, and restored in 2003–2009 by the Republic of Lithuania)"[14]. The proposal plays with the terms *constructed, reconstructed* and *restored*, referring the first two to the ancient time and the last one to nowadays. This game between terms can be better explained if we look at the European selection panel's report.

The selection panel was composed of seven experts from different Nations[15]. All of them have a thick experience in cultural field and many of them participated in the organization of other European capitals of culture.

In giving positive evaluation of the project of Vilnius, affirming its role of advisor, the appointed commission elaborated a set of suggestions. Among these, about the Royal Palace: "*The panel suggested rewording the documentation about the Palace Of Lithuanian Sovereigns to reflect the fact that it was not a restoration project but a new construction project. This would avoid creating a potentially misleading impression.*"[16]

Panel suggestion underlines the necessity to avoid possible debates or critics from other

[13] *<http://www.lietuvai1000.lt/index.en.htm>.*

[14] *From official proposal for EU Commission .*

[15] *The experts were: nominated respectively: 2 by European commission (France–Poland), 2 by European parliament (Finland–Poland), 2 by European council (Ireland–Netherland) and one by committee of the regions (Ireland). On the day of the presentation and selection, the French member was absent, so in total they were six plus some observers.*

[16] *Selection Panel for the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) 2009. "Report on the nominations from Austria and Lithuania for the European Capital of Culture 2009". Brussels, 14 April 2005.*

European cultural operators on the value and the meaning of the Palace as a symbol of specific history.

In other words, the selection panel seems to suggest: we accept your project, we accept your idea to include the Palace in the project to connect Lithuania to the time of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, just do it in a way acceptable for other countries. Keep evident the terms of this construction and the connection with the contemporary policy. This would avoid any cultural dispute on it.

Together with showing different visions on the management of cultural heritage, the topic that has been already developed by other authors[17], the panel also recall a possible space for dispute. We can have a clearer vision of it by reading another part of the report, where the selection panel "felt that certain aspects such as the Country's historic links with Poland, the Jews, etc. should be further emphasized. The panel was confident that Vilnius would find a balance between national pride and its ancient role as a European cultural cosmopolitan meeting point".

This last advice seems to show how probably the panel considered the project too nationalistic and wanted to stress the opportunity to drive its representation in a direction that fits more an "International version of history of Europe". I put this last concept between quotation marks because it can be disputable to talk about a unique international version of history of Europe, at the moment I want only to underline how it looks that the panel wanted to accommodate the nationalistic representation of Vilnius project in a shape that does not create problems with general vision of History of Europe and does not contrast with other countries representation of history.

Despite the fact that European countries agree to consider the soviet period as a historical accident, an attempt of soviet troupes to invade countries and destroy their national identity, some dispute can come when a country, in recalling more ancient and "original" history of foundation that legitimizes the present, can produce a representation in contrast with the representation of other European countries. This comes on the stage and it has to be managed when the situation, like the European cultural event such as European Capital of Culture, asks to give a coherent and unique image of history of Europe that includes the singular national history of each country. Lithuania was for a long time the Grand Duchy connected before to the kingdom of Poland and later to tsarist Russia. In 1918, as I wrote above, Lithuania got the first independence but it was not able to get Vilnius in its border. At that time Vilnius remained a Polish town. Nowadays, within Lithuanian borders Vilnius is imagined as multicultural capital with a wide Russian and Polish community. This image is often recalled by Kaunas' citizenry, it means the citizens of the second-largest town of Lithuania and the former political capital during the independence, the one that, in their words, is a real fully- Lithuanian town[18].

Lithuania has an articulated representation of its own official history and thus it has to face the controversial debate among historians on its being part of kingdom of Poland, then part of Russian empire and now an independent Republic.

When the selection panel suggests to emphasize the Country's historical links with Poland, the Jews, etc., it is trying to manage, to combine, to adapt Lithuanian representation of its own official history with, for example, the Polish one.

In this view to celebrate at the same time Vilnius as European capital of culture and the

[17] *I.g. Palumbo, B. 2003. L'Unesco e il campanile. Roma, Meltemi editore.*

[18] *Another episode can clarify this point. During the conference in Ljubljana I presented a paper on the management of monuments in Lithuania and, talking about the urban space, I gave example of two different projects, on one side the modification of Vilnius historical centre (part of UNESCO heritage's list) with the construction of Valdovų rūmai and, on the other side, the buildings closed in a commercial center in the centre of Kaunas, Akropolis. A Polish professor underlined the contested historical truth of the restoration of Valdovų rūmai and the debate involved Polish historians.*

independence day can create some problem, it connects actual Vilnius to the celebration of the first independence of Lithuania, in 1918, in a time when Vilnius was not a Lithuanian town. It can disturb a coherent image of history of Europe and bring on the stage some contested reading of history. The stress on the Royal Palace's project is a good example of this attempt to adapt different visions.

The Royal Palace is still a symbol of Lithuanian statehood, national pride. It is still being presented as the reinstatement of a symbol of the sovereignty of the state and the nation, as the restitution of the historical truth, etc., but all this remains within the border of the Nation. On European stage the palace is a new construction project.

Conclusions

In this article I described the process that, taken a specific cultural performance with an official aim, develops in a different way according to the level of analysis and the context we consider. Vilnius as European capital of culture starts from the European project, the programme is developed according to criteria that fit European selection panel and it is implemented according to the needs of actual Lithuanian political representation of culture. This let me create the frame, the context which helps to individuate the actors, the protagonists of this public cultural performance. In considering the connection at international level, the selection panel's members constitute just part of actors involved. They influenced the first shape, the first presentation of a project, European Capital of Culture, which, at national level, will be implemented by other actors (bureaucrats, cultural operators and politicians) and presented to, and evaluated by, people according to the common sense[19] at work.

[19] *I use the concept "common sense" in Bourdieu's meaning of doxa, audience, common idea shared by a community.*

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KULTŪROS STRATEGIJA IR POLITIKA LIETUVOJE. VILNIUS – EUROPOS KULTŪROS SOSTINĖ 2009. ANTROPOLOGINIS POŽIŪRIS

Domenico Crisafulli

„Europos kultūros sostinė" – vienas įspūdingiausių ir produktyviausių renginių Europos Sąjungos kultūros politikoje. 2009 m. šio projekto šeimininku tapo Vilnius. Miesto skyrimas Europos kultūros sostine sutapo su tautai svarbaus įvykio šventimu – „Lietuvos" vardo minėjimo tūkstantmečiu. 2009 m. Lietuva, praėjus 20 metų po Sovietų Sąjungos žlugimo, pasirodė Europos Sąjungos scenoje, galutinai nutraukusi ryšius su sovietine praeitimi ir bestiprinanti savo narystę ES. Šiame kontekste Europos kultūros sostinės projektas buvo Europos reikalavimų ir nacionalinės retorikos mišinys. Nors ankstesnės antropologijos studijos tyrinėjo struktūrinę projekto „Europos kultūros sostinė" organizaciją, šio straipsnio tikslas yra ne analizuoti ir vertinti pasirinktą programą, jos renginius ir išlaidas, bet apžvelgti visą projektą istoriniame, kultūriniame, politiniame ir socialiniame kontekstuose. Straipsnio tikslas – palyginti oficialias projekto ataskaitas: valdininkų dokumentų, viešų pareiškimų ir žurnalistų, menininkų bei asmenų, tiesiogiai dalyvavusių projekte. Straipsnio autorius siekia tyrinėti kultūros renginių sąsajas su politika ir ekonomika bei atskleisti VEKS projekto, kurio paskirtis reprezentuoti bendrą Europos tapatumą per kultūros įvairovę, vaidmenį Lietuvos ir Europos kultūros politikoje.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: kultūrinis pasirodymas, nacionalinė kultūra, Europos tapatumas.

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