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Difficulty of living

Maria Chiara Tosi

The object of this essay regards the spaces of welfare, which were constructed starting at the second half of the 20th century in Europe as spaces for socialization and collective life activities, services and infrastructure. Despite their many limitations, these spaces aimed to guarantee comfort, health and safety to the city, while also giving a spatial form to welfare state policies. To work on this topic with the broadened perspective of Europe is deemed urgent for three distinct reasons:

– firstly, because the arrangement of infrastructure and services, the widespread presence of these public services, even if not always correctly situated or constructed, in our view, constitute one of the characteristics of the contemporary European city as one of its main factors of identity.

In other words, if from the past our cities inherit certain elements of identity such as public squares or theatres, churches and castles, starting from the 20th century, the European city distinguishes itself from other cities in the world instead by the presence of the products of welfare, the physical translation of the policies of the welfare state; secondly, because the spaces of welfare are one of the areas in which citizens can determine their very identity and form the very spirit of citizenship. And it is these factors that are yet more important today, in order to receive the many immigrants who aim to obtain not only home and employment but also new rights (and duties) of citizenship;

– thirdly, because to investigate the space of welfare means to work out the themes of urbanity, or that *mixité*, of the construction of urban fabrics that are livable, comfortable, healthy and safe. The comparison and exchange between experiences and best practices on these themes can contribute to improving the overall quality in the design of social and welfare services at a European wide level and to open a debate on the connections between the quality of the spaces of welfare and the quality of urban life in European cities.

Being involved in the space of welfare means coming to terms with the difficulty of living in many parts of the city and of the territory which were constructed after World war II, due to the hostility that extensive areas of developed land have in relation to their inhabitants and not only to the young or elderly or to the physically impaired. Given this point of view, this strategy of attention emphasizes the importance of a return in observing the city of daily life, to ask about the reasons and the causes of the difficulty and hostility. This is partially due to the absence of services, equipment and space for socialization, in the majority of the situations it seems instead that difficulties and hostilities are due to the incorrect organization, to the faulty operation, to the discontinuity of a system of services and equipment that for this reason generate

lack of comfort, uneasiness, insecurity and sometimes peril.

Starting from the set of characteristics and elements responsible for the difficulty of living it may be possible to highlight the urban infrastructure, namely that component which does not directly produce individual wealth, but that contributes to the well-being of a group or community. It is therefore necessary to establish a relation between the difficulties and the hostilities of daily life in the city and the policies and projects aimed at ensuring a higher degree of well-being; to rethink urban infrastructure as a result, a physical repository of urban welfare policies.

Forgetfulness

This area of interest has gradually been outlined starting by ascertaining the lack of consideration or the merely technical attention which the space of socialization and collective life is often dealt with; that is the totality of spaces, services and infrastructure that should guarantee comfort, security and quality to the city, shaping the welfare policies.

Insufficient attention with a plurality of attitudes that range from total ignorance and negation of the physical characters of this space, to considering them merely a need to grant a technical problem to resolve through standard compliancy. The attitude of guaranteeing minimum quantitative levels has made the relational character of these spaces, the spatial characters of the problem banal.

At times, when engaged in the relationship between welfare and the city, attention has almost entirely been focused on the tools and procedures which enable higher conditions of well being, on the characteristics of urban standards, on the quality of the implementation, on the alignment with urban and social politics, on the need to change from descriptive to performance models, with little focus on the physical implications of these policies and tools or to the characteristics that urban infrastructure takes on and to the ability to make a developed area habitable.

The fact that is often forgotten, is that the majority of people that live in a city desire a normal daily existence, made up of comfortable and secure spaces.

Researching a 'normal' existence seems to be the aspect that ties together different population mixes which make up contemporary European society, a society with a strong practical competency of daily living that requires spaces characterized by decency, well being, security, health and independence to be configured.

Comfort, security-safety, health

It seems to us that engaging in welfare requires observation of the European city in an attempt to construct pertinent technical descriptions regarding the characteristics that these spaces assume today. These descriptions are required in order to express judgments and evaluations regarding the conditions of comfort, safety

and health that de-fine urban space, as well as to initiate planning investigations that stem from the same objectives. Therefore to restart from the description of urban space, maintaining the physical dimension of welfare as the focus.

Naturally investigating these themes means coming to terms with the real possibilities that have been available over the last few years to construct new urban infrastructure; with the norms, the policies, the projects, but also and above all, the standing that the physical character of these projects has had in the investment programs for increasing social wellbeing. In other words, the spaces, the places, the services and public infrastructure of public interaction will be observed as a dimension and physical translation of welfare politics.

To study welfare space for us also means engaging in topics regarding security, a phenomenon closely linked, if not derived from weakened or lacking urbanity. This encourages the role of those projects and policies that have made heterogeneous and continuous urbanity their strong point to be rehabilitated, attempting to create distance from the all too frequent condition of adjoining cordoned off spaces, small distinct fortresses in which 'people value physical and spiritual independence, as opposed to a feeling of belonging and identity of place'. This is why we think it's more useful and fertile to observe the topic from a different perspective: without emphasizing fears and insecurities, to wonder instead what has been obtained and what can be accomplished in order to construct a comfortable and healthy civil space, a place of encounter and exchange, of coexistence and of social interaction, and consequently 'secure'.

Investigating the difficulty of living also means relating to the characteristics that comfort has assumed in the contemporary city, in addition to themes regarding health. Wellbeing in a space, enjoying it pleasurably, is certainly one of the objectives that have had an important role in considerations made by people involved in urban space. The difficulties associated with living the city have led increasing numbers of people to find individual solutions to the issue, to search for comfort inside their own home, abandoning urban space. The transfer of the city toward suburban areas, toward dispersed living conditions, also leads to this theme: to the search for individual comfort. Today then, we must enquire as to the reasons for this absence, on the lack of comfort that characterizes important parts of the city built after WWII, ensuring this enquiry be done neither with a generic or a superficial attitude, but on the contrary identifies in the diverse conditions the specific reasons for that absence, the reasons and the causes of the lack of ease generated by moving, pausing and using the urban space.

The stress related to day to day life in the city at times takes on a dangerous and damaging aspect. In recent years local communities have made the effort to communicate the particular importance of widespread environmental quality as a common wealth to be preserved through apt welfare policies. In this case also, it is

necessary to show and clarify the relevance that the methodologies related to this issue take on: a wooded area, sound proofing, flood mitigation measures, alternative transportation networks, reclamation of a landfill all have value, but it is the method and the way that they are planned in the area which requires attention.

Looking into these topics one wonders about what creates common well being today, on the possibility of regaining the fixed social assets that have been used and consumed over the past decades. How common welfare can be reconstructed in order to be both a product and a prerequisite of any real and meaningful welfare policy. In other words this research should encourage us to observe the intense use and consumption of existing fixed assets generated by the developmental models of the contemporary city, which leads us to ask with a sense of urgency: what are the new collective goods, the 'common happiness' that recent urban phenomena have been able to construct?

Maybe also some environmental improvement programs, the promotion of regional parks, the rehabilitation of roadways, a richer and more varied offer of common areas, more generally a different environmental policy could be interpreted as a new welfare policy, as the search for a more hospitable and habitable place, less demanding and hostile, where collective and not only individual well being is possible.

Some remarks

As we have tried to specify at the beginning of this essay, the question motivating our interests regards the methods and the configurations that city infrastructure would have to assume in order to make daily life easier. Starting a reflection around these issues, which we have only begun to delineate, seems useful for many different reasons:

- to allow more visibility to the relevance at an urban level of policies of the welfare state, which are instead often only viewed with reference to healthcare, in order to help a plurality of spatial configurations that can and should adopt more ample social policies emerge;
- to shift the attention from the recognition of a single or networked common good and-or commodity, to a more attentive consideration of the spaces of welfare in their entirety as a common good;
- to deal with the spaces of welfare with a more articulate approach such as an amplified look at Europe and to additional single nations with their specific traditions of welfare state policies;
- to establish some informal welfare networks, recognizing the methodologies by which single individuals form alliances to supply collective answers to the absence or to the lacking operation of urban infrastructure. These alliances are functional to the improvement of the quality of collective life and the capabilities or substantial freedom of every individual, that have to be seen as active agents of transformation and no longer as passive recipients of benefits;

– to start a reflection that could extend toward extreme conditions, towards those contexts in which the absence of comfort, security and health prevail. Settlements in which uneasiness dominates. Here we refer to the settlements called 'planet of slum' by Mike Davies, and that could constitute the future direction of this enquiry.

Building the welfare

Bernardo Secchi

My principal aim today is to put forward some hypothesis for our research: they are not news; some of the themes I'll propose have been investigated, even if from another point of view, by others scholars; for some of them we have to give more specific details concerning specific historical periods or specific regions. All of them concern the contemporary city and territory.

Since many centuries, since the beginning of the modernity, the individual and collective welfare is one of the main issues of every government and of every social group.

But the idea of what the welfare is changed during the time in a radical way with the change of the social and power structure. For me how the idea of the welfare is changing now must be the main issue of our research. What I can do now is only to point out some themes, concerning the city and the territory and speaking of this change.

The first one is the importance of the body, *le souci de soi*, the importance to adequate the urban space to our body and its performances (that are not always perfect). The following are the importance of the 'right distance', between subjects, objects, activities, practices; the 'porosity' of the metropolitan tissues and territories, the opportunity the porosity is giving to the flexibility of the society, economy and to the living space. The opportunity it is giving to the social differences and to identity policies; the fragmented character of the urban space that is coming out; the growth inside this fragmented space of enclaves, in both the versions of the ghetto or of the gated community, but also in the intermediate versions. And again, the importance of the accessibility, permeability and connectivity, but the ambiguous role of the mobility infrastructures that are at the same time tools for the connection and access, but also for separation and exclusion; the socially and economically selective role of any infrastructure and of any spatial design. The globalization that is penetrating in the everyday life of the urban populations. Globalization is always unpredictable and generating fear, pushing the people to retire in specific niches, to give a value to the tradition and stability, to the fixity of the identity.

The themes I mentioned are not for me in causal order; it is possible to take them in many different orders. They have not the same importance everywhere. They appeared in the different European regions in different period, even if we can expect a kind of unification of the western world droved by them.

What is more important they are not building only one scenario for our future, nor a project. But 'the new urban issues', different from the issues of the XIXth century or of the middle of the XXth, have there their roots: in the

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tensions and conflicts that these themes are producing at different scales and on the different layers: from the ideological, to the imagery, the individual and collective behaviours. That is the reason why to do a research.

Between risk and cohesion. Requests for innovations in urban planning

Alberto Clementi

These days, to bring forth a critical reflection on urban planning and welfare represents a serious challenge for a discipline which, in the past, has contributed notably to the structuring of policies of social well-being, helping to discover the importance of collective spaces and living conditions in cities of modernity; while more recently, this discipline seems to have instead lost its propelling role in times when dramatic issues of actuality call for a redesigning of welfare having endured the effects of significant changes in the economic structure and society of our contemporary era.

Particularly in Italy, a radicalisation of drives towards local movements and the tutelage of single territorial subjectivities, in response to new conditions of our 'society of risk', along with the advanced decomposition of intermediary social bodies, significantly lead to the compromise of certain universalistic visions of requested services directed towards the social state, which was to in turn guarantee a common well-being and help to balance the distorting effects of the market. It is these visions, as we well know, that have in large part shaped modern urban planning.

In facing the enormous load of processes and the ongoing transformations of the social state, it may seem retrogressive and a bit pathetic to go back to focussing on marginal measures such as the adaptation of urban planning standards or the routine proposals for new service plans, which oftentimes involve university research and resources. As a matter of fact, I personally have had the chance of witnessing the progressive shifting of the thematic topics of welfare in urban planning in my experience as a university researcher. From the beginning of the 1970's, one would tend to think optimistically about the new forms of the city, and trust in the determining role of collective. During the following decade, when the rising conflict connected to claims and demands for the right to residences and services were exhausted, urban planning was called to redefine its role in the prospects of social policies, which were strongly conditioned by a growing scarcity of public resources and no longer intended to establish homogeneous standards for the use of the. The preoccupations caused by risks and a growing loss of identity started to outweigh those of urban 'liveability', hence demanding responses and solutions for which we were substantially unprepared.

Flexibility, instability and uncertainty have started to enter heavily in the life strategies of individuals; and together with the perception of risk, there is a fear of the future that has significantly conditioned the agenda of public policy (Bauman, Liquid fear, 2006). In response to the devouring powers of networks, there were additional

processes of a growing autonomisation of the individual, with prospects of an institutionalised individualism that inspired the reformist policies or 'Blairist approach' of the last decade. All of this has had important outcomes with the intent of innovating policies of welfare.

What has emerged most importantly are those risks regarding the environment and urban security, which urban planning has promptly addressed through reformulations of its own cognitive and projectual framework.

A positive account of this, for the first factor, is the growing attention on perspectives for sustainable cities, and particularly the reduction of pollutants and emissions, the generation of renewable energy resources and the conservation of non-renewable natural resources. In regard to the second factor, the growing concern for urban security has become almost pathological for its hyperbolic media coverage; and only very recently has there been a more organic approach to dealing with it. One interesting study dealing with these factors was the 'first investigation on the state of security in Italy and on the directions and approaches of security policies for citizens', developed by a commission for institutional affairs, on behalf of the Chamber of deputies, over the course of the 15th legislature, presided by Luciano Violante. In light of this proposed profile, urban planning seems to rediscover its historical vocation by presenting itself as an instrument of welfare that is less oriented towards policies of surveillance and repression and instead more inclined towards affirming the positive values of urban space, which favour sociality and a consequent increases in security.

City, civil society, welfare: a risk perspective?

Giulio Ernesti

The following essay and notes stem from a basic assumption: that the welfare state is the result of historic processes involving the construction and universal extension of citizenship, in response to a demand for socioeconomic and political equality which, once the issues of social dynamic and organized labor are assimilated, starts to extend rights to individuals for the sole fact that they are members of society.

It was a long and conflictual process in regards to the formation and evolution of industrialized nations and, within that course of action, there were also the dynamic relations among the market, private enterprise, philanthropy and different forms of state and private charity. It is within the framework of these interactions that social and public policies started to take form. In regard to such policies, it is important to highlight their clear and apparent function to contain and limit social-economic conflict, while providing for controls and integration, and also to recall their origination and evolution: from the emergence of public state actions and normative obligations, deriving from the stigmatization of the poor, to factors of prevention, which lead to the adoption of certain universalistic measures following the Second world war. The interest in periodizing the welfare state stems from the conviction that in and throughout its evolution there was a progressive erosion of the autonomy and capacity of local societies to express solidarity and effectively respond to social needs. This gradual erosion allows for a better understanding of the uncertainties in the process of constructing a stronger state presence and, conversely, also a persistent resistance towards the state's processes of modernization.

At the same time, this erosion is due to the significant persistence or resistance of local society, in pointing out certain problems and issues such as the crises of fordism's social pacts, the de-institutionalization of labor-capital relationships, and the great difficulty of defining collective interests; all occurring within the ongoing discussion regarding the existing relations between society-state institutions.

Welfare, we might add, was no longer a prerogative of the state, as much as it was a widespread social function as well as an indication of the crisis of political representativeness, which validated the necessity for new and more vital forms of democracy. All that is stated herein intends to highlight the centrality of the city as a complete and local society, and to point out that the proposal for the future of the city's crucial role concludes and also reopens the shifting cycles, as well as the ongoing dynamic of the last century.

More precisely, the aim is to investigate the hypothesis of a welfare society-welfare state circularity.

In this perspective, one important aspect is certainly

constituted by the experience of the Giolitti era in Italy. The overall experience of that historic period was characterized by an intentional reformist imprinting as a necessary requisite for a modern industrial democracy to be founded on a key prospect of expanding a social basis of reference, with numerous ties to center-periphery relationships.

One reformist intent, which cannot overlook the cities, municipalities, and local societies to which it refers, regards those environments as the fulcrum of a more ample and articulate project capacity that is able to face and deal with the pressing issues of social dynamics and urban settings.

Programs of rationalization and control of the growing complexification of social life in the new century tend to go hand in hand with a sharp criticism of the democratic insufficiencies in the liberalist state, the state's class structure, and the scarcity of the upper-middle class' social breadth; and this includes the presence in municipalities of dominant nerve centers for the transformative project programming of current corporate regimens.

A careful examination shows that these implications indicate the affirmation of minimum rights of inclusion and citizenship, as well as the quality and amplification of citizenship. In other words, it denotes those potential policies that have the purpose of expanding access to wellbeing. Such policies hypothesize and arrange for the passage from a more ample and widespread distribution of charity and social assistance to the prospect of an all-inclusive right to wellbeing in general. In synthesis, we are here referring to cities that seem to take on a supplementary role of the state.

Such processes were abruptly rescaled with the rise of fascism in Italy and its economic and social political measures. The plan for welfare was however a path that was held open, yet again by the actions of local government, even if under the lodge of subordination in which local societies were to reside following the new state-nation-fascism political identity.

It is necessary however to underline how the gravity of the crisis of the 1930's brought back attention to the social question, and this seemed to recreate unbalance in what was a delicate equilibrium: between the state and municipalities; the state and political parties; and the state, political parties and the church.

The result of this complex iteration seems to be an unquestionable growth in forms of social assistance and securities; a growth in social spending; a tendency on behalf of the fascist party that can be reassumed in a formula that was to legitimize itself as an effective tool of social political policy. In reality, the prevalent action of assistance and social benefits locally developed in neighborhoods was substantially residual, and tied to the emergence of the ongoing economic crisis.

In synthesis and summary, it lead to what was intended as the delineation of a socially assisted society.

Cultures in public spaces. The case of Hafencity Hamburg

Ingrid Breckner

Cultures influencing the conceptual and constructive realization of public spaces as well as their uses are highly connected with the development of public welfare. In Germany we can discover such relationships since the beginning establishment of public welfare policies at the end of the 19th century. The democratic movements during the Weimar republic after the First world war and before the nazi-regime succeeded in integrating public welfare in the national constitution. In this period German cities got a lot of good examples of well used and appreciated public spaces as playgrounds for children in large housing areas, sport facilities, green belts, neighbourhood parks, urban gardens, etc. Even as these innovative welfare policies did not follow an explicit spatial approach such good practices are respected until today. Mostly they are considered much more useful for the daily life of residents and other city users than the highly standardized concepts of public spaces constructed in the fordist period between 1960 and 1980. Nowadays the issue of public spaces in Germany is discussed in terms of requalification of older public spaces, lacking sustainability, and the development of new constructive practices, which are compatible with more highly differentiated post-fordist life styles.

The new downtown Hafen city Hamburg which is not expected to be finished until 2025 (see: www.hafencity.com) is an excellent example of new initiatives of planning and constructing public spaces.

The residential, commercial and tourist uses of public spaces realized in the first two construction periods between 2000 and 2009 show a lot of innovative practices. Public spaces in this new city centre are considered a key issue for cultural innovation, social integration and economic success of the emerging postindustrial urbanity.

The president of the building development enterprise Hafen city Hamburg expressed that urbanity in Hafen city is to be 'socially, culturally and economically select' and that the spectrum of the differentiation and heterogeneity is to positively be greater in comparison with other analogous projects of urban development. If one observes the uses of open public spaces in this new central portion of the city, it becomes clear that there is a devised stratification of the complexity that is part of urban life. As recent data shows, a social composition made up of resident inhabitants of the area are strongly represented by intermediary social groups, contrary to the images of typically represented elitist and exclusive urban neighbourhoods, which are often presented in the media. The efforts and activities of many in the organisation of this collaborative collectivity have been intense and oftentimes extraordinary.

Example of this are the involvement of parents in the

realisation of playgrounds, self-organised initiatives and meetings on a regular basis, the intensive use of a web-based platform, the constitution of the 'Kunstkompanie' artists organization, and the 'Störtebecker e.V.' sports association, and especially the capacity to manage the diverse factors of rivalry and conflict that issues of space use often generate. Certainly, the management of the Hafen city GmbH project promoting enterprise also plays a fundamental role in endorsing local welfare. Positive accounts of this are the care and attention towards accessibility for the physically challenged with all walkways for the work-site's development stages, the intent to encourage and support the installment and localization of the university as well as an innovative school complex, and the constitution of an ecumenical forum to encourage dialogue among different religious communities. The use of highly elevated ecological standards in the project-design of building and the care for the processes of social organization through the direct involvement of a highly qualified expert in social policies. There are many other aspects of this interesting process that deserve more detailed explanation. For those who are interested, we would recommend exploring the website, but also, more importantly, planning an on-site visit. Every useful and viable suggestion, which could help enhance the quality of the work that is going into the research and development of Hafen city GmbH regarding these topics is of course very welcome!

Welfare for all? Utopia or reality in a socialist society. The case of Romania

Rudolf Poledna

When I was invited to write about 'The welfare space in Europe', I had serious doubts if somebody like me coming from a former socialist country and sociology, has something to say related to this topic. Because my problem was: do the meaning of welfare defined in the frame of the socialist state and society match the meaning of welfare, *Wohlfahrt*, etc., defined in the frame of western societies, speak capitalist societies?

If we admit that welfare is related to well being (as the contributions to the seminar show) and well being can be related to happiness then welfare could mean, from a sociological point of view, the totality of social, economical, cultural, political, conditions that are created to make the achievement of happiness possible. It was a time of heavy deprivation for the people from Romania due to, especially, the economic policies of the Ceausescu regime in the end of the 80's, oriented towards the aim of paying back the credits of the Romanian state, credits taken for the huge industrialization-modernization projects. These modernization projects should improve, *à la long duree*, the quality of life in the Romanian society and reduce the disparities in comparison to the more developed countries.

And this access is socially granted and taken for granted by the social actors. For socialist societies the ideological character of planning theory and the praxis of planning and building is intrinsic given. Architecture and planning were supposed to give material form and shape to the 'scientific' ideology of the working class, 'wisely' conducted by unique and almighty communist party. Communist ideology (in the package of the dialectical and historical materialism) was the main theory in planning and practice in urbanization and spatial development. As a theory of the revolutionary class this theory was always truth and right. And the consequences can be observed even now. Welfare for all is also well spaces for all. Is this sentence right? What is the meaning of 'spaces of welfare' in socialist societies?

I start from the classical distinction between praxis and theory, respectively from the distinction of the field or community of architects and urban planners as professionals of organizing and designing space and the field, or community, of sociologist who observe empirically and reflect theoretically on the antecedents and consequences of both, the outcome of the practical work of the architects and planners, and their representations of space and society. I was searching for the concept 'spaces of welfare' first. Then I was looking for the concept of 'welfare'. The books are representative for the language and the semantics used in the scientific and professional communities in the '80 and the beginning of the '90. Technical literature. The next step was to search for the term: public spaces. And in the technical encyclopedia

I really found the notion, with the meaning of exterior spaces in the building area of the settlements. This concept refers among others to the quality of housing, public transport, protection of the environment, infrastructure. In planning activities two main types of indicators were used: indicators of the quality of 'material' life and indicators of the quality of 'spiritual' life (Cardas, Mircea eds., 1983, pp. 49-50). The concept of urban aesthetics related to public spaces is also present in the encyclopedia (Ibidem, 1983, p. 102), insisting on the need of respecting the rules of beauty and harmony in planning and building.

Sociological literature. In the sociological dictionary the concept 'Public' is present related to the latin ethymologic publicus, derived from the ancient 'people'. The concept is defined in opposition to 'private' according to the western liberalism of the 17th century 'public space' means 'domain of the state' and 'private space' denominates the freedom of thought and faith in the frame of civil society. The dictionary is suggesting that the concept of quality of life is taking over, from an other perspective, the concept of happiness.

As conclusion: from my point of view the concept of 'quality of life', even it is ambiguous, covers the meaning of the western capitalist (in the times of the cold war) meaning of welfare and wellbeing. It is also through that we hardly can speak about spaces of welfare in socialism, because the spatial dimension of the quality of life and the aesthetics of public spaces were not a priority to former socialist societies. It is also clear that in the absence of high levels of the Gdp and income, the former socialist states where forced to invent something to show to the capitalist states the superiority of socialist order.

Spaces of welfare and relation-based goods

Stefano Munarin

When we started this series of reflections it seemed that we had gone a bit past the due date: 'welfare is in the past' and 'there is no sense to researching something that no longer exists'. However, it remains true, as Nadia Urbinati stated last june, that we are undergoing a continuous policy of reducing political policies of the welfare state; so much that, with the introduction of measures like the so-called 'poverty card', there will no longer be a social state, but rather substituting policies of sporadic relief and aid for the needy. The only path that seemed left to follow was for the state to retreat and leave everything to the rules of the market.

After only a few months, it seems to be a completely different story: state interventions have returned to trend and no government is at all ashamed to dole out billions of Euro in this and that direction. Even the idea of a welfare state seems to suddenly come back into play and is casually put to practice by unexpected agents of 'public power'.

It is precisely in facing these contradictory signals that the necessity emerges to investigate such topics. Because, when facing the obsession of fear and the apprehension of the 'other', to work with the themes of welfare and the city means also to speak of the research strategies on 'wellbeing' operated in articulated and numerous ways by people practicing their daily activities and by the many forms of conviviality and peaceful co-habitation taking place in everyday life; practices that are sometimes obfuscated by the strategies of self-segregation which is often discussed in the media and also in some higher literary circles.

On the other hand, we know that modern urban planning has always held a tight relationship with its coeval public political policies, and with policies of the welfare state in particular. So much in fact that, according to Bernardo Secchi, for example, 'the patient research on the physical and concrete dimension of individual and collective wellbeing... has left a rather solid deposit in the cities of the 21st century'. And perhaps even today, it is for this reason that urban planning appears to be brought back into discussion from the myth of the intangibility of the free market and the exasperated individualism of the 'society of opulence'. At the same time however, it is also charged with new expectations connected to the continuous processes of society's reorganisation, facing the risks of globalisation and environmental issues; so it can therefore be useful to go back to thinking of the relationships between urban planning and public (so to speak) policies of welfare. We are well aware of the fact that the policies of a welfare state can be interpreted as forms and instruments of a 'bio-power', while we also understand that the welfare state, as Federico Caffè stated, is not 'a failed encumbrance from which to free

ourselves'. This provides the courage to think of a welfare that presupposes non-return investments, having uncertain benefits that are often posthumously realised. Among the numerous attempts to 'define' Europe and its 'identity', a recent and supple book by George Steiner proposes considering the relevant significance of five main characteristics in the history of the European continent, proposing 'five axioms to define Europe: its *caffés*, a practicable landscape at human scale, roads and neighbourhoods that take on the names of statesman, scientists, artists and writers..., the double lineage to both Athens and Jerusalem and ultimately the awareness of a conclusive chapter'.

Hence if we recognise, as Steiner did, that some places (like the *caffés*) have carried out an important role in the definition of European culture, today it may be just as relevant to observe the role carried out by the spaces of welfare in the formation of European citizens. It seems particularly pertinent at this point to perhaps add a sixth axiom to the list, in recognising that Europe is characterised (also) by the presence of social equipment, intended as the spaces and materials produced by the modern policies of welfare.

This is why we have attentively focussed on observing the places of welfare in these decades; for it is within these places that a considerable part of social relations take place in Europe: parks, sports facilities, schools of various levels and types, hospitals and clinics, civic centres, libraries, etc. are the places within which space and time are shared, people meet and encounter one another, rules and comportments are acquired, and European citizen-ship is formed.

We are also seeing that this characteristic is not simply something that we inherit from the past, but rather something that we have created ourselves. This is a recent occurrence and still in its processes of definition, although it tells us what we have been looking for throughout modernity, while also showing us a brighter side of our last century.

On the other hand, while reflecting on a 'new' welfare and in recognising the many aspects there are to deal with, Anthony Giddens affirms that 'in the society of post-industrial well-being' there is urgent need for 'a welfare that is conceived to increase solidarity... to contribute to a reconciliation of cultural diversity and styles of life within a general social cohesion; while the main social issue is in creating such an equilibrium between the multitudes and social cohesion itself'. Therefore, what we note in frequenting public parks, kindergartens, civic centres, libraries, etc. is that these are, on one hand, the spaces and services produced by the 'fruitful seasons of the welfare state', and, on the other, that this functional equipment, without which the lives of millions of people would be rendered very difficult, are 'free' places, of 'free access', wherein the activities of socialisation and sharing are practiced freely.

It is along this path that the debate involves certain 'densified' concepts ('well-being, common-good, public

realm', etc), and one may encounter certain reflections of those, like Cristina Bianchetti, who point out the 'inactuality' of some ideas about the public realm, or else the rediscovery of a long-standing tradition of relationships between modern projects and collective spaces. Reflecting on the relationship between the spaces of welfare and social practices, it may be interesting for us to consider the concepts of 'social capital of reciprocity' and 'relation-based goods' in particular.

These themes interest us especially because they allow us to go back to reflecting upon the city as a 'support system' that is able to host and activate social relations. As urban-planners we tend to think that we can conduct research and work through project-design directly on those 'spaces of the public' which allow-help (without of course obliging or causing) the development of practices of sociality.

It may be useful here to develop a better understanding of the concepts of reciprocity and relational dynamics, because, if its true that urban planners, in studying the distribution and allocation of land use values, are also occupied by 'positional goods', today it is important to see if and how lived-in spaces, considered as 'infrastructure' are capable of hosting and encouraging relational activities.

This is perhaps simply a new way of bringing back attention to an old question that is however still of fundamental importance: i.e. the city as an 'instrument of impersonal lives, and as the structure in which the diversity and complexity of persons, their interests and lifestyles become usable as social experiences'.

Yet again what interests us in particular about the city is its being an 'instrument of co-habitation', a place where, through the obligation of sharing one's own life experience -with others, people learn to live together. This does not guarantee automatic results, however it does allow for the roles of players in the game to unfold. It is therefore with this perspective that careful observation and attention are placed on the given practices that develop within public spaces intended as 'platforms for the practices of socialisation' and where the processes of social interaction are free and at no cost. Such spaces are at the basis of these practices, but at the same time, they can also become a sort of 'materialisation' of their own physical expression.

We know quite well that we are reworking an old discussion, and maybe only renewing claims on the 'right to the city', but we feel that today this has become 'necessary': to investigate the relationship between welfare policies and the city, intended as a 'structure of impersonal relations', is an issue of great social relevance that cannot be sufficiently exhausted. Moreover, this prospect can be a fertile means to set forth pertinent critiques on urban policies, which, in recent years, have affected the European city. While many of these policies have succeeded in conferring dignity to the city in generating a sense of pride to live therein, the question remains about what they have done in order to 'favour active

citizenship' and develop universal rights of citizenship? To close this essay we can cite Giovanni Bollea when he reminds us that 'courtyards, elementary schools, city squares, porticos, side-walks, sports facilities, cultural centres of music and dance, libraries, cinemas and theatres, sports fields, conference halls... (all constitute) the logistic essentiality of our youth' and he invites us to 'leave the constraints of institutional spaces, and in doing so, create the spaces for building a sense of belonging' ... knowing very well that the game favours socialisation and that court-yards, gardens, small squares, porticoes, etc. increase the sustainable spatiality' of our cities.

Barcelona's markets: formation and duration

*Nadia Fava, Manuel Guàrdia Bassols, José Luis Oyon**

Markets have been driving forces and backbones of European cities since the middle ages. Their layout was a main concern in planning the traditional city, and gained considerable prominence in the context of urban reforms in the nineteenth century. They have not, however, been studied in much detail. The case of Barcelona offers some remarkable peculiarities. Although it joined the wave of renovations with some delay, the validity of its system of markets has been maintained and strengthened in a very unusual manner in western countries. As of the early twentieth century in England and France, the concept is nearly exhausted, and in general we see how, during the second half of the twentieth century, the system of markets in all these countries showed erosion stemming from the expansion of more modern forms of selling products. In Barcelona we saw, however, the modernization and decisive expansion of the number of markets. In this municipality of reduced dimensions (92 sqm), the number of covered markets went from 18, in 1940, to 40 in 1970.

In the 1980s, the municipal departments saw them as a fundamental asset in the policy of reconversion of the retail fabric of neighborhoods and as an instrument for commercial planning to contain the oligopoly of large supermarkets.

The first steps (1836-68): the markets of Sant Josep and of Santa Caterina

In Barcelona, the re-zoning began with the construction of two large markets on the pieces of land of two convents that had been seized and sold in accordance with the law of 1836, while other open markets in squares and streets were maintained. The new market of Sant Josep at las Ramblas, in the form of a porticoed square, and the new market of Santa Caterina, in a more working-class neighborhood, a modest version of the Saint-Germain model in Paris, finished in midcentury, already appeared as anachronisms.

Towards a policy for markets (1868-97): the first metallic structure markets

A municipal report from 1871 made the first proposal for the properties. It maintained the central role the two markets of San Josep and Santa Caterina played, and proposed complementing them with a strong and consistent network of markets. The Born market, inaugurated in 1876, and the market of San Antonio in 1882, followed the European models, with their open spaces, protected from the elements and separated from the street; their new architectural design included ironwork and glass. They had in common their large size and a floor space around a central crossing topped by an octagonal dome, in which large perpendicular buildings converge. They

involved a highly important effort, born of the desire for modernization, and of overly optimistic expectations. It was hoped that their ability to attract customers would decongest the Santa Caterina market and, especially, that of San Josep which was dramatically overloaded. This was not the case, and in both cases, their dimensions turned out to be excessive.

After this experience, the Council abandoned the idea of a large market and opted for the construction of neighborhood markets.

Both of the first two large markets and the later projects were the work of The Land and maritime engineer company, which gives great unity to the initial set of markets in Barcelona. It was a local company founded in 1855 for heavy construction machinery that, in those days, aimed a large part of their production towards metallic constructions. Among many other accomplishments, in 1888 it handed-over the metal work of five covered markets (Born, San Antoni, Barceïlloneta, Hostafrancs and Concepci3) with a surface area totaling 23,600 mq.

From the annexing of municipalities to the conversion of the Born market into a wholesale market (1897-1921)

Following the annexation of the municipalities of the Pla de Barcelona in 1897, it is striking that of all the markets of the old municipality of Barcelona, Sant Josep (La Boqueria) represents, according to the 1902 Yearbook, 40% of the total takings of the 16 markets of the new unified municipality. The second, the Santa Caterina market, represented 12% of the takings, but was described in 1900 as follows: "The majority of this building is in a ruinous state". In short, the two most centrally located and important markets are those in the worst condition. The interior re-modeling work affected them and prevented a decisive renewal.

An evaluation of the various markets done in 1900 confirms that the metal work markets of Born and San Antoni represented two thirds of the total investment in municipal markets. Their takings were, however, quite modest when compared to Sant Josep or Santa Caterina, which were the most profitable, and most congested.

The unarguable modernity of markets (1920-75)

In countries like France, Britain or the United States, markets lost prominence, throughout the twentieth century, to retail food sales. Spain has displayed a nearly opposite trend. Throughout the twentieth century, markets remain in full force and receive a firm commitment from municipalities. They are a cause of reflection for the most committed architects and city planners involved in running the real city. In Madrid, the design and construction of the Legazpi central wholesale market for fruits and vegetables, or the plan for markets driven by the architect Ferrero, show that public markets were far removed from losing their modernity and were the subject of a marked typological renewal, in part associated with the use of reinforced concrete. From a city planning point of view, the visionary proposal for Madrid

by Zuazo-Jansen (1929-30) is also of interest to which he attaches great protagonism. The crisis, war and the long post-war period did not lessen people's confidence in markets. Moreover, if we look at the cases of Madrid and Barcelona, during the post-war years, an extraordinary increase and strengthening of their systems of markets can be observed. This is probably the crucial period of branching off if compared to the path taken by other Western countries.

As of 1942, the City Council encouraged the construction of some new markets that were to replace the street markets that had been tolerated as a lesser evil since the crisis of the 1930s. After the deep crisis of the immediate post-war years, the 1950s were years of slow transition, that would lead to the so-called 'developmentism' of the 1960s. On 26 July 1956, a regulation to set up markets run by private individuals was approved. The approval laid the foundation in Barcelona for the most active stage in the construction of markets. The idea was that everyone in Barcelona would have a market less than a kilometer from home. Between 1957 and 1977, 18 neighborhood markets were built in the least served areas. Moreover, as of 1966, systematic proposals were made for, "The possibility of the simultaneous construction of local markets equipped with car parks." That affected both the new construction of the expanded network of retail markets, and the renewal of existing ones.

The active policy for markets was an attempt to lessen the high cost of foodstuffs. For the same reason, in 1962, a public tender was called to select a financial project and formula for wholesale fruit and vegetable markets. This initiative was registered in the forecasts of the First development plan of 1964-67, which wanted to overcome the momentum of the sales structures that were having serious implications on the cost of living. Approval for the new fruit and vegetable market had to overcome great resistance. Finally, in 1971, Mercabarna was inaugurated and the central market for fruits and vegetables moved to it.

Crisis and urban revitalization: markets as instruments of urban planning (1975-2008)

The economic crisis of the early 1970s and 80s led to a growing food industry in response to unemployment. This brought about a situation of small-scale holdings, lack of professionalism, low investment, very low level of self-organisation, an aging employable population with little capacity for initiative, ratchet market shares and so on. Paradoxically, the increased offer was accompanied by a rise in prices, because these establishments were only sustainable with high sales margins. In the analyses conducted, the considerable market share within the overall local municipal consumption could be seen. The concentration of total consumption per capita was 49.9%, and 40.4% of all types of businesses. Ever since the first proposals, the extensive system of markets in Barcelona (40 municipal markets) and the

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metropolitan area (75 local markets) were considered essential in the conversion process. It had to do with, "Exercising a veritable commercial urbanism". The special Plan for foodstuff equipment for Barcelona or Pecab (its acronym in Catalan) adopted the municipal markets, and above all their areas of business concentration and polarity, as its main instruments of action. The analysis was not limited to markets, and markets (polarity nodule) were considered together with establishments in their surroundings. The extent of these polarities was studied by means of more than 138,000 surveys at the doors of the market places. The business environment and issues of accessibility (bus stops, metro stations, car parks, pedestrian areas, directions of traffic, etc.) were also analysed. It required an approach to urban planning: organising polarities, quantifying business facilities, avoiding saturation of the sector, and regulating the commercial uses and forms permitted in each area of the city. In april 1991, the Municipal institute of markets of Barcelona (Catalan acronym: Immb) was created. It is an autonomous agency dealing with sales and services, for the direct management and administration of municipal markets in Barcelona. It has its own budget and is under the supervision of the City council. Since then, the Immb has led to the progressive modernization of sales structures of markets. Since its first interventions, there has been a concern for the quality of architectural projects, which have been quite varied depending on the market addressed. They have also not been exempt from a process of spectacularisation that is quite evident in some projects like those of Santa Caterina and la Barceloneta.

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Urban planning in Medellín

*Mario Tancredi**

Medellin is a complex city. It is characterized by well-known stereotypes which distort its physical and cultural position, in a country which is a sort of microcosm in the American subcontinent. Rich in expressions, it represents an exception also at the political and social level, since it's been dealing with the most powerful system of subversive organization in the eastern hemisphere for over forty years. Tropical country, third in the world as for biodiversity, it seems to reflect this biological feature on its inhabitants: the sadly notorious violence is contrasted by their bewildering but unknown kindness.

Medellin features contrasting characteristics: it is sunny and pleasant but at the same time violent and segregated. It is closed in its valley but it's able to emanate lively artistic and cultural expressions (among all we may cite Botero). A strong entrepreneurial spirit makes it the industrial heart of the country. Fashion and chemistry, trade, advanced and competitive technologies and services 'in the most strategic angle of south America': a glance at the map of the continent is enough to ascertain that the region of Antioquia, whose capital is Medellín, is the only one bordering the two oceans.

Surrounded by high mountains, it clings to the cliffs with broad working-class neighbourhoods and elegant residential towers for the most well-off. In its impetuous development it has practically erased the traces of its foundation and of the colonial past, only with the exception of the traditional grid pattern layout, dating back to the XVII century. Today it forms with the surrounding townships a metropolitan area with about three and half million inhabitants, the second in the country. The vitality of the public administration made it possible to develop the elevated railway system, finished and in service since 1995, and the development of the Epm (the public agency which encompasses the electric, telephone and waterworks companies). This system of works attempted to link some large urban sectors, despite the serious problems of public order and the consequent organization of the city into large private complexes.

Until recent years, the legacy of drug syndicates (which had their golden age in the 80's and early 90's) could be found in the violence which made this city one of the most dangerous and unapproachable urban areas in the world, with 390 murders per 100,000 inhabitants.

In 2004 Sergio Fajardo was elected mayor. Disappointed by the traditional politics, easily prone to corruption and electoral patronage, the city put its trust in the son of one of the most famous architects in Medellín, which managed to assemble a civil list free from the two traditional coalitions. At this point, something resembling the experience of Barcelona in the early 80's seemed to happen. The catalan model was transplanted into one of the most vital faculties of architecture in Medellín (the

Pontificia Bolivariana) thanks to the architect Alejandro Echeverri, who had worked and studied in Barcelona. Without doubt the city was already moving in this direction, thanks to some important projects in progress such as plaza Mayor, the exhibition complex developed by Daniel Bonilla (emerging architect native of Antioquia); the Metrocable, the cableway system planned to be a masivo means of transport connected to the subway, which climbing on wild slopes could reach the most populous and dangerous neighbourhoods of Santo Domingo or Comuna 13; the set of public squares like Los Deseos, La Luz and Pies Descalzos. What was really new was the structure of these projects, which could have otherwise run the risk of staying isolated from one another in enclosures (such as the notorious conjuntos, residential blocks, shopping centres, office district and cultural centres, protected by fences, security guards and video cameras) and in 'technical' transport spaces (urban motorways, subway). The new administration, seeing the possibility of a turning point, moves towards a simple but risky idea: Medellín is a violent city. One of the reasons is the segregation and the organization into enclaves which produces nothing but poverty. The solution to this impasse lies in education. The project is organized in two paths: on the one hand forming the new generations to a different social reality, alternative to armed groups and rival gangs; on the other hand, through the use of public space, really meant as everybody's space, as a space of sharing and meeting. In this way the Metrocable, which was liable to simply bypass the area with its suspended cars, becomes the occasion to create with Proyectos detonantes, public microspaces which, starting from the stations, has a positive effect on the dangerous neighbourhoods they go across. Projects such as Plaza mayor or the other squares, through an effort of integration that implies urban surgery strategies, are connected with the immediate vicinity and ultimately with the metropolitan system through crossings, textures, paths and urban microstructures, devoting particular attention to the important issues of accessibility, environment and networks.

Project and implementation

The management of Medellín's 'new course' is organized around the Edu, headed by Echeverri: "While the urban planning department was solving the daily problems, typical of a big metropolis, we were commissioned to think only of the city as a system, of strategies". The management has followed the guidelines of Pot, which put the stress on environmental balance, on a 'sistema estructurante' of mobility that could integrate the different systems, on the creation of centrality and of adequate instruments of implementation. In this way the Edu has been able to implement, among the others, the Pui (Proyectos urbanos integrales), a sort of partial plan aiming at optimizing resources and time. Two good examples are the Pui in the Santo Domingo district and Moravia. In the case, the project was to carry out a series

of actions around the Metrocable, which crosses with three stations one of the most difficult areas of Medellín, reaching the cerro of Santo Domingo, on which, after an architecture competition, one of the five new public libraries was being built. In that case the Pui has affected on the whole an area of 158 hectares. The strategy, besides the coordination of different institutional actors which acted on agreement and trying to optimize expenses and time, was based on a series of microprojects which concerned the whole territory, providing, squares, streets, schools, but also sewage systems and service networks.

In the case of the project for social housing, given the geological risk and the presence of illegal houses on the edges of the gullies that cross the area, a detailed survey has been carried out house after house. A surgical operation which has remoulded where possible and pulled down where necessary, in the latter case replacing the people in the same sector in new tower buildings. The areas cleared on the edges have been redeveloped and transformed into linear parks.

The contribution of the people has been important, with tens of workshops where local people such as mothers, elders, young people and children were invited to contribute with their ideas in the design of the city or in the choice of the names of the new public areas which were often inspired by the 'founding' stories of that community and have therefore been crucial for the recovery of its identity.

One of the works which was most 'loved' by the administration itself was the building of pedestrian bridges on the gullies: besides the physical connection they had a strong symbolic meaning, being a way of going past the geographical barriers which, in the recent history of Medellín, represented its social fractures.

The Moravia operation had a high symbolic value: it changed from rubbish dump to central urban area, being strategically located as a sort of natural 'plug' to the important historical axis of Carabobo, on which the city was born. At the foot of the former hill some works have been placed such as the technological park, the new botanical garden and, among the shacks, a cultural centre made by Salmona, which seals the prominent role assigned to architecture.

'The solutions to the problems of contemporary cities involves a rethinking of conventional urban planning theory' as was written in the revised Pot of Medellín in 1999. The city didn't create new instruments, but adapted to the already existing ones. A strong political will has turned an estate agency into the 'thinking actor' for the strategic planning and the management of the city, given that the Edu already had a special relationship and synergy between public and private sectors.

Inserting new and shared contents into the Pot, the city was able to conceive a new metropolitan system using the resources in the strategic sectors between networks and environment, between residences and large public spaces, employing the architectural design in different

ways: with the politically correct tool of architecture competitions, by commissioning important architects but also giving space to young architects who could reinterpret with freshness the dynamism of the city.

It was possible to think the city as a system, with a real reconquista of the public role versus the usual delegation to private companies of whole sectors of the city. It looked like a dream, even a too perfect one, but actually concerning one of the most problematic areas of the planet.

Medellin has been for little less than four years a huge construction site, something similar to cities hosting a great event.

Thanks to these operations Medellín experienced a real urban and social revolution, with an easier interpretation of urban projects, planning and implementation, which went toward an important shared aim: the construction of the polis, the public city, through a new idea of politics that is closer to the etymological root of the word.

Fajardo has now concluded his term of office but he is running for the next presidential elections. The new mayor who won the recent local elections was in his same civic list.

* Teaches at the Faculty of psychology, University of Rome 'La Sapienza'; where he held the course 'Laboratory Communication'; in the psychology of development and education.

The urban question in the southern Italy. Conurbation in emergency and weak networks

Giovanni Cafiero

The foretold and disquieting crisis of the urban areas of the southern Italy raises many questions to people who think about planning results and perspectives.

What is the relationship among garbage, compulsory administration, urban redevelopment intervention difficulties and delay, incapacity to place a value on dismissed industrial areas, environmental crisis, difficulties in reforming urban mobility, difficulties in promoting supra-municipal networks and services? Why all those critical urgencies appear in the southern Italy regions in a serious and alarming way?

In a negative situation with far-reaching consequences the answer can only be found among the inefficiency and the inadequacy of the territory management system. This inadequacy is over in the centre-north of Italy because of the bigger and plural dynamism and authority of the system and private bodies who are a vehicle and a motivating force and they make the public system to yield to the results-based logic.

There are some places where you cannot find private system plurality and authority such as the southern Italy. Therefore, inefficiency in public institutions and territorial governance system is unmercifully revealed.

Delays and inefficiencies along the State-Regions-Municipalities administrative institutional chain – highlighted from the Dps Evaluation Unit during the halfway evaluation updating of the Qcs Objective 1 – look like the aspect of a general far-reaching phenomenon and of a non virtuous plot among institutions, economy and territory. It is a specific distress of the cities.

The 'Southern question' is an institutional and civil question of 'national dimension' and it is confirmed by an image losing aspect that is spreading from the metropolitan area emergencies of the south of Italy up to the deeper image and reputation of the whole Country.

The southern metropolitan areas are a potential 'engine' for economic development and thus they become a place where stressing social unease, worsening environmental crisis and decreasing women's participation difficulties to the world of work.

European and international models: great urban areas and city networks

Great cities and European capitals are unique cases where customs and national politics prevail; the European model deals almost with middle-sized, dynamic and strongly interconnected city networks. This point of view was formalized in adopting the European spatial development perspective (Esdp) during the Potsdam Council in May 1999.

As explicitly reported in this 1999 scheme: global cities such as London and Paris and metropolitan regions such as the Ruhr and Randstad will continue to maintain their pre-eminent positions. New functions and networks may, however, in future have a major impact on the development of individual cities and regions. Cities are increasingly co-operating and pooling their resources, for example by developing complementary functions or sharing facilities and services. Such co-operation can be advantageous for regional development because it improves the range of services offered and the economic conditions of the region and thereby increasing its competitiveness. (from: Esdp European spatial development perspective, Towards balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the European Union, Agreed at the informal council of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning in Potsdam, may 1999. Published by the European Commission).

For this purpose interconnection is an important issue, too. The Sweden model represents an extreme case with its wide distances and short term path. On the contrary, Calabria Region and other southern Italy wide areas are a classical model with their high term train path, in areas where railway exists, also in places and towns relatively near to each other.

Southern town condition is far-reaching from the strongly interconnected towns network european model. In fact, southern territorial systems are defined by a lacking mutual interconnection, a low mobility among different towns.

In spite of a faint middle towns network there is a trend loss of urban government control in big metropolitan areas. Environmental question is worsening: illegal economic growth, service inadequacy for people and enterprises and decreasing woman participation to work are some of the aspects of the big southern conurbation crisis. This is paradigmatically represented by the most populous Italian metropolitan area, that is Naples.

Southern urban areas. Social-economical and demographical aspects

The 162 Istat based local urban systems are an important ensemble of the whole country system: they collect more than 40% of the Italian municipalities, they occupy 30% of the national territory and they host 65,5% of the whole resident population. Only Pescara is considered a local system with functionally urban aspects.

The other urban style systems in southern Italy are a part of the same category, that is 'port urban areas', and thus it reports a weak presence of urban and managing functions in a strict meaning.

Altogether, here are some of the most important aspects: – at a national level an increase in population distinguishes urban areas on the whole as regard to the national average and in particular it defines 'functionally urban' areas by appearing in a weak form in the other urban area cases;

– in southern Italy area the urban system migration balances are on the whole very weak and sometimes they become strongly negative for some 'metropolitan regions'. In 2007 the total migration balance of the metropolitan areas of the south of Italy was negative; – as regards to the still negative 2005: from –0.5 per mil in Catania to –6.7 per mil in Naples. South data are on the whole a growing widespread phenomenon of town escape in search of environmental conditions and of access to services and to the market of the most suitable houses. Development based general politics and good conditions do not appear in the south metropolitan big areas. Those conditions can possibly retreat: in economic functioning, in social unease expansion, in illegal activities spreading, in environmental emergency increasing.

Conurbation in emergency: Naples case

Metropolitan government failure. In the last winter news about garbage emergency, road rebel incendiaries, town genuine tissue civil despair and territory image as a new Gomorra went around the world and made our national Government to act promptly and to force limits on institutional and constitutional competences to look forward to contain a civil calamity.

Therefore, we are always in an emergency situation: we had a Superintendent for the garbage emergency in Campania Region and a Superintendent for the traffic in Naples and then we had a Superintendent for Rom emergency in Milan, as well as in Rome. All those superintendents in our cities now are no more an emergency but an 'ordinary practice'.

The superintendent practice highlights our institutional governance system inefficiency and is therefore the indicator for a wider problem that weighs strongly upon the managing skill in a difficult metropolitan area, certainly the most difficult area in Italy and in Europe, that is Naples area.

Town peripheralization. In Naples you cannot remarkably find a commitment to promote activity rate in southern Italy and above all an undertaking to improve significantly women's economic performances.

Total activity rate in Naples district is lower than regional average, just for a bit: 43.6% instead of 43.8%. On the contrary, women's activity rate records an important negative performance: 29.7% instead of regional average of 30.8%.

Women's activity rate value in Naples district is lower than national average and other Regions of southern Italy average value, too.

In Naples, per capita Gdp data clearly records a reverse for the urban areas advantages features. In fact, there is a greater capability to create added value in other urban models of the same Region.

Weak networks: Calabria model

In Calabria's town networks and junctions do not improve, there is instead a widespread settlement; there are

not important correlations between employment and population movement, except for the inner areas general crisis.

A functional parallelism among new constructions, the population movement and new socio-economic opportunities is above all negatively comparable, as far as 'crisis areas' are concerned, but it does not relate to rational and coherent development elements.

Population dynamics and settlement tendencies in Calabria. There is a regional population absolute balance for middle and long term as far as population rate is concerned, the 1988,052 inhabitants in 2007 equal astonishingly those in 1971, that was 1988,051. As far as territorial dynamics and settlement are concerned nowadays the situation is essentially different.

As regards to main town centres there is a tendency to a population decrease that goes on. As regards to urban dynamics the most important phenomenon are the centre of Cosenza's crisis and a 'Strait conurbation' reinforcement.

Because of a general stop to traditional main towns attractions in Calabria, there are some signals of a bigger vitality in Vibo-Pizzo area and partially in Lametia area.

As far as territorial dynamics are concerned in the rest of the territory there have been a gradual weakening phenomenon in inner areas and a faint but widespread population improvement in coastal areas since 1992.

Finally, as regards to all those different aspects, and above all development opportunities, Calabria's territory has indeed a real difficulty to create a more cohesive, dynamic and efficient 'settlement structure'.

Population-settlement dynamics relate of some clear tendencies:

- gathering towards the Stretto;
- conurbation establishing in the north of Cosenza;
- Calabria north axis weakens, towards Basilicata and Campania;
- gradual population displacement towards the coast.

Calabria's two extreme areas, southwards and northwards, act in an opposite way: on the Stretto towards Sicily and the Mediterranean sea there is a certain demographical concentration and towards the north a slow and progressive escape, thus the proximity to the extra-regional areas in the north-centre of Italy is nullified also because of the highway Salerno-Reggio Calabria condition.

As far as the inner areas are concerned you need a deep change in policies for the functioning system of the public presidium and a strong policies of associative gathering of the population and enterprise services.

Here follows the major strategic meaning priorities in Calabria to achieve national and European convergence and cohesion objectives: administrative system reform and efficiency for inner areas and small municipalities, settlement gathering interconnection achievement tenaciously through interregional and regional mobility system modernization and through technological networks development, Mediterranean role enhancement.