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The future is dependent on the offering of the projects

Snapshot: light versus shadows*Giuseppe Scaglione*

Two parts: one 'illuminated', the other one 'in the shadows', separated by a system of green and natural barriers, mountains, parks. The 'illuminated' part goes from the Tyrrhenian slopes to the Apennines, from Praia to Reggio, and, mainly thanks to national choices, the Salerno-Reggio Calabria motorway, the railway line, the two airports (Lamezia and Reggio), and the two major regional universities, in these years has witnessed a progressive change in settlement conditions and socioeconomic dynamics. The part 'in the shadows', despite its characteristics and resources, and the fascinating profile of 'Magna Graecia', runs from the mountain ridge to the Ionian sea, from Rocca imperiale to Pellaro; it lacks a main highway or an effective railway network, with two ports underused and an airport that operates for only half the year.

This is a possible snapshot of Calabria, and it is not all that far from the truth. Calabria is still in a transition phase, moving from a basically agricultural economy to a hybrid system, in which hasty industrialization, a tertiary sector, commerce and small enterprises progressively substitute the endogenous resources, more typical of a still recent past.

Against this background, the parts in the light must try to scatter the shadows in the rest of the region. The Qtr (Regional territorial outline) is a concrete challenge for the development of this territory with policies for the construction of new scenarios and new development models. In this new vision, still under construction, Calabria's strategic position in the 'Euro-Mediterranean'

system should be used to the best advantage.

The passage from a long, chronic, frustrating absence of instruments of territorial governance, to the new phase, with a greater wealth of instruments, and renewed also in its models of planning and implementation, must necessarily include, as a fundamental element of transition and innovation, also a number of priority projects. In the national stalemate that has in recent years affected mostly the weaker regions, such as Calabria, the most important dynamics and the most interesting economic performances have been produced in the towns and cities.

In the passage from the more widespread system of countryside-city-smaller centres, to the more innovative one of infrastructures-urban territories, a first positive project scenario is envisaged, making it possible to glimpse in the more propulsive role of urban systems certain new and possible visions of the dynamics of 'city networks'. Thus, visions as an interpretation of a new, coordinated 'multicity' project, which intercepts the positive dynamics and the driving influences of the main territorial-urban systems of the region, and translates them into project opportunities.

In defining these first, delimited, but advanced visions, relations of significant collaboration with the bordering regions must necessarily be increased, to make them effective also with coordinated projects able to create territorial and productive integrations and new relations and exchanges, constructing occasions to increase the competitiveness of the territories and economies. In this scenario, on the basis of surveys started, and through the indications of recent regional planning

documents and guidelines, it is already possible to draw up a first possible 'battle chart', identifying a number of poles of reference, namely the territorial contexts with interesting multipole and more dynamic prospects, due either to their higher population density, or to the presence of advanced, driving activities, on which to concentrate strategies and to activate the first 'project workshops', also in experimental form.

It is therefore the 'illuminated parts' that should move towards the parts 'in the shadows', helping to shed light on them. This concerns in particular the extended conurbation of Valle Crati, Cosenza-Rende-Università, and the Sibari plain, on the Ionian side, another urban-agricultural-productive stronghold in rapid transformation, near Basilicata and Puglia. In the centre is Lamezia Terme with its interesting performance. In the extreme south of the region, finally, the port of Gioia Tauro - in spite of difficulties, problems and a backlog of delays - shows promise of strong productivity.

The territory of Reggio Calabria-Gioia Tauro has the greatest development potential in terms of infrastructures, logistics and production. It is here that Calabria's future is being played out, as an important articulation of the 'Southern transnational platform'.