

THE CULTURE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC COHESION

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Summary: This contribution aims at driving the reflection to the dynamics characterising the processes of sustainable and enduring development. In line with well-established sociological theories concerning territorial sustainable development, we wish to corroborate the hypotheses that, on one hand, still point to the economic system as the main standard for measuring concrete growth opportunities, but on the other hand place the main emphasis in their descriptions on the cultural system and citizens' awareness as the essential correlates for a development able to promote socio-economic cohesion in a given territory.

Keywords: territorial intelligence, socio-economic cohesion, territorial solidarity.

This contribution aims at driving the reflection to the dynamics characterising the processes of sustainable and enduring development. These are the most relevant topics CAENTI group has focused on during the cultural meetings and congresses carried out in the EU countries involved in the project.

During the last decades, such development took a multidimensional meaning and a trend tuned to the guidelines of the advanced-capitalism countries, that are however committed in enforcing the rules to safeguard the environment. Such development is related to the resources available on the territory, is aimed at the preservation of the manufacturing sources, avoiding exploitation's activities that could cause an impoverishment of the whole territory.

In Western societies, the preservation of environment against the interests of the self-referential sectional powers is a long-term investment for the future generations. Preventing the environmental disasters (pollution, non-recyclable wastes, arsons) gives the opportunity to make use of the resources in other sectors and to create job opportunities.

We must note that, at least in Italy, we are still far from the necessary maturity very subjects needs to consider his own territory an integral part of social life. A culture of the environment lacks, or is not fully developed, that considers the environment as a collective good, affecting the individual welfare.

Besides, the idea of escaping environmental dangers by the seclusion in little private paradises does not avert the dangers. On the contrary, it favours the selfish interests of polluters that profit by the lack of environmental policies.

Citizens of several Italian regions do not have an environmental culture. In particular, this problem exists in Campania region that holds some negative records since fourteen years, as claimed in the annual "Legambiente" dossier. Three main environmental risks are excessively present: the first one is the waste problem, that according to the news has become a national affair; the second one is the unauthorized building, deeply rooted in southern culture and linked with the organized crime of "camorra"; finally, the third problem are the rasons that burned to ashes many woods of the Campania region.

Within this region, the three environmental risks are present above all near some densely populated districts: the 80% of the population is actually concentrated around the towns of Naples, Caserta and Salerno, while the remaining 20% of population occupies the 70% of the territory.

In this initial notes, is very clear the gap between urban and rural areas. It also emerges a density of population that in some towns like Portici, San Giorgio a Cremano, Torre del Greco is one of the highest in Europe. In the mountain areas of Salerno area, Benevento area and Irpinia the density of population is instead one of the lowest in Italy.

Just in the territories with high density of population it can be observed a low interest for the collective goods among both citizens and local government: the public space is a no man's land so it can be considered as a container that everybody can use and misuse for his own advantage. This urban decay is observable in many towns. There are pavements in a very bad state, impassable roads, littered monuments and, as completion of such decay, a general anarchy of bad behaviours that show a big arrogance.

These phenomena are mainly located in urban centres and suburbs of the main towns. In the small centres belonging to the other cities-provinces of the region the environment is instead well protected by the citizens and the local governments.

"Legambiente" says there are dozens of "virtuous" municipalities of the region that solved positively the three environmental problems described above. There are well protected areas that together form the artistic and environmental heritage of towns like Amalfi, Ravello, Positano, Capri, Benevento, and the Cilento's coast.

In this short contribution, we attach the same significance to both the environment and the territory. We consider them as a whole, containers of all the things that exist, natural elements as well as socio-environmental components.

The "territorial intelligence" has a great relevance, and is the basic concept of the theoretical framework developed by CAENTI. It is not an abstract category, nor one among the several components of the territory's morphology. The "territorial intelligence" has been considered the subject of the development the territory's fate depend upon in many ways. But it also a product of the territory itself, that plays a fundamental role in the composition of the *governance*.

The idea of quantifiable development has changed throughout modernity rich and thriving territories in large deserts. Such idea has been dropped by the same organization that formerly supported this type of development.

Over time a culture is born that, even though respecting the production of material goods, has made the citizens aware of a different conception of the consumption and the respect of natural resources.

According to the immaterial culture, the development does not mean increasing the gross domestic product of a territory *only* by exploiting the available resources. The development's sustainability is measured by the respect of the balance between the territory's various components. The rationalization of a right relationship between manufacturing's sources (in the processes involving natural resources, labor force, and distribution strategy) and territory, in its totality and complexity, today characterizes the main reflection upon in the most developed countries.

The globalization has considerably contributed to the construction of territorial identities and of the belonging to the different socio-cultural contexts, through the recognition of the internal and external differences of the society.

CAENTI has based its project on the study of the roles that territorial intelligence plays in promoting the strategies that make the qualitative development a primary objective. The goal is to support a culture that, even though distinguishing between quantity and quality, without making the first one to prevail over the second.

The so-called "post-modern" culture promotes the production and consumption of immaterial goods. It takes its place on the ridge of those who like better a different relationship with the world we live in than the materiality and quantity of goods. We clearly do not underestimate the commoditization of modernity: the problem of hunger and primary needs is the best won by modern capitalistic and industrial societies.

The focus of social scientists' reflection is today the analysis of cultural components that couch the need for emancipating of the logic of consumerism. This consumption being an end in itself generates an identity's model "*the more I consume the more I am*", against consumption as a mean of living. The evolution and emancipation of some types of needs produced a shift. It can be described as a gradual liberation from the possession-consumption of things, towards a value choice of goods and products belonging to a culture of the "immaterial".

The trend is a critical detachment from the forms of exclusiveness and possession of goods. Nevertheless, in post-modern culture such detachment does not mean giving up the enjoyment. To *share-in* holds a relevance and prepares people to cooperative forms of shared interests. The contemporary culture gave the highest promotional visibility to the individual, going beyond those secular differences of class and belonging.

Anyway, we can't believe that consumption in general is the only, because backward the satisfaction of primary needs becomes a knotty problem for many families, especially during economic slumps.

Therefore, if the emancipation of individuals led to the realisation of citizenship's rights, there are still unresolved problems, such as the full recognition of such rights for a growing number of people.

The cultural emancipation of the individual depends on the socialization and on the processes of integration taking place in a given social context. Within a society, when many people are excluded from the active participation into social policies, then it lacks a full achievement of democracy. Thus, the role of territorial intelligence becomes strategic. The fate of sustainable development and the people well-being depend on the policies that such territorial intelligence can set in motion. Its role is strategic because the meaning of actions must be the aware involvement of community's citizens in achieving shared objectives in order to orientate all human resources respecting the differences.

The course of development would then not be produced by the interests of a particular group: it would be the result of a common will expressed in the recognition of an "organic" solidarity. There are several examples of social contexts where people live in small blocks, grouped without relationships and shared interests. There, the "familism" prevails over the reciprocity's rationale and deviant behaviours characterise the territory. The suburbs of Naples is a fitting example of such characteristics, and it can be considered a typical contemporary case of *governance's* failure and of local politics' negligence.

The Redevelopment Plan of Scampia Quarter's report states that: "*A complex aggregate, alienated and heterogeneous, decayed, lacking in community's life, in a real connective tissue, and in relational spaces*".

Scampia is a recent social reality: the so-called "Sails" buildings, built just twenty years ago, are the most decayed example-ruin of modern urban architecture. This territory is completely lacking in the action of territorial intelligence. In such context it is very difficult to individualize the social capital, neither is possible to claim the institutions accomplished a vicarious function.

The three cornerstones of CAENTI (territorial intelligence, governance and action-research) share the principle of supporting the actual sharing-in of actors and of population into the produced benefits, through actions oriented towards the setting up of the project.

It is impossible to carry out a project without the cooperation of the social capital and of the institutions, whose control functions do not mortify the innovatory demands autonomously promoted by the territory.

Of course, we are aware that territorial intelligence has to reckon with large-scale socio-economic and cultural realities, to the extent that it assesses the resources available on a given territory, thus becoming able to promote and steer actors' behaviours. It is then possible to think that territorial intelligence must play the role of 'mediation structure', bridging individual and society. It empowers the social and individual capital through public agencies, economic organisations and associations. These agencies support interactions aimed at feeding the social capital in return, becoming the basis of local development.

According to the main established sociological theories concerning territorial sustainable development, our research aims to test the hypotheses that, even if the economic system is still the main standard for measuring actual growth opportunities, a greater emphasis must be accorded to the description of the cultural system and citizens' awareness as the essential correlates for a development able to promote socio-economic cohesion in a given territory.

The territorial intelligence is the expression of a culture that supports the socio-economic cohesion. Such cohesion can define and develop itself only within a balanced relationship between the territory's available resources and the rational action of conservation and preservation of his own assets and heritage.