THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM - A FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

The Mediterranean Basin is one of the most popular destination all over the world so that tourism is one of the leading economic activity. Mass tourism is still the predominant form of tourism in that area while large public and private sectors started advocating a different way of thinking of tourism. In fact the vulnerability of ecosystems, the lack of capacity to absorb great amounts of tourists in small areas, the lack of an adequate strategic planning for viable long - term effects at economic and social level urge a Mediterranean governance of sustainable tourism.

The Parties to the Barcelona Convention and the European Community adopted a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) in 2005 as further instrument of cooperation and sharing policies to achieve the ultimate goals of establishment a common area of peace, security and well - being for the Mediterranean citizens.

The MSSD includes 7 areas of priority actions of which one deals with the promotion of a sustainable tourism. That set of principles has to be considered as a sort of guidelines for setting up a Mediterranean strategy of sustainable tourism policy through networking and cooperation of Mediterranean regional and local authorities. The MSDD goals require a pre-condition which is also the envisaged methodology: the cooperation and exchange of best practices among EU States and non EU States both at central level and local level by democratically involving the regions and local authorities, the Universities, the enterprises and the civil society of the Basin.

The MSSD's objectives for the realisation of a Mediterranean sustainable tourism are:
- Reduction of adverse territorial and environmental impacts of tourism, especially in existing coastal tourist areas.
- Promotion of sustainable tourism, which in turn reinforces social cohesion and cultural and economic development, enhances Mediterranean diversity and specificities and strengthens synergies with other economic sectors, especially agriculture.
- Increase the added value of tourism for local communities and actors in developing countries.
- Improving the governance for sustainable tourism.

Due to their geographical position and their rich legacy of institutional, economic, maritime and cultural exchanges in the Mediterranean area Italian Regions and local authorities play a crucial role in leading the Mediterranean process and could strongly support the implementation of the Mediterranean strategy for development, including tourism.

Regional and local authorities have progressively become crucial stakeholders of the UE foreign policy and its enlargement strategy being vehicles of European values and orienting the development towards a sustainable democracy at regional and local level.

The strategy of development within the European policy of neighbourhood is based on the territorial dimension and multilevel governance so that the Euro-Mediterranean partnership is featured by a regional approach where regional and local authorities and civil society organizations effectively participate at the decision making process[2].

At international level, indeed, the traditional multilateralism, characterised by the cooperation between the national governments and the UN has been enriched by the systematic cooperation with the territorial bodies and new multilateral platforms have been initiated[3].

2 The Committee of Regions has recently published a white paper on the multilevel governance whose definition is "an action coordinated by the EU, the Member States and the regional and local authorities based on the partnership aiming at defining and implementing the EU policies" .

3 An interesting example is the ART Gold initiative which puts together programs and activities of several UN agencies and promotes a new kind of multilateralism.

ART is a French acronym for "support to territorial and thematic networks of human development cooperation". An international co-operation initiative that brings together the programmes of several United Nations Agencies (e.g. UNDP, UNESCO, UNIFEM, WHO, UNAIDS, ILO, UNITAR, UNCDF, UNOPS).

ART GOLD was launched in 2004, and stems from the human development framework programmes developed since 1989:

Consequently, the analysis of sustainable tourist models of governance at local level represents an important tool in setting up the Mediterranean partnership based upon the concept that Mediterranean basin is a common resource and tourist potential for the all Mediterranean Countries. In fact following the global mainstream of responsibility sharing among the different level of involved powers and democratic participation in policy planning , the good practices adopted from below on tourist governance are considered a more direct mean of competencies improvement in the whole Mediterranean area.

The following chapter will focus on Apulia experience in tourist governance, proposed as a case study to be shared in the path towards the development of a larger Mediterranean tourist strategy where regions, cities and civil society are given the responsibility to participate at the decision making process in a more and more effective way.

A CASE STUDY ON TOURIST GOVERNANCE: APULIA' S EXPERIENCE

Apulia' s tourism policy integrates the overall regional development strategy for the period 2007 - 2013 whose global objective is the definition of the regional economic and social trends and planning actions for increasing the employment and sustain the development.

The regional productive systems are facing a phase of structural change due to the integration and internationalisation of markets and against those challenges Region Apulia' s strategy is based on the strengthening of its competitiveness through the valorisation of the different components of regional and local attractiveness.

According to the latest socio - economic analysis regarding Apulia territory, the Region still presents stunts in the development growth, urges to make larger amounts of population to get into the labour market and solve environmental problems[4] while tourism is one of the regional driving economic activity[5] for both the employment growth and the overall economic development of the territory.

Against that context Apulia initiated an innovative virtuous methodology of decision making process by involving the all system of local authorities and territorial stakeholders in order to maximise the public action results by establishing innovative inclusive planning procedures in all policy sectors, including tourism.

Planning, participation and innovation are the 3 cornerstones of tourist governance elaborated at regional level to support the tourist demand and reinforce the tourist offer through an overall strategic vision focusing on the valorisation of natural and cultural resources for the empowerment of the productive weaving factories, services and competitiveness of the regional territory.

The regional goal of making tourism a much more driving economic sector to overcome structural problem of socio-economic stuck and unemployment goes through an integrated action aiming at the

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PRODERE, SMALP, HEDIP, PDHL, PDHI, SEHD, ATLANTE, PRINT, PASARP, CITY TO CITY, APPI, UNIVERSITAS.

The programme helps regional and local authorities in the South and the North to set up alliances and partnerships in support of local development and governance processes prioritised by countries through ART GOLD programmes. More than 300 decentralized cooperation partnerships operate in different countries and, in the North, include regional and local governments of Belgium, Canada, France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Switzerland.

ART involves local communities in development processes, and promotes a new type of multilateralism in which the United Nations system works together with governments to promote the active participation of regional and local authorities, local communities and social stakeholders in the South and the North, while striving to fulfil the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals. Cf. http://www.undp.org/partners/region-local/art.shtml

4 A detailed SWOT analysis on the Apulia territory is on the 2007-2013 ERDF Operational program realised by Regione Puglia and published on the Regional Official Gazette ("BUR") n.68/2007. On 20 November 2007, the European Commission approved the Operational Programme for Puglia for the period 2007-13.The Operational Programme falls within the framework laid out for the Convergence objective and has a total budget of around € 5.2 billion. Community assistance through the ERDF amounts to € 2.6 billion.

5 Cf. The Three - year program of tourist development. Implementing plan 2008/2009 ex lege n.28/1978 of Apulia Regional Council for Tourism and Hotel Industry.

modification of the on - going composition of tourist flows both in terms of tourist typology choosing Apulia for their holidays and periodicity of arrivals.

The overall regional strategy elaborated to achieve these objectives can be summarised as follows:

- the valorisation of regional cultural and natural excellencies in the all territory by promoting a network of integrated tourist micro - systems pivoting on different regional attractors. That approach is intended to support the gap between the coastal areas and the internal areas and equalize socio - economic opportunities at regional level.
- The support to the tourist regional offer, the reinforcement of the tourist demand and the improvement of regional infrastructures.
- The adoption of different participatory models to elaborate the overall regional strategy of tourist development by reinforcing democracy and communities responsibility. To those innovative democratic experiences that paper will dedicate a special attention.
- The rationalisation in the expenditure of the limited national and European funds at disposal.

The core of Apulia tourism policy consists in a series of actions aiming at the development of Local and Thematic tourist systems which can diversify the tourist offer and improve the regional attractiveness through the integration between tourism and natural and cultural resources. That binomial corresponds to the specific vocations and expressed needs of the 10 so - called "*area vasta*[6]", (in English: vast area) who are sub-regional aggregations of municipalities which represents a part of the regional territory and are experimenting an innovative process of multilevel governance which leads to the definition of strategic plans per each *"area vasta"*. Therefore also the tourist strategy is elaborated at local level through several process of sub-regional strategic planning enhancing the territorial stakeholders and democratic participation and contribute to the empowerment of local authorities and achieve more territorial cohesion.

The strategic plans elaborated by each *area vasta* are evaluated by a specific Regional Committee of evaluation and verification of public investments and then will be the basis of further program and implementing agreements with Apulia Region.

The *area vasta* process is probably the main instrument of territorial strategic planning and democratic decision making but other processes of participation have been experimented at regional level, such as:

- 3 Regional Fora on Tourism in Apulia with the participation of all public and private tourist stakeholders gathered in focus groups whose results have been considered in the regional tourist policies [7].
- Setting up of a brand new interactive institutional website for the tourist promotion: www. viaggiareinpuglia.it which allows the participation of tourist stakeholders and tourists and should evolve and become a social network through services of web community (i.e. blog for tourists, multimedia contents, virtual tours and audio-guide, systems of selling and purchase tourist packages, on line booking, etc).

Special attention must be dedicated to a further means of democratic participation at the tourist governance as it is not just a specific program of integrated development of the regional tourist entrepreneurial system and the mainstream of the regional promotional campaign on tourism, but a sort of ethic concept which reminds to the local cultures and identities: the myth of hospitality of Apulia territories and citizens and the idea of belonging to a community[8].

6 The process of strategic planning in the Area Vasta was initiated in 2005 through a public call initiated at central level for the presentation of proposals for "Actions of innovative planning in regards of Strategic plans for cities and metropolitan areas" - CIPE decision 20 / 2004 followed by the Regional Committee decision n.262/2005. The evaluation phase ended with the funding 9 proposals regarding 9 territories headed by the following cities: 1) City of Bari; 2) City of Gravina di Puglia; 3) City of Barletta; 4) City of Brindisi; 5) City of Foggia; 6) Mountain Community of Southern Dauni; 7) City of Lecce; 8) City of Casarano; 9) City of Taranto. Later on in 2006 another proposal headed by the city of Monopoli was approved.

7 The third edition of the Regional Forum of Tourism in Apulia has been recently realised: on 20th and 21st November 2009.

8 Cf. The Three-year program of tourist development . Implementing plan 2008/2009 ex lege n.28/1978 of Apulia Regional

This message conceptualizes the whole innovative tourist strategy of Apulia which is based on the rediscovery and revaluation of the regional traditions and cultural and natural peculiarities trough the whole regional territory and the all regional communities and citizens. In fact the challenging idea behind marketing choices such us the creation of the Apulia brand and advertising slogans like "Apulia: a region for all seasons" and "In Apulia nobody is a stranger" is: every citizen and every community is called to build up an image and vision of Apulia based on the joint combination of innovation and tradition of a welcoming land, projected into the Mediterranean sea, crossroads of several Mediterranean cultures, goods, stories and people.

The myths of hospitality and tradition are the framework of innovative integrated initiatives of valorisation of natural and cultural heritage involving all territorial communities: the oenology and gastronomy circuits, the historical sites circuits, the folkloristic and creative circuits, the circuits of manor farms and farm holidays.

From an operational point of view, the regional system has to optimise the financial resources [9] since the lesson learnt from the previous period of planning (2000 - 2006) warns to enhance the planning and monitoring of the financial expenditure and to more and more integrate the planning of European and national financial resources[10].

In particular the Italian national strategy for the development of tourism in the Southern Regions is described in the interregional operational programme for the expenditure of European[11] and national development funds called "Cultural, natural and tourist attractors" elaborated since 2007 in order to maximise and rationalize the development of the affected Regions in a systematic and comprehensive approach[12]. That programme relies on a framework policy of strategic growth of all South of Italy through the valorisation of the extraordinary cultural and natural heritage and the innovation of the tourist sector and represents an alternative to the model implemented in the 2000-2006 programming period when the lack of a national interregional strategy of Southern Italy development contributed to its economic and social stunt[13].

Council for Tourism and Hotel Industry
9 The Axis IV of Apulia Regional Operational Program- ROP- 2007-2013 regards the "Valorisation of natural and cultural resources for the attractiveness and development" whose general objective is improving the attractiveness of the regional territory for tourist purposes.
10 Cf. Region Apulia strategic document 2007-2013 where the integration between the European funds planning and the national funds planning-specifically from the "FAS" (Fondi per le Aree Sottoutilizzate - Underused Areas Funds) – is considered one of the good results from the previous planning experience of Apulia Region.
11 The 2007-2013 funding program of the European Union sustains the tourist development through several channels shortly: the European Regional Development Fund-ERDF supports models of sustainable tourism to improve the cultural and natural environment, develop the accessibility and role of innovative SMEs, cluster companies, services and trans-national exchange of best practices. (www.europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/index_en.htm) .
The European Social Fund-ESF supports educational programs aiming at improving the productivity and quality in the tourist offer.
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)supports the development and valorisation of tourist activities as tools to get better rural economy activities.
The European Fisheries Fund - EFF supports the small fishery firms and the tourist infrastructures.
12 The Operational interregional program "Cultural, natural and tourist attractors" forecasts the distribution of national and European funds amounting on 1.977,4 million of euros to be distributed among 8 Italian Southern Regions.
13 The Operational interregional program "Cultural, natural and tourist attractors" is based on 3 main principles guiding the public action for the tourism development in Southern Italy:
a) the great cultural and natural potential of Southern Italy which has still to be conveyed into tourist attractors policies;
b) the need to implement a new systematic and overall interregional strategy of development to promote the competitiveness of the all area;
c) the structural stunt featuring the tourist sector in the Southern Italy is mainly due to relatively low competitive standards so that the establishment of overall excellences standards in the offer of cultural and natural resources can contribute to the area development.

THE FIGURES OF TOURISM IN APULIA - A STATISTIC ANALYSIS

With reference to the last available official data (2007), this section will provide statistic hints aiming at framing the tourist phenomenon in Apulia both referring to the receptive structures interested by the movement of Italian and foreigner clients and the arrivals/presences of the same clients.

The totality of Apulia receptive enterprises is 3.147; specifically, the hotels are 882 (28% of the structures)[14], the complementary structures - landlord, camping, villages, tourist, hostels - are 919 (29%) while the bed and breakfast structures amount to 1.346 (43%).

As far the complementary structures are concerned, it is interesting to underline that Apulia territory comprises 261 lodgings farms, 237 holidays houses and 178 landlords.

Considering the overall receptive structures, different performances analysis are available for the sleeping accommodations: there are 218.291 beds in total out of which the 36% refers the hotel exercises, the 60% to the complementary exercises and the 4% to the bed & breakfasts.

The overall arrival flow accommodated both in the hotels and complementary structures is composed by 2,7 million tourists who came to Apulia in 2007, out of which the 84% is constituted by Italian clients.

Moreover meaning by the concept of presences the number of nights spent in Apulia the Italian and foreign presences register similar tendencies: the average presence in hotels is 3,3 days for Italians and 3,2 days for foreigners; for Bed & breakfasts there is an identical relationship between the two categories of clients (3,3 days) while in the complementary exercises the average presence is 8,4 days for the Italians and 7,3 days for the foreigners[15].

As far as the natural and cultural resources are concerned, Apulia profits by 700 km of maritime coasts, 6 blue flags, 3 maritime protected areas and 237 seaside resorts. Among the cultural attractions there are 2 sites classified as Unesco Heritage, a castles and coastal fortifications circuit, around 100 historical abodes, 111 museums, 9 historical theatres and 1.042 churches among cathedrals, basilicas, abbeys, rocky churches, Romanesque cathedrals and testimonies of the Baroque period and 7 cities belonging to the circuit of most beautiful cities of Italy. Moreover there are architectural territorial specificities: there is a total of 256 manor farms, "*trulli*", oil-mills, apogees and literary parks.

In 2006 Apulia's tourist turnover amounted to 3,3 million of Euros, same as the 6% of 2006 national one and in 2005 the foreign flow generated business amounted to 525 million of Euros, equal to the 14% of the foreign expenses in the South and Islands.

THE ROLE OF REGIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION AREA – APULIA REGION EXPERIENCE

The history of the Mediterranean region is the history of the interaction of the cultures[16] and people of the lands surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. The Mediterranean basin has traditionally been the cross - roads of several peoples and cultures and derives its own specificity by the mutual enrichment and melting - pot of people and cultures living, traveling and fighting throughout the Mediterranean sea.

For centuries the Mediterranean Sea has been a theater of conflict, a boulevard for battleships and invading armies, a moat between great empires, diverse cultures, religions, and political systems.

Nowadays the Mediterranean basin is not yet a peaceful area due to several reasons: the Middle East conflict; the large economic inequalities between the Northern and Southern shores; the migrations flows which are not considered as a natural phenomenon with demographic effects but a threat to be even impeded; the mistrust and scarce knowledge among the different cultures and people - especially between the European Mediterranean Countries and the non European Mediterranean Countries.

14 *Still going down more in the details, among the hotel exercises there are 3 star that represent the greatest consistence with a total of 421 unities (48% of the total one); the 1 star hotels are 46 while the 5 star luxury hotels are just 8.*
15 *Out of 11,5 million presences at regional level 86% of them refer to Italian clients. Generally the foreigner clients slightly prefer being accommodated in complementary exercises and Bed & breakfast in comparison to how the Italians do.*
16 *Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Persian, Phoenician, Jewish, Greek, Roman, Illyrian, Arab and Turkish cultures.*

The objective of the Euro - Mediterranean partnership: Union for Mediterranean is to function as a regionwide frame for policy - making on Mediterranean security, economic and socio - cultural growth for the EU and the all Mediterranean Countries. The achievement of this objective is to a high degree dependent on the resolution of the ongoing disputes and conflicts in the Region. Therefore the Mediterranean area is not affected just by the military or interstate conflicts but also threatened by a broader and more challenging sort of conflict: the potential one among cultures and civilizations living in the lands surroundig the same Sea, basically in a North - South perspective.

Given that situation, only a diplomatic governmental approach is not sufficient to achieve the Euro - Mediterranean goal and undertake a serious sustainable development policy for the area. Regions, towns and citizens instead are called to directly participate for the strenghtening of a regional partnership because a bottom-up approach could be very effective for the regional democracy and development.

The Euro - Mediterranean Partnership: Union for Mediterranean has been focusing very much on policies on security rather than on decentralised cooperation, city – to – city and people – to - people diplomacy. The second approach would be very much successful in getting the objective of creating permanent platform of dialogue, cooperation and exchange and furthermore supporting the mutual understanding and development of the all area.

Over the last 10 years regional and local authorities, indeed, have been playing a significant role on the international scenario at the cross - road between globalization forces and local policies response.

Regions, in particular, are both the link between higher institutional bodies and local authorities and the frame to better gather and represent the local needs, strengthens and resources on the international competitive arena.

Regions[17] and local authorities hold the territorial governance, have broad experience and direct powers in the cooperation sectors envisaged by the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, including local economic development, local tourism development and management and enhancement of the cultural and historic heritage.

A new initiative of the Committee of Regions seems to get together local and regional authorities and their associations from the whole Mediterranean area: the ARLEM- Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly which is supposed to represent a permanent platform of dialogue and confrontation[18] with consultative status within the CoR. Regional and local Mediterranean representatives will be given the chance to discuss regional bottom-up strategy for sustainable development and guarantee that the people they represent are ensured with the ownership of the proposed solutions.

Apulia Region has been deploying a very relevant role in the Community initiatives aiming at strengthening the cooperation in the Mediterranean basin: firstly in the management of the ear - marked funds regarding the C.I.P. Interreg Italy - Albania and Interreg Italy - Greece. Those programmes saw the important involvement of many regional stakeholders - Regional Administrations, local authorities, Universities, economic partners, NGOs and so on - who have had the chance to strategically and systematically benefit from the internationalization and Mediterranean development of stronger economic, social and cultural links.

Later on with the launch of the new Community programming for the period 2007-2013 Apulia Region has maintained a central role in the territorial cooperation programmes[19] due to its favourable geo-political position.

17 *The reinforcement of European Regions' desentralised powers has been catalysed by their more and more involvement within the European mechanism and regional development policy and their relationships with the European institutions - firstly the Committee of Regions.*

18 *Relex-IV-017 Opinion of the Committee of Regions on the Barcelona Process: Union for Mediterranean- implication for regional and local authorities.*

19 *The European Commission, under the Cohesion Policy 2007-2013,established three development Objectives:*

1) Convergence for supporting the development and employment in the least developed regions.

2) Regional competitiveness and employment for supporting the territorial development, anticipation of changes and increase of attractiveness.

3) Territorial cooperation for supporting trans-national, cross-border and interregional cooperation. That Objective defined specific territorial cooperation procedures: a) Cross-border cooperation, devised to integrate border areas through

Apulia Region renewed commitment in the 2007-2013 Community programming refers to the improvement of the already established good relations in the Mediterranean basin and the promotion of new means of territorial cooperation enhancing internationalization economic opportunities, Mediterranean strategies of sustainable development and cultural partnership.

In particular Apulia Region is involved in a series of territorial cooperation programmes which can be used to decline the financial Community instruments of cooperation to the overall objective of initiating a Mediterranean tourist governance through specific cross - border and trans - national actions. Here it follows a brief description of all programmes where Apulia Region is directly involved and for each of them a non comprehensive indication of the thematic areas where the issue of the integrated tourism development in the Mediterranean area can be faced:

The cross - border cooperation programme Greece-Italy 2007-2013[20] is a specific programme designed for the cooperation between Apulia Region and the Greek Regions of Epirus, Western Greece and Ionian Islands. That programme aims at improving the territorial cohesion among the abovementioned area through initiatives of sustainable development and promotion of both maritime borders. The Objective 3 deals with the improvement of the quality of life, strengthening the protection of the environment and enhancing social and cultural cohesion.

The cross-border cooperation programme South-East Europe (SEE)[21] is designed for the Adriatic Italian Regions and the South Eastern European Countries from the Alps to the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea for the improvement of the territorial, economic and social integration. The Objective 2 deals with the protection and improvement of the natural heritage and the Objective 4 deals with the development of trans-national synergies for a sustainable growth of the involved territories.

- The cross - border cooperation programme CBC IPA Adriatic[22] is designed for the sustainable development in the Adriatic Area in the perspective of Eastern Adriatic Countries accession. The Objective 2 deals with natural and cultural resources and risk prevention.
- The cross - border cooperation programme Mediterranean Sea Basin ENPI[23] is designed to develop cross - border cooperation initiatives under the European Neighbourhood policy. The Objective 2 promotes the environmental sustainability of the Mediterranean area.
- The trans - national cooperation programme Mediterranean (MED)[24] is designed to strengthen the competitiveness of the European regions involved and enhance the cultural identity of the Mediterranean space. The Objective 4 promotes a polycentric and integrated development of the Mediterranean space.

Furthermore Regions have also the power to directly make agreements with other Regional entities or sub-regional enthities in bilateral dynamics that underline focused cooperation policies in certain sectors of common interests.

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integrated solutions; b) Trans-national cooperation, devised to promote cooperation among EU Member States on strategic Community issues; c) Interregional cooperation devised to strengthen and innovate the European regional system; d) Pre-accession Programme IPA (Instrument of Pre-Accession) devised for Candidates and pre-Candidates external Countries and Neighbourhood Programme ENPI (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument) devised for improving the cooperation with the Non EU Mediterranean Countries and equalize the Mediterranean area.

20 The programme managing authority is the Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Greece-www.interreg. gr and the cross-borer info-point and national coordination is executed by Apulia Region-Servizio Mediterraneo - www. europuglia.it

21 The Programme managing authority headquarter is in Budapest (Hungary)-www.southeast-europe.net

22 The Programme managing authority is Regione Abbruzzo- Direzione Affari internazionali (Italy)-www.adriaticipacbc. org

23 The Programme Joint managing authority is Region Sardinia (Italy)- www.enpibcmed.eu and the Italian national committee and national contact point is Region Apulia- Servizio Mediterraneo-www.enpimed.europuglia.it

24 The Programme managing authority is PACA Region (Provence, Alpes, Côte d'Azur),France-www.programmemed.eu.

Coming back to our case study, Apulia Region has been using the so - called "regional treaty-making power" that the Italian Consitution acknowledges to the Italian Regions who - in the fields of their jurisdiction- can make agreements with other States and other States'internal enthities. The treaty - making power – introduced in 2001 by a Constituzional law modifying the Italian Constitution - represents a very effective tool of neighborhood in the Mediterranean area between regions, communities and people cooperating on practical initiatives aiming at fulfilling citizens' needs. The treaty-making power is also the legal frame for fostering decentralised cooperation activities in the EU members States and supporting the non EU Mediterranean Countries - who do not generally have developed decentralised powers - in their process of democratic governance and structuring regional cooperation policies much more responding to their territories.

All Apulia Region's bilateral agreements are made with other Mediterranean entities [25] on the other side of the Adriatic sea aiming at the exchange of good practices and fostering relations in common strategic issues of development. Tourism is of course a key issue in many of those treaties. Among the different bilateral agreement signed by Apulia Region the latest Declaration of intents with the Istria Region signed in Pula on the 27th April 2009 is a relevant example of good cross - border relationship recognizing the stronger effectiveness of well-structured regional actions in the frame of the subsidiary paradigm and citizens' closeness. The Parties declare to undertake joint actions and exchanges to promote the sustainable development of their territories in a series of field including tourism through the development of joint offers based on natural and cultural resources, an adequate territorial marketing; common initiatives on typical products valorisation, rural development and culture. Apulia Region and Istria Region set also a strategic plan to achieve their goal by the rationalization of the joint access to the Community programmes funds and the permanent cooperation in the wider arena of the Adriatic Euro-region.

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25 Apulia Regions treaties are: 1) a Cooperation agreement with the Republic of Albania signed in 2004;2) a Declaration of intents between the Apulia Region Department of food farming resources and the Albanian Ministry of agriculture, feeding and consumers' protection signed in 2008; 3) a Cooperation agreement with Sousse Government from Tunisia signed in 2001;4) a Cooperation agreement with the Dubrovnik- Neretva County from Croatia signed in 2006; 5) a Cooperation Agreement with the Republic of Montenegro signed in 1996; 6) a Declaration of intents with the Istria Region from Croatia signed in 2009.

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BOTTOM-UP PLANNING IN SICILY: A LEGACY FOR INTEGRATED RELATIONAL TOURISM

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Abstract

This paper is the result of a research on an original planning operation of the past. During the sixties, Sicily had a lead role in bottom-up planning practices conceived from its territory as an alternative to a policy based on external and hierarchical models. Among the most significant experiences, the one leaded by Danilo Dolci and its Centre is emblematic of an approach that sees urban planning first of all as a means to educate society, to promote a sense of responsibility and to foster local relationships. The identification of the Belice Valley as a target territorial unit gave a clear signal of the need to develop planning methods as a valid answer to territorial issues and as bearer of community values. Although part of what is called «unofficial Urban and Regional Planning», these practices obtained a large response thanks to the network created with other community planning episodes that occurred in Sicily at the same time (in Riesi and in Palma di Montechiaro), besides other minor cultural practices such as the publication of the magazine *Nuovo Sud* [New South]. This network, thanks to the connection with similar international experiences and Town Planning debates as well as the direct commitment of great cultural personalities, brought to the creation of a bold project: the institution of the *Libera Assemblea* [Free Meeting]. This organ was aimed at renewing Sicily (starting from its public life) by affirming with conviction that «even the most deprived zone with the smallest possibilities of economic development must be considered from a human perspective and not just from a mere economic point of view». Such principle reveals an intense research totally committed to re-design planning policies, beginning from the innermost areas of Sicily and from its inhabitants, through the recognition of the value of local resources and territorial identities.

These practices could assume an even greater relevance if revised within an operation of «change of paradigm» that initiatives as Integrated Relational Tourism are trying to put into effect. As during the sixties (even if in different terms), nowadays we are experiencing a moment of general reflection in terms of planning policies. Nevertheless, if concepts such as «sustainability, urban identity and community participation» have become basics prerequisites for any action on the territory, we too often assist to an improper use of such terms; this makes necessary to clarify the «premises» of such method. In this regard, this paper wishes to present the bottom-up approach proposed in Sicily during the sixties as an essential tool for the formulation of the necessary «premises», in order to give a valuable historical legacy to the new integrated projects of local development underway. The revisiting of these practices that belong to the Urban and Regional Planning history assumes greater meaning if translated into concepts and tools able to face future challenges as that one undertaken by the Integrated Relational Tourism. In this regard, this paper is part of a wider reflection on planning theories that try to combine past and future practices in order to discover common principles to be used by all those people who intend to build the new Mediterranean space.

Key words: Sustainable development, Bottom-up approach, Local identity, Community participation, Regional planning

INTRODUCTION

This paper intends to remind of an important experiment led in Sicily half a Century ago, in a vibrant period of intellectual and political debate; an experiment that presents many similarities with the cultural project of IRT.

Among all the development projects, Integrated Relational Tourism has been conceived as a bold planning strategy on the regional scale. Its aim, designed to raise the depressed areas of the low Mediterranean region by making use of one of the most important economical resources, tourism, appears as an accepted challenging objective. The words used to name this kind of strategy are the emblem of a grassroots policy based on local and person–oriented approach. The word «relational», which comes from the sociological and economical literature, recalls directly to the values of *identity* and *reciprocity*. These two principles are seen as the object of the operation and not just as a mere technique, and their purpose is composed by the value of the exchange and not by its correspondent economic benefit. The link to the territory and to its inhabitants promotes the start of authentic processes (sometimes even not predicted) as a direct consequence of the spontaneity and the naturalness of the genuine relationships between human beings (Bruni 2009). The word «integrated», then, completes and broadens the meaning of this approach by pointing out the positive consequences that such type of tourism could bring to the economic sector, as well to the cultural and the social ones (Gulotta et al. 2004).

Following the same principles, the MOTRIS[1] project was proposed in order to raise Sicily not from its well-known places of the coast but from its less known «treasures»: from that «sea of lands» made of manor farms, villages and pastures. The «treasures» at the heart of this project are at the same time the most suffering and the most genuine roots of this region: thanks to them Sicily has preserved a solid connection to its territory, but because of them the development of the region has always been very critical. In this regard, IRT has to occur not as the latest attempt to promote the most depressed areas of Sicily, but as a compelling example of local development. The most ambitious goal consists in being able to formulate innovative regional policies (based on interpersonal relations between the inhabitants) that can concretely start a process of re-territorialization established on the foundation of the Sicilian local identity and on the definition and enhancement of the «Mediterranean Regionalism» (Urbani 2009).

In order to accomplish the mission of this project, it is necessary to find a new model of governance able to control territorial and economic forces that spread out directly from the territory. For this reason, it is not possible to think about this ongoing bottom-up planning process that is involving Sicily, without evoking the period when the same challenge took place. I am referring to the Sicilian laboratory that occurred during the 1960s thanks to the charismatic work led by Danilo Dolci. Through a successful combination of community actions, cultural initiatives and grassroots projects (and through a capillary network made of immediate relationships, communication and comparison between all these different practices), a global planning action of the central–west areas of Sicily had been experimented. This *Sicilian Utopia* get its peak in the middle sixties and started to decline at the end of the same decade, struck by the terrible earthquake of January 1968, which hit the areas of the project. Few years later however, two urban planners, Doglio and Urbani, wrote a sort of posthumous epilogue, which, at the same time, set the basis for the beginning of a wider and bolder new project. The «message in a bottle» held by *La Fionda Sicula* [the Sling of Sicily] is an invitation to win the challenge between the «absolute island» and the «interchange island» or the «inner lake» (Doglio & Urbani 1972), in contemporary terms between «local» and «global», starting from a deep inspection of Sicily. This message appears to be have been gathered and continued by the MOTRIS project (fig.1).

This paper wishes to be a reflection towards that branch of Sicilian regional planning in which the cultural

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1 *Mappatura dell'Offerta di Turismo Relazionale Integrato in Sicilia [Mapping of the Offer of Integrated Relational Tourism in Sicily]*

identity of Integrated Relational Tourism resides. There are serious reasons for arguing that only through the rediscovery and the comprehension (carefully filtered in from the past to the present) of this historical period of regional planning in Sicily, it is possible to recognize the strengths and the weaknesses that can affect the attempt of building a «Mediterranean space» based on social inclusion and local development principles. This paper, therefore, is to be regarded as an inspection towards those «yesterdays of nowadays» that can help us to construct the cumulative knowledge for dealing with the challenges of the future (Mazza 2009).

SICILIA LAB – 1958/67

This research has not been conceived as an exhaustive investigation of that constructive period of the history of Sicily; the aim is to recall some topics of that experience, which are particularly important for planning policies even nowadays. For this reason, the issues are presented into four points: planning as more than a technical subject; planning at the human scale; planning as a cultural and educational action; a network of community initiatives (the importance of the network as means to address and to elaborate interchange nodes). Planning today is strongly affected by all these themes, but it was during the 50s and the 60s that these issues started to be analyzed in Italy, by experimenting new models and policies of urban and spatial development.

Planning is not a technical subject
At the end of 1962, during the IX Congress of the *Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica* [Italian National Institute of Town Planning] in Milan, the role of urban planning was discussed within economical development programmes, with special regards to the South of Italy. Among the several topics related to this main issue, one seemed to appear very clear: in order to respond to the hierarchy of real human needs, the plan could not be a mere technical matter. As a consequence, the planning activity had to consist of different scales and of an exchange that enhanced minor communities, in order to foresee a reality based on responsibility and on real answers to local problems. Moreover, the key point was, first of all, the need to create «civic infrastructures» that could function as a link between local initiatives and the central State and, secondly, the ways for organizing, changing and framing the social structure (Semerani 1962, 10-11). It is a period in which planners used to research the «appropriate planning unit» (the season of *Comprensori* [territorial districts]) in order to enhance the minor forces that could positively affect regional development through their social action (Fiorentini 1963).

During that period, the pursuit of a territorial unit able to represent human relations (and not just functional objectives) achieved its best results (theoretical, methodological and experimental) in Sicily. In fact, during the same period, a great area of its western part was involved in a democratic planning experiment that would have brought to:
- the formation of a network of communities centres for the organic development (the five Centres for the full occupation in Partinico, Trappeto, Roccamena, Menfi and Corleone);
- the establishment of several Civic Committees, which should engage with local governments for problem solving and should be grouped into a great organ at the regional scale;
- a comparison between social planning experiments and international case studies;
- the transmission of these planning experiments to the whole area of the western Sicily, through conferences and open forums.

Communication and diffusion of this planning practice was extremely important for the direct involvement of the population. During one of these conferences and open forums, a great experiment of democratic planning took place: on the 29th of April 1962, in Roccamena, for the first time Sicilians were called to talk to experts and institutions, in order to engage local governments for a jointly bottom-up planning

process. As was remarked that day by Carlo Doglio at the end of the presentations, a big step forward was taking place in Sicily: a local answer was found to the problem of moving towards different structures because different was the society represented by territorial patterns; it was the promise to focus on local policies, to address the creativity of the inhabitants and to include communities into the planning process as active and not passive agents (Doglio 1962).

Planning at the human scale: the Danilo Dolci's Centro Studi e iniziative per la Piena Occupazione *[The Centre for studies and initiatives for full employment]*
The Sicilian bottom-up laboratory was conceived and developed starting form the *Centro Studi e inziative per la Piena Occupazione* [The Centre for studies and initiatives for full employment] founded in 1958 by Danilo Dolci, after being awarded the Soviet Union's Lenin Peace Prize (Bess 1993,180). Thanks to the cash award from the Prize, Dolci decided to found a proper research centre to tackle the situation of economical underdevelopment, unemployment and underemployment of the west part of Sicily of that age. The Centre was developed in continuity with the previous initiatives that Dolci generated after his arrival in Sicily. Danilo Dolci and his collaborators, in fact, had started several studies and projects already well-known by the regional and the national community thanks to the Congress on *Iniziative locali e nazionali per la piena occupazione* [Congess on local and national initiatives for full employment] that took place in Palermo at the end of 1957. The great success of this event (and the economical resources available after the Lenin Peace Prize) attracted to Sicily a vast number of national and international intellectuals[2] and several young local volunteers; after the establishment of a working group, Dolci could start building a network of strategic centres and thus forming the structural frame of his ambitious project of bottom-up democratic development. All these Centres were conceived as a decentralized organization of a social organ spread on the west part of the Region, based on cooperation, aimed at the knowledge and the study of local contest and the promotion of meetings and initiatives for a common action. Consequently, the Centres were developed with multiple purposes: in order to educate the inhabitants and search for common actions as a value; to share citizen's practices and knowledge with public institutions; to create a strong framework able to form a network of practices and thus implement the plan for the development of the Jato, Belice and Carboi Valley (Mazzoleni 1997).
All these activities brought to an important achievement some years later, in 1965, when, thanks to the work of the social-planning group and of the Civic Committees (which were working with the Centres) the *Comitato Intercomunale per la pianificazione organica della Valle del Belice* [Interregional Committee for the organic planning of the Belice Valley] was instituted. This important goal reflected perfectly the aim of the intellectual planning community: it showed how local actions (generated by interpersonal relations) could clearly and easily define the right territorial scale in order to find common solutions. As Lorenzo Barbera remembered, in fact, «all this began in a spontaneous way, after several public meetings. By the time everyone was aware that in order to defeat the drought a key point was the building of several dams; but these dams would have involved a huge area of the region, at least twenty municipalities, without counting those ones placed above the dams, in order to build new forests, because Sicilians mountains were treeless and lakes need to be protected. This is how the Belice Valley was born. The Belice Valley was born first of all into its inhabitants' mind»[3].

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2 *The echo of the work of Danilo Dolci was extremely vast and was followed by a great number of cultural and political personalities. With regard to the project for the organic plan of the Belice Valley, in 1960 the following people gave their support as «plan advisors»: for the economical field Sylos Labini and Giorgio Foà; for demographic studies Somogyi and Sauvy; for the town planning sphere Astengo, Caracciolo, Cosenza, Marescotti, Michelucci, Quaroni and Zevi; R. Dumont e G. Haussmann for agrarian studies; the sociologists G. Friedmann e J. Galtung; the geographer Georges; for the educational field L. Borghi, Ross Waller and P. Martin (Centro Studi e iniziative per la Piena Occupazione 1960)*
3 *Interview of the author to Lorenzo Barbera (Gibellina, 12/05/2009)*

The bottom up approach had brought to this important outcome and the planning process was finally ready to begin (fig.2).

A cultural framework
The work of Danilo Dolci and its group reflected a planning model that finds its roots into the regionalism of Lewis Mumford. According to Mumford, in fact, the task of planning had not to be a system of removing arbitrarily the reality, but an attempt to clarify it, and an effort for achieving the elementary need to harmonize factual, geographical and economic data with human aims (Mumford 2007, 379).
This was also the scope of the *gruppo socio-urbanistico* [social-planning group] of the Centre (*Centro Studi e iniziative per la Piena Occupazione*). The group, leaded by a prestigious composition of technicians and intellectuals, addressed this cultural model by undertaking the effort to guide a planning process jointly driven by local governments and Civic Committees (fig.3). The social-planning group had a key role in coordinating the whole work: they used to meet every week in the Centre of Partinico for a common comparison of the work done, for the discussion of the work in progress, for the elaboration of new proposals or for studying other planning methods and practices, like the well known practices of the *kibbutzim* in Palestina or Swedish and Yugoslav planning systems[4].
Since the beginning, the whole work was not confined into a local operation. It was clearly set into a wider cultural environment that placed the entire work into a strategy accurately thought for gaining the interest and the resonance of the Centre's initiatives both at the national and at the international level (The Economist 1998). At the international level, the main support came from the *Comitati stranieri* [solidarity committees], which financed the project and followed carefully the whole activities through the work of their volunteers[5] (fig.4).
Another important and ambitious result achieved by the local action of this group was the relationship with public institutions. Already in 1961 many were the requests of collaboration with the Centre: some forward-thinking institutions decided to engage the Centre for arranging their Development Programme or City Plan. As an example, Ludovico Corrao, who was the mayor of Alcamo at that time, hired the Centre for studying a plan of industrial development for the areas of Alcamo, Calatafimi and Castellamare. His idea was to stipulate «a federal agreement between the three municipalities for enhancing the energies of their territories and turning them into a massive force able to create the economic development of that area of Sicily»[6].
As Carlo Doglio, one of the main intellectuals of the Centre at that point, has said, it seemed that the Plan was finally taking form, embracing «like ripples formed by water» region after region; and within each region the sub-regional plans (Alasia & Doglio 1961). The results of this demanding work (that seemed to be finally sustained by public institutions) should have been presented at the end of 1962 at an important international congress headed by Lewis Mumford, the cultural guide of the plan (fig.5). The congress should have had several venues (hosted by different municipalities), but it never took place[7].

A network of community initiatives
The experiment of the Belice Valley was not the only community action in Sicily: in 1960 Salvinus Duynstee,

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4 *These planning practices were studied both indirectly (through seminars) and directly (by study trips)*
5 *The network of the community centres was created thanks to the financial aid offered by the Comitati Stranieri [Solidarity Committees] (Mazzoleni, 1997). In particular, the centre of Roccamena was sustained by the Swedish Committee, the centre of Menfi by the London Committee, the centre of Corleone by the Swiss Committee and the one of Partinico by the German Committee and by several Italian groups (Source: Lorenzo Barbera, Interview, Gibellina, 12/05/2009)*
6 *Interview of the author to Ludovico Corrao (Gibellina, 12/05/2009)*
7 *Probably the congress didn't take place because of the absence of some important scholars like Lewis Mumford, who declined the invitation because of his decision to take a sabbatical year. (Source: Fund Carlo Doglio)*

a catholic priest, founded a community centre in Palma di Montechiaro with the aim of supporting, through educational work, a social and economical transformation; one year later, in 1961, the Valdese pastor Tullio Vinay instituted in Riesi the *Servizio Cristiano* [Cristian Service], with the objective of translating the evangelic preach into a global development project (Leone 1993, 5). The two initiatives differed from each others for many reasons (the one in Palma di Montechiaro ended just after three years, while that one in Riesi exists even today), but they shared the same aim: a careful educational work with the inhabitants, regarded as the most precious resource for the social and economical development of that depressed area of Sicily.

The activity leaded by Danilo Dolci, at that age already in the middle of its work, was the inevitable reference for both of these community projects, and in a very short time a profitable network of local initiatives, based on comparison and goal sharing, started to absorb the planning scene of Sicily. The Salvinus Duynstee's community centre was indeed founded after the «Congress-report» that had been organized by Danilo Dolci and that took place in Palma di Montechiaro on April 1960 (Leone 1993).

If we draw a comparison between these two community initiatives, the one of Riesi appears more meaningful because of its positive effects on the Sicilian bottom up planning process. The community Centre of Riesi, in fact, was involved with the initiatives of Danilo Dolci thanks to a continuous exchange of their methodological and experimental work[8]: as a result of this connection, the Christian Service placed its work into a regional dimension and intercepted some of the main issues addressed by a local development planning project, like knowledge, communication and participation.

Furthermore, the strong friendship that connected Tullio Vinay with Carlo Doglio (at that time outside the group of Dolci, but still active in Sicily, where he kept doing planning activities with Leonardo Urbani) drove Riesi to become a new bottom up planning laboratory. Series of meeting had indeed been organized in Riesi for reviewing the economical assessment of Sicily[9] and soon after a Civic Committee was born. The aim of Vinay, in fact, was to achieve a communal development project with the local Council, in order to design a community development plan for the region.

The work done in Riesi contributed to increase the intellectual debate that alike initiatives encouraged. Their positive influence reached very soon the area of Caltanissetta, where, starting from 1966, a group of intellectuals leaded by Marco Bonavia started the editorial practices of *Nuovo Sud* [New South]. The creation of this magazine reflected the positive and optimistic feeling that portrayed the intellectual climate of that age and embodied the common desire of change through a profitable alliance between scholars and civil society, enlarging the opportunities of participation (Mangiavillano 2002, 11). The great interest around these practices of community planning and development aroused the naturalness of relationships and the creativity of people's proposals. In fact, it seems hard to talk about this last initiative without recalling the previous community actions that took place in the centre-west areas of Sicily.

In its first number, *Nuovo Sud* pointed out its role of «bridge» between politics and culture by hosting a letter from pastor Vinay. In fact, the aim of the journal was to renew the political system of the South by moving forward towards a reformism that, from their point of view, the political forces of that period would not have promoted. The magazine intended indeed to address and to support community actions and strategies, in order to achieve a deep renewal of the policies of institutions, and to complete, thus, the regionalist change already in progress. Thanks to *Nuovo Sud* the public opinion was recalled to the common good and to the responsibility toward an action that would have brought positive consequences for the whole Region (fig.6).

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8 *The collaboration is testified not only from several letters between Dolci and Vinay, but also by several documents about the work of the Centre of Partinico found in Riesi (survey papers, memos, pamphlets etc.)*
9*I.e. Carlo Doglio was in charge of the planning seminar and Giorgio Spini for the one about the history of Sicily (source: Fund Vinay, Riesi)*

The bottom up approach and the human scale, conducted initially at the local level by minor community initiatives and then handled on a regional scale (the west part of Sicily), demonstrates that, if well encouraged and organized, direct relations and territorial factors could represent a strength able to accomplish a planning system based on common values and community participation. The cultural impact of those community initiatives had been so important to merge into a unique great movement. The main objective of this movement was the pursuit of the reconstruction and the renewal of the public life of the region, through the rising of consciousness and the commitment of its inhabitants, for a real development of Sicily[10].

This is the process that brought on April 1967 to the institution of the *Libera Assemblea* [The Free Meeting], an eminent organ supported by the magazine *Nuovo Sud* and composed by intellectuals, politicians and citizens who, through a series of monthly meetings, should have dealt together the local issues. The institution of this Meeting group can be seen as an attempt for engaging the disciplinary, the territorial and the administrative networks at the same time (fig.7). After ten years of efforts and local commitment, the *Libera Assemblea* intended to connect strongly bottom up practices with local and regional institutions. As the memo for the Palermo *Libera Assemblea* of March 1968 stated, the aim of this organ was to assert firmly that «the economy is for the person and not that the person is for the economy», and that «even the most deprived zone with the smallest possibilities of economic development must be considered from a human perspective and not just from a mere economic point of view». (Libera Assemblea 1968)

WHAT LEGACY FOR INTEGRATED RELATIONAL TOURISM?

Unfortunately this great democratic experience did not endure. The project of the *Libera Assemblea* came to an end in the beginning of 1968, the year of the tragic earthquake that destroyed houses, cities, human beings and even what had been built with great effort through the community development work.

The *Sicilian laboratory* of the 60s represents the most authentic and immediate expression of a development planning process conceived from its territory, for its territory and within its territory. It is the result of a process that has progressively involved people and places until the creation of a new territorial system. The identity of a place is the result of memories, experiences, events that, gradually, stratify the individual consciousness, till forming its personality (Ferrarotti, 2009). It is also the support that keeps relations alive and constitutes the narrative dimension of a place, thus creating new territories. The path that has transformed Sicily into one of the most interesting laboratory of ideas of the post war period on political and planning issues it is a fact that should not be ignored in order to accomplish the IRT mission. From this point of view, the Free Meeting [*Libera Assemblea*] can be seen as an experience of synthesis and as an attempt to embrace human and intellectual forces that are usually excluded from public life policies.

Unfortunately this final experiment did not last too long. The last Free Meeting took place in Palermo, just a couple of month after the earthquake; the reasons of its ending are not clear. It has been said that the initial driving force had progressively weakened because of the prevalence of a particular political stream (the autonomous socialists) or because of the risk to turn the meeting into a political movement instead of a democratic round table[11] (Mangiavillano, 2002). Nevertheless, the initial enthusiasm could have hardly survived the terrible shock that involved the Belice Valley on the 15th of January 1968. The earthquake changed the optimistic climate by breaking old relations and showing new priorities. Furthermore, after the earthquake, emerged clearly the lack of a regional plan that could have addressed all the community initiatives, to be

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10 *Press release (source: Fund Tullio Vinay, Riesi)*
11 *Actually, from the unpublished mimeo that was written before the meeting of Palermo, we can read: «Despite what has been said by the friend Doglio, who wants to avoid any sort of organization, we think that the Libera Assemblea needs to be organized in some ways, in order to make real a proficient work» (Libera Assemblea 1968, 2)*

included into the same organic strategy. As Giuseppe Carta (1997) has written, during the '60s and the '70s in Sicily, instead of the regional plan, politicians and public institutions used the planning book *Programming and Infrastructure* [Programmazione e infrastrutture] (by Doglio and Urbani) to support their choices: the anchorage to governmental institutions was missing and these community programmes could not survive. Therefore, it seems crucial to address the need of finding a different regional planning policy order: «the political order of the Sicilian communities». In order to achieve the strength of a scientific theory and to offer a real development strategy, the Integrated Relational Tourism should find its solid anchorage (Hempel 1961).

The interruption of the process in 1968 is also a consequence of the lack of this «solid anchorage», which shattered ten long years of community actions[12]. The hope is that projects like IRT will be able to recall the memory of that history of Sicily, in order to strengthen the roots needed to turn into reality a multi-level network that self-determines, in the name of the past, the future of the Mediterranean region.

IMAGES

Fig.1 The "absolute island", the "inner lake", the "interchange island" (Doglio & Urbani, La Fionda sicula) and La Sicilia interna e «la città in estensione» [the inner Sicily and the city in extension], card of the recent Conference on Integrated Relational Tourism in Sicily (Enna, 15/05/2009)
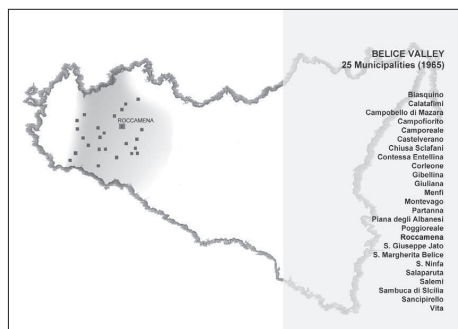
Fig.2 The 25 Municipalities of the Belice Valley (Interregional Committee for the organic planning of the Belice Valley), 1965

12 *The changed that occurred to the pronunciation of the word "Belice" (from Belìce to Bèlice) is the emblem of this failure (La Repubblica 2009, 35)*

Fig.3 Map of the social-planning group showing the sub-regions of the western areas of Sicily, 1962 (Source: Fund Carlo Doglio)
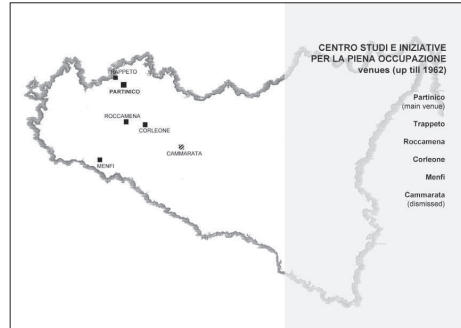

Fig.4 Mapping of the Centro per la piena occupazione [Centres for the full occupation] of the Belice Valley, 1962
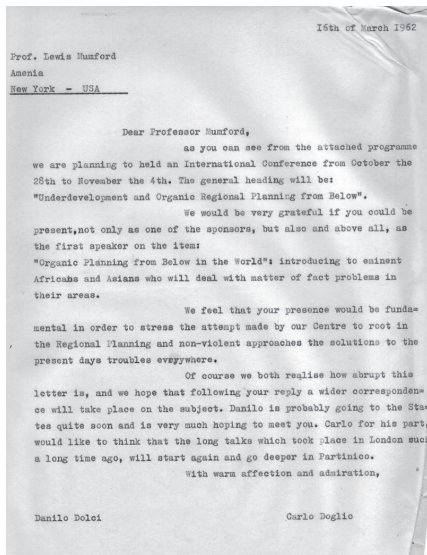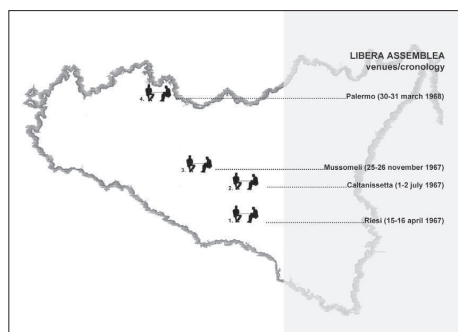

Fig.5 Letter from Carlo Doglio and Danilo Dolci to Lewis Mumford, 16/03/1962 (Source: Fund Carlo Doglio)

Fig.6 The first meeting of the Libera Assemblea, Nuovo Sud, number 3/4, 1967 (Source: Mangiavillano 2002)

Fig.7 Libera Assemblea: venues and cronology

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APPLYING MODELS AND STRATEGIES OF THE INTEGRATED RELATIONAL TOURISM IN THE LOCAL PROCESS OF TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

Vincenzo Todaro[1]

1. Interpreting and cognitive framework

The traditional policies of local development, promoting the Southern Italy from the '60s, haven't been able to determine permanent and meaningful relapses of development on the territory. Distinct approaches and models of development followed timeline, highlighting working issues and modalities of intervention which finally have been useless.

From the 70s in Italy, thanks to the growth of sensibility for the environmental issues subsequently developed in observations on sustainability of development and discussion of the traditional models of reference of the system of ford production, it get acquainted with the end of the reasons of the physical growth of the city, and subsequently, of the necessity of interventions of requalification and territorial and urban regeneration.

The modalities of approach of traditional public actions, divided into disciplinary "divisions" rigidly separated, divide into sectors and institutional levels and organized in hierarchical -decisional structures are unable to "govern" the fast processes of territorial transformation. By now they are inadequate the methods, the techniques and the traditional tools of planning; the dominant models of public interventions are inadequate; they are no more able to answer efficiently and effectively to the demands of the social changing composition of the city. It's above all from the '80s and the first '90s that the crisis of the planning tools further on worsening for a series of events which in a national and communitarian sphere intervene to modify significantly the scenario of the traditional territorial policies.

Among the causes of this change can be located the first durable effect of the legislative action of the Regions[2], the national reform of the local authorities; the spreading of innovative territorial approaches promoted by the European Community[3]; the start-up of processes of devolution and following attempts of tax and administrative federalism.

Inside of the changed framework which has been traced, the local dimension assumes a new value which, from territorial dimension, in which the elaborate choices to a superior level were flowed, becomes strategic dimension where it's possible to elaborate innovative models of sustainable development able to have a dialogue, in a well balanced way, the local system to the global[4] one, empowering the international competitive capacity of the local realities[5].

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2 The Regional Councils were elected for the first time in the spring 1970, but the real power transfer was in 1972.
3 Particularly the processes of territorialisation and regionalisation of the policies through which, for the subsiadiarity principles, integration and concentration, are introduced new decisional and procedural models.
4 In the configuration of the relation local/global A. Magnaghi (2000) affirms the three following models: a) approach to the globalization from on high, where the local actors locate in the local spheres, the ideal conditions to allocate their own activities; b) approach which looks for a substantial glocal equilibrium, where the local organized systems succeed on supplying and communicating equally with the local system; c) approach grassroots, where the competitive and organized capacity of the local dimension succeed on imposing, in terms of funds on the global system.
5 About international competition between city and region, it's possible to locate two main "chains" of actions on which the efforts of the local companies are concentrated in order to catch fluxes of over local money: from one side the system of actions for the formation of the pre-condition to promote the local advantages from the specialized industries (multinational companies); from the other side the actions addressed to the building and exportation, with real campaigns of urban marketing, of a strongly "seductive" territorial images, able to recall the international tourist sector promoted by the amelioration of the conditions of accessibility, for the abatement of costs and times of displacement. In both local described policies, the relation with the global system is built grassroots, overcoming the national level.

In the meaning here quoted, more than being bounded to a scale question, the "local" dimension is then lead to the relational and network feature (network governance) belonging to the relationships of interaction inside to a community. This vision is closed to the interpretative reading of the local territorial systems, meant as "territorial spheres of collective action" (Governa, 2000) which are able to produce auto-sustainable models of development, and inside of these, it's possible to located the co-evolutionary dynamic which differentiate the existing relation between society and territorial local context in a perspective of grassroots development (Noorgaard, 1994; Lanzani, 1999; Urbani 2000).

It is recorded in this context, the awareness of the complexity of the playing territorial components and the necessity of their integrated governance by making of a multi-disciplinary and multi-sector-based approach which, inside the new law framework of '90s town planning of reference, is mainly interpret from the new tools of territorial planning which define the interventionist scenario of the following years.

These tools are characterized by a prevalent planning approach of financial-economical type, far from the territorial planning, more strictly rooted in the territory under an identitary and cultural profile; they are however shown too often far from the real exigencies of territorial development. The results of these experiences show that the problems haven't been solved; the separation between economic-financial planning and project of territorial physical transformation is still evident and has involved a reductive and demagogic interpretation of the concepts of territory and integration (Camagni, 2003; Palermo, 2004).

The experiences which follow to these models and regain the "project dimension" of the planning process, placing at the centre the territory as a complex reality and at the same time as driving force of the planning, are those which have reference to the so called territorial approach (Magnaghi, Dematteis, Gambino), according to that, the territorial dimension has a fundamental role according to the productive, environmental, identitiary, cultural, social, physical profile. In the territorial project as it is described in these last years by Magnaghi, the concepts of territory and project assume new meanings.

The components which play a role are: the multi scale approach and development/control and reading/ interpretation techniques of the physical project and of its carrying out; the relevant and explicit role of the territory, meant as complex physical heritage in the future vision; the specific attention to the process of production of the project and of the effective territorial transformation; the innovative representations of the territory and of the project; the innovation of the presence of used tools to grant the form control and more generally of the results of planning actions. It's substantially about a redefinition path of models of intervention for the territorial project which are rooted in "four movements" (Magnaghi, 2007) which constitute the reference disciplinary background: the auto-sustainable local development; the identitary representation of the places; the places' statutes (unchanged structural ones and rules for the transformation); the elaboration of visions and future scenarios on the valorisation of the local heritage.

2. Approaches and models

Visions and scenarios are since long time used as tool of communication for capacity of involvement, flexibility of elaboration and management. They are useful to orientate and guide the processes of transformation of the city and territory, among the modalities of use of a territorial vision, it is possible to trace a multitude of models and different variables among which often for antithetical approaches, separate the promoting strategies of top-down territorial policies and those bottom-up, often used to endow of big spatial and temporal flexibility the tools of government of territory.

The latter ones are part of those visions which use approaches which increase the value of auto organization and participation processes, where a priority role is based on the sharing of favourite scenarios rather than the multitude of possible future ones. They haven't a normative value, but assume a meaning, from one side, as a tool to imagine, transmit and share the "meaning of the city" (Piroddi, 2000) and, from the other side, as a result of a process of negotiation among social actors of unsure decisional contexts (Forester, 1989; Urbani, 2000).

In these contexts, the process of participation of local communities is characterized by a re-framing, and

the produced vision constitutes a *re-frame* which resets the fragments of reality or partial and subjective visions, translating them into shared and by nature unitary images. Inside of this cognitive process, the sharing of the vision can contribute to solve the eventual conflict translating it into negotiation (Donolo, 2003), and in some cases in "social" pact, and to reinforce the meaning of belonging to the community[6] and identity of the latter one. In this sense, the elaboration of future strategic visions and scenarios founded on the valorisation of the local identitiary heritage is based on the activation of a process building and/or rebuilding of formal and informal networks (reticular networks) of individuals and local actors potentially shared the process of development. The formal networks are mainly constitutes by public administrations, known associations and constituted groups which work in territories as organized structures[7]. The informal networks are those which commonly act according to own mediating proxemics relationships of a community, not recognized from a formal point of view, but through which the social individuals relate each other, training a silent model of action on the territory which contributes to define and qualify the identity of a local community.

In reference to the used approaches in the re-composition of the networks and in the construction of the shared vision, in the sphere of the territorial policies which integrate the top down decisional traditional models with the bottom up approaches, the principals references are constituted by the experiences of participation which involve directly and actively the local communities (Camagni, 2003).

Inside these experiences, most of the used techniques focus their own attention, from one side, on methods of management of the process and, from the other side, on the "efficiency" of the final product. It's clear that the management of the process constitute an effort not indifferent for the multitude of individuals and actors which interact inside (Crosta, 1996), so as evident is that the product of interaction doesn't constitute the real future to reach (Donolo, 2003), but it is useful principally to orientate the choices and the actions of transformation of the territory along a shared "horizon". The typological articulation of methods and techniques of participation see, from one side those experiences aimed to the elaboration of a shared "product" and, from the other side, those aimed to the construction of the "consent" as it is, inside of the process of participation. In this context, it's possible to locate some procedures particularly careful to the management and to the facilitation of the process of participation, and others that, in particular conditions of uncertainty, concentrate themselves mostly on the definition of vision/scenario which orientates the choices and the decisions. To each of these models, determined techniques are suitable which by nature refer to some codified "types". Particularly, to the mostly careful techniques, a structured model generally corresponds on a kind of "path" by nature circular (Friend and Hickling 2004; Giangrande, 2004).

On the contrary the circular model is closer to the feedback processes where the elaborated decisions in a given moment get rich and revise in an incremental way with the grant of external contributions coming from other decisional areas which take part in some moments and with modalities not always predetermined. In these cases, the participant process contribute to manage the uncertainty, and the assumed choice in an determined moment can however be reconsidered. The capacity to manage the uncertainty, revising continually the choices, is the condition which contributes to enforce the process. Among these techniques are those of *strategic choice* (Friend and Hickling, 2004).

Those techniques where, fundamentally, from the beginning, a starting point and an arrival one are foreseen inside the process of participation, belong to the linear model. Generally, it's about basically rigid techniques which foresee conceptually distinguished and well defined phases temporally and spatially. In these cases, the respect of the codified sequence of the phases is condition of coherence for the entire process.

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6 To share the vision means to recognize ourselves in the community which has produced it and is equal to feel ourselves part of a global project (Donolo, 2003). In this meaning, the northern American cultural component of community is very strong (Piroddi, 2000).
7 For formal network, it is meant that network constitutes by a subscribed agreement by the components of the quoted network..

Among these are the techniques of community visioning (Ames, 1996), of future search (Weisbord M. and Janoff, 1995) or those of scenario workshop[8] inside of them. Possible visions/scenarios of future are elaborated starting from a determined initial condition; among these, it will be chosen and implemented that, with has most consent by the community (Friedmann, 1992; Ames, 1996; Secchi, 2003).

1. Tools and strategies

Referring to the delineated framework, the experiences of territorial integrated planning working in Sicily in the sphere of the diffusion of the approach of the Integrated Relational Tourism in Motris project (Urbani, 2003; Naselli and Trapani, 2004) try to decline the territorial approach of the project of territory (Magnaghi, 2007), by an operative modality which reinforces the component of the integration, restoring the role of the protagonist of the territory[9]. The necessity to include in the complexity and unity of the territorial project the different structural components (physical, social, cultural, identitiary, environmental, productive) and at the same time govern them in a unitary and coherent way, requires the definition of a new interpreting model.

The integrated project of territory, in the following delineated meaning, is a complex subject and isn't still endowed of a defined disciplinary scientific statute. As regards to the delineated profile for the project of territory (Magnaghi and Marson, 2004; Fanfani, 2005; Marson, 2006; Magnaghi, 2007) is empowered the integrative component, meant as capacity of government of different components which structure the identity of territory and relate each other in order to start a durable process of development. This approach, in fact, restores the relational dimension of territory as differential factor which contributes to define the planning dimension. Finally, inside this context, it is meant for integrated project of territory, an operative modality of intervention on territory which inserts itself in the tradition of local development and constitutes on the theoretical-disciplinary field, the evolution of the integrating planning of the 90s and the project of territory delineated by the context of the most recent disciplinary advancement on the theme of local development (Magnaghi and Giusti, 1994; Magnaghi, 2000, 2005, 2007; Donolo, 2007). However, it is detached both from the disciplinary tradition of the town planning project and from that of the territorial planning.

Compared to the first one, it tends to extend its own field of application inside the territory; compared to the second one, it moves on the direction of a purposeful dimension, explicating the necessity to overpass the purely functional approach to the territorial planning, to rediscover the rules of transformation in the long term (Marson, 2006), the identitiary permanence, the re-qualified heritage, the essential resources for the well-being of the inhabitants, all elements to revalue as bases of the project. Besides, even if it is rooted to the integrated planning of the '90s[10], it's getting to detach from it significantly, both for the restoration of the real unitary value of the project[11] and for the process of identitary territorialisation of planning actions, which it brings itself.

Then, it's about an operative modality of intervention which, by a transversal approach, encompass the material and immaterial elements of the territory as components of the project to try to intervene efficiently on the variables of breaking of the process of the territorial development. The components which get into force are the territory, the integration and the project.

8 Fondazione IDIS and Andersen I., Bilderbeek R., Leone U., Terragni F. (1996), "European Awareness Scenario – Workshops: Self Training Manual", European Commission, DG XIII/D2, Luxembourg.

9 In the Territorial Integrated Project (TIP) spread in the territorial planning of all the Italian region, the territory (declined in its adjectival version "territorial") remains in the background as context on which locate projects; in the integrated projects of territory, as well as everywhere, in the territorial projects, it becomes the driving force itself of the project, and to the latter, it becomes co-protagonist (privileged interlocutor) in the planning action.

10 In this sense, it stands aloof from the "project in the territory" so as "product" from the territorial policies of the '90s which set up as tools for the re-organization of the public funds (projects in the territory) rather than as new projects of territory (Mascarucci, 2007).

11 Too often, the project of territory of wide area still tends to set up as the implicit result of the summation, most of the times contradictory and hostile, at most "ruled" by plans, sectorial plans activated by specific holders of interests, without a design strategically unitary of territorial transformation.

From the concept of territory (meant traditionally as an adjective "territorial", as context) is essentially restored the noun value bounded both to the identity of the places and to the local dimension. The identitary value of the territory becomes the real "driving force" of the local development (Friedmann, 1987; Governa, 1999; Donolo, 2003).

More than being bounded to a scale problem, the local dimension is related to the relational and reticular feature (reticular governance) which belongs to the relationships of iteration inside a community.

In reference to that, it seems useful the reference to the concept of territorial capital which alludes to the territory both as a resource which can generates risings of efficiency and economic and well-being productivity for populations (public goods, share fixed capital, physical capital), also *share capital* incorporate in the places as a sense of belonging and consolidated traditions, and as *relational capital* (meant as capacity of cooperation and of "doing network" on permanent territorial spheres and on complex challenges). In the perspective of the active territorialisation, the territorial heritage is not more interpreted as detached from society, economy and institutions of government, but rather as pre-condition for the activation of processes of local development founded on the co-evolutionary interaction between local society and territorial "environment" of reference (Noorgaard, 1994).

The concept of integration, besides, the theme of intersection of thematic sectors of intervention (as already experimented in the experiences of integrated planning in the '90s) recalls to the double-directional integration among some traditional dichotomy couples (safeguard and development, bond and intervention, immobility and action) which must necessarily restore a condition of equilibrium to contribute to define completely and coherently the whole planning actions. It's just by this interaction that the tools of the project can restore a real proactive value and produce "territorial added value" as result of a positive game among society, economy and territorial heritage (Mascarucci, 2007).

So the object of the new project of territory becomes this net of relationships, or better, the physical-spatial configuration which can promote the synergies bounded to this system of interaction and the management of the physical-spatial transformations which are generated from this[12].

In relation to its typological structuring, the Integrated project of territory essentially follows a reticular decentralized model of "opened" type. The reticular model postpones to the structure and functioning of a system made of "knots" – area elements by nature which constitute the "place" where the different kind of information concentrate and elaborate themselves – and "links" – generally linear elements which consent the exchange of information.

Besides, it's about a decentralized system "opened" because the policies of development which it deals with, tend to re-distribute the potential critical mass on its own territory in correspondence of the existing knots and of those which the system will be able to interest in the future. The system of links implies the conditions of relationality and integration of the model of development.

It's about relations on scale (and inter-scalars) and relations of system (and inter-system). The first ones put in relation the different territorial scales around which a project has been developing: the regional and local scale of the single areas of application. The second ones define the internal sets up and existent ones to the system among the different systems of the view of integration and inter-change.

4. The experimental application

Starting from the above mentioned thoughts, the traditional models of local development centred on the mass tourism haven't been able to respond to the demand of qualitative growth of the Sicilian territory which, in the process of globalization of the economies, is often remained marginal, loosing attractiveness and planning capacity.

12 In this sense, meaningful references to this planning dimension must be traced in the European programming URBACT II (European Commission C(2007)4454) of the new communitarian scheduling which, for that is about particularly the themes of the production process of territorial projects, put strongly in relation to the issues directly bounded to the urban qualities with those related to the social inclusion and to the forms and models of participation.

In the sphere of the delineated scenario, the territory of the Nebrodi mountains is traditionally considered an old TLS (Territorial Local System) (Dematteis and Governa, 2005; Hoffmann, 2004). This condition derives from a high level of working planning, result of a stratified process of a territorial development working from the first '80s by the promotion of policies of local development rooted in socio-economic context. To this activity is associated the capacity of territorial planning debugged by the Natural Park of the Nebrodi and by the programming and planning policies promoted by it (territorial Planning of the Park, PIT, Leader, Prusst, etc.). Within this complex reality, some specific portion of inland territory live a particular condition of crisis. The progressive process of depopulation for the coast municipalities, the inadequacy of the tourist-receptive structures and more generally, the inefficiency of policies of development activated till now, are among the main causes of the crisis.

The Integrated Project of Territory (IPoT) "Eastern Nebrodi" assumed as a sphere of application, the system of the four municipalities (Naso, Castell'Umberto, Ucria and Floresta) located along the mountain crest which from Capo d'Orlando goes towards the Etna, along the SS 116.

It's about a territorial context characterized by: wealth of the antropic, natural and cultural heritage; ease of accessibility for the old tourist system (Eolie islands, Tyrrhenian coast, Taormina, Nebrodi park, Alcantara park Etna park); availability of free building heritage. In relation to the above mentioned territorial context, the (IPoT) aims to restore a real proactive value and produce "territorial added value" as result of a process of system growth of relationships among society, economy and territorial economy (Mascarucci, 2007). Concretely the IPoT means to promote a process of development of the local cultural-tourist system by the reinforcement and integration of the system of relationships between inland areas and coast ones: finally the object of the new project of territory becomes the net of relationships, or better saying, the physical-spatial configuration which can promote synergies bounded to this interactional system and the government of the spatial-physical transformation which are generate from it. The above mentioned idea-force is founded on the necessity of territorial re-distribution of the topical traditional tourist flux and above all on the development of typologies of complementary relational tourism (social, environmental, supportive, sport, rural, cultural etc.) by networking and the empowerment of the infrastructure system and service of local level (municipal), but of territorial interest. It's added to this, the necessity to realize new infrastructures and public and private services able to connect the tourist coast centre of the central Tyrrhenian sea (Sant'Agata - Capo d'Orlando - Tindari), with that inside of the regional park system (Nebrodi, Etna and Alcantara). The force-idea, besides, points to the reinforcement of the relationship between over-local tourist demand and the supply of structures and alternative tourist services responding to the aims of relationality[13] between hosts and voyagers oriented to the principle of the territorial integrated fruition (Trapani, 2008). They are both in relation to the established relationship between residential supply and local production (rural and hand-crafted), and to the process of valorisation of the local cultural-historical and social heritage. In the relation to the above mentioned idea-force and coherently with the directions of Motris project (Urbani, 2004; Naselli and Trapani, 2004), the IPoT has located three specific goals: re-territorialization of the economy starting from the support of topical knowledge, enriched by the necessary innovative components of the modernity; re-contextualisation of the society starting from the restoring of a stantiality (Samonà, Urbani) lost for many aspects; re-composition of the cultural identity pointed to orientate the development. To reach the above mentioned goals, the directions of the IPoT are towards the localisation of strategic lines of intervention which, through the definition of specific material and immaterial actions, can intervene on the breaking variables of the process of territorial development. Coherently to the general points of the Motris project, the strategic lines of intervention are:

13 *The relationality and the modality with which the different components of the territory relate each other and express value also in planning terms. Consequently to it, it is also led the managerial dimension of the project, in an attempt of overcoming of factors of criticality of the traditional models of programming and territorial and urban planning. The components of the research line, organized by F. Trapani and G. Ruggeri in the Motris project, have been presently employing on the definition of the "relationality" concept.*

Line 1. Infrastructural interventions. It's about interventions which point to the adjustment and enforcement of the infrastructural system and the supporting services of the Integrated Relational Tourism.
Line 2. Public actions. It's about immaterial interventions mainly addressed to the training and realization of exhibitions/events
Line 3. Helping systems for the companies. It's about helping systems to private companies related to both to the enforcement of the existing structures and the realization of new ones.
Each strategic line is articulated and supported by specific actions, each of them, structured as a file card and defined according to a double order of coherence:
internal coherence: with the general aims of the strategic line and with the other specific actions;
external coherence: with the directions of the new planning.
The territorial visions of the single municipalities where the IPoT are:
  1. Naso Vision: tourist development sea/mountain
  2. Castell'Umberto Vision: innovation in the tourist supply
  3. Ucria Vision: integrated relational tourist development and local tradition
  4. Floresta Vision: sustainable integrated relational tourist development.
In relation to the model of proposed development, the application "Eastern Nebrodi", even if it is based on bottom-up experiences of the programming negotiated in the '90s, promotes a further level of approach to the local reality, through driving roots in the system of the internal relations to it, just of the relational approach. This process introduces a level of complexity which is proportional to the socio-economic conditions of the territory. The components of criticality founded up to now, are mainly traced in the difficulty of integration with the form of traditional acting tourism and in the difficulties to implement the agreements to the project because of the produced disappointments from the public recent policies of local development activated by other tools (Trapani, 2008). The unexpected ephemeral incisiveness of policies of the Natural Park of Nebrodi and the resistance forms to the systemic approach proposed in the models of located public-public and public-private partnership must be added to the difficult structural and context conditions. Nonetheless, the verified consent particularly in the private sector about the project has been significant.
Thanks to the above mentioned conditions, the operating application has delineated a further level of operating experimentation with the definition of a receptivity supply orientated to the Integrated Relational Tourism (Urbani, 2004; Naselli and Trapani, 2004) which interests mainly the private sector. This planning proposal, counting on the informal networks and existing interpersonal relationships among the different operators working in the territory, has been currently verifying the complexity of the reached thoughts in the theoretical sphere by the approaching to the free market.

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DEVELOPING IRT APPROACH IN THE AREA OF CENTRAL SOUTHERN SICILY THROUGH GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

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Abstract

The paper presents a case study concerning the development of IRT approach through Governance and Territorial Strategic Planning in the area of central southern Sicily, the ample portion of territory surrounding Agrigento and its Archeological Area known as "The Valley of Temples". This has been inscribed in the Unesco List of World Heritage in 1997, due to the fact that Agrigento was one of the greatest cities of the ancient Mediterranean world, and it has been preserved in an exceptionally intact condition.

Despite this uncommon characteristic, touristic development in the area is still latent and the "Valley", rather than being a resource for development, has become somehow a bulky presence that has assembled on itself every attention of the operators. Other areas of great interest existing in the rest of the territory and the same city of Agrigento have little appeal for tourists, who perceive the Valley as the only motive for visiting Agrigento, »a pearl« set in a non suitable context.

Instead, the wide area surrounding Agrigento owns a cultural and natural heritage rich of tangible and untangible assets potentially functional to the development of new types of tourism, which can re-launch these inland areas, through the re-discovery of their authenticity and local identity:

- small prehistoric archaeological areas and Hellenistic-Romans riuns, Palaces and Castels, abandoned sulphur mines which constitute today forms of industrial archaeology, fascinating landscapes and farms in the rural territory, sites of naturalistic interest, and other testimonies of merit;
- unique local productions;
- a tradition of quality in arts such as literature, theatre, music, singing, picture, sculpture.

This area of Sicily is historically identified with the cultivation of wheat and the extraction of sulphur. By the mid of last century, with the decline of the former and the abandonment of the latter, these territories have been experiencing a progressive but constant loss of value and economic wealth, with the consequent loss of identity. As it often happens to areas experiencing such a decline, the loss of values, practices and customs has led to the abandonment of an important number of buildings - both in the historical centre of small villages and in rural areas -, some of which are of undeniable historical and architectural value.

The Integrated Relational Tourisme (IRT) Model can contribute to activate those micro-centralities in close connection to agriculture, craftsmanship, small industrial enterprises and family businesses and all the existing activities in the area founding on the principles of the capillarity and subsidiariety.

Public and private actors are working out a strategic planning aiming at the creation of synergies among:

- Integrated projects of agricultural development, together to the expansion and the retraining of the tourist offer of the rural territories.
- Politics of development and search in the sectors: energy, refusals, water for civil and industrial and agricultural use, together to the politics of guardianship of the local naturalistic resources and the preventive management of the risk idrogeologico and seismic.
- Politics of guardianship and exploitation of the cultural goods intending complementarizzare such actions with those that will be implemented by the Valley of the Temples.

Conscious of the peculiarity of their territory and the challenges for the future of their communities, the Municipal Administrations of 6 small towns in the area surrounding Agrigento – Favara (file-leader), Aragona, Comitini, Joppolo Giancaxio, Porto Empedocle, and Raffadali – decided to make a common effort to write a Territorial Strategic Plan and included IRT approach in their strategic lines.
The paper describes the process followed for the strategic plan and its contents.

Key words: tourism, Integrated Relational Tourism, governance, strategic planning, regional planning.

INTRODUCTION
The area of central southern Sicily, the ample portion of territory surrounding Agrigento and its Archeological Area known as "The Valley of Temples". This has been inscribed in the Unesco List of World Heritage in 1997, due to the fact that Agrigento was one of the greatest cities of the ancient Mediterranean world, and it has been preserved in an exceptionally intact condition. Its great row of Doric temples is one of the most outstanding monuments of Greek art and culture.
Despite this uncommon characteristic, touristic development in the area is still latent, and characterised by lack of accomodation structures and tourist routes and lack of connections among hotels and the points of interest for tourists (the city centre, the Valley of Temples, the beaches, and so on).
Furthermore, most actors in tourisme industry (operators, guidebooks autors, individual travelers, etc.) seem to perceive the "Valley" as the only motive for visiting Agrigento, and consider the surrounding territory of scarce appeal.
Therefore, the image of the "Valley" is one of »a pearl« set in a non suitable context; the only resource of the area rather than an unique resource for the area and it has become a «passing through» destination. Travelers and tour operators mostly include the visit to the Valley of Temples in 1 day roundtrip tours of western Sicily starting from Palermo and Catania, with the consequence scarce economic relapse on the territory.
Instead, the wide area surrounding Agrigento – which on the coast goes from Sciacca to Gela and can include the minor islands Linosa and Lampedusa, and in the inside goes up to Grammichele, Caltagirone, Armerina Plaza, Enna, Caltanissetta, S. Angelo Muxaro, Caltabellotta, Racalmuto, while – owns a cultural and natural heritage rich of tangible and untangible assets potentially functional to the development of new types of tourism, which can re-launch these inland areas, through the re-discovery of their authenticity and local identity:
- small prehistoric archaeological areas and Hellenistic-Romans riuns, Palaces and Castels, abandoned sulphur mines which constitute today forms of industrial archaeology, fascinating landscapes and farms in the rural territory, sites of naturalistic interest, and other testimonies of merit;
- unique local productions;
- a tradition of quality in arts such as literature, theatre, music, singing, picture, sculpture.

This area of Sicily is historically identified with the cultivation of wheat and the extraction of sulphur. By the mid of the twentieth century, with the decline of the former and the abandonment of the latter, these territories have been experiencing a progressive but constant loss of value and economic wealth,with the consequent loss of identity. As it often happens to areas experiencing such a decline, the loss of values, practices and customs has led to the abandonment of an important number of buildings - both in the historical centre of small villages and in rural areas -, some of which are of undeniable historical and architectural value.
The Integrated Relational Tourisme (IRT) Model can contribute to activate those micro-centralities in close connection to agriculture, craftsmanship, small industrial enterprises and family businesses and all

the existing activities in the area founding on the principles of capillarity and subsidiariety. Such Model has been indicated as one of the strategic lines in the Territorial Strategic Plan proposal drafted by the Municipal Administrations of a group of small towns in the area surrounding Agrigento – Favara (file-leader), Aragona, Comitini, Joppolo Giancaxio, Porto Empedocle, Raffadali, and Realmonte[1] – decided to make a common effort to put together the efforts of public and private actors to plan for the future of the area. In this paper, after a short discussion of the main characteristics of Territorial Strategic Planning, we will present the case study. To this aim, the paper will discuss: 1) the main characteristics of the territory; 2) the process followed for the strategic planning process; 3) the methodology adopted to promote wide participation in the definition of the Vision, Objectives and Strategic Lines for the future development of the area; and 4) the main aspects of the strategic lines indicated in the plan, with peculiar concern for those directly or indirectly connected with the development of IRT Model.

TERRITORIAL STRATEGIC PLANNING

Territorial strategic planning has emerged in the last two decades as a tool useful to guide and accompany the processes of local economic development.

The adoption of such instrument leads to integrated urban or metropolitan development plans developed around long-term visions for cities and neighbour-hoods in their regional context. According with the European Commission, the experience has demonstrated that area-based integrated development plans work best if they are embedded in city-wide strategies and supported by policies that are geared towards specific target groups.[2]

In such view, Strategic Planning does not replace the ordinary tools of urbanistic and territorial planning, on the contrary it integrates in a rationally ordered framework the objectives of "strategic" importance, and delineates the future vision of area, the strategic lines in which this articulates, the actions and projects to be realised, and the resources required.

The European Commission[3] has synthesized the key elements of sustainable urban development as follows:

- Developing a city-wide vision that goes beyond each project and is embedded in the city-regional context (analysis of target areas; strategy building; defining long- and medium-term objectives, priorities, measures and projects);
- The integrated approach as an added value (strong 'horizontal', cross-sectoral coordination of urban regeneration measures and physical urban renewal as the main elements of an integrated approach to sustainable urban development, covering aspects of local economic development, business and employment, education, training and qualification, social inclusion, culture, environmental measures, urban mobility and high-quality public spaces; strong 'vertical' coordination with all relevant levels, coherence with European, national and regional objectives);
- Financing and investing to achieve a lasting impact; concentration of resources and funding on selected target areas;
- Creating strong local and regional partnerships (increate involvement of citizens and local and regional stakeholders, including the private sector; shared responsibilities, implementation bodies); new instruments of urban governance, administration and management;

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1 *Realmonte joined the process a few moths after it was started.*
2 *European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy Unit C2 – Urban development, territorial cohesion: Promoting sustainable urban development in Europe ACHIEVEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/presenta/urban2009/urban2009_en.pdf*
3 *Ibidem.*

- Capitalising on knowledge, exchanging experience and know-how (benchmarking, networking);
- Monitoring the progress (ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluations, set of criteria and indicators).
  Strategic planning emerges as an innovative process of extraordinary importance, since it coagulates the different actors of the local community (stakeholders) in a common effort aimed to draw the future of the territory in a long-term horizon and in multidimensional strategic frame embracing the urban, environmental, social and economic aspects of the community's life.
  The importance of strategic planning mainly descends from two of its characteristics:
- the involvement and responsabilisation of stakeholders, both in the phase of planning and in the phase of implementation, through a process of «deliberative democracy» in an integrate perspective that overcomes the distinctions / opposition of roles among public administration and private actors (enterprises, intermediate organisms, and individual actors);
- the overcoming of the idea of administrative border / limit, that is the recognition of the importance of common effort among neighboring territorial areas (even though distinguished under the administrative profile) to find resources, potentialities and common runs of development.

CASE STUDY

THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TERRITORY

The small towns of Favara, Aragona, Comitini, Raffadali, Joppolo Giancaxio and Porto Empedocle, constitute a polycentric system with an extension of 242,42 km2 and a resident population of about 76.000 resident inhabitants surrounding the town of Agrigento.

As a consequence of its distance from the main urban centers of the Island (Palermo and Catania), and some important gaps in the regional transport infrastructures (road, railways, airports) the area has become more and more marginal, what reinforced the negative effects of the decline of the traditional main economic activities (the cultivation of wheat and the extraction of sulphur).

Although the «Valley of Temples» tends to monopolize any attention the area is reach of cultural and natural heritage.

As it regards the cultural patrimony, the small archeological ares withnessing human presence since pre-historic age, testimonies of the rural world, and the patrimony of the historical centers characterised by castles and high class palaces, surely emerge as deserving attention for expoitation, despite the urbanistic degrade of the last decades.

Of peculiar importance is also the patrimony of industrial archeology costituted by the system of mines and plants for the extraction and transformation of sulphur that should be reconverted in enjoyable cultural patrimony.

From the landscape point of view, the coastal system presents some environmental emergencies of landscape and naturalistic relief, among which outstands »the Turks' Staircase«, in Realmonte.

Another environmental emergency is constituted by the Integral Regional Natural Reserve of the Macalubes or «Vulcanelli» in Aragona, important and unusual geologic phenomenon, in the territory of Aragona and Ioppolo Giancaxio. The area of the Natural Reserve has been declared Site of Interest of the European Union and inserted in the net Nature 2000, site ITA 040008.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE AREA

The strategic plan of the area results from a long process, started in September 2005 with the project «Agorà dei diritti». This is a project of active citizenship and e-Democracy aiming at building instruments for participation and orginising and promote forums of discussion propedeutical to strategic planning.

On may 23, 2006, the Municpality of Favara, the Administration of the Province of Agrigento and 20 private actors subscribed the agreement for the institutional partenariat for the elaboration of a strategic plan for the area.

In the following table are listed the subscribers:

Table 1. The subscribers of the Agreement for the institutional partenariat

Provincia Regionale Agrigento
UIL Agrgigento
Confagricoltura Agrigento
C.N.A. Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato
Unione Industriale di Agrigento
Confartigiano Agrigento
Camera di Commercio
Azienda Servizi e Promozione CCIAA Agrigento
Confimpresa Euromed
Consorzio Agnello Pasquale
Consorzio per la legalità e lo sviluppo
Cofidi Sicilia
Medit – Consorzio Nazionale per la tutela e lo sviluppo delle PMI
CESCOM – Centro studi Ist. Mezzogiorno e Mediterraneo
Fondazione Mediterranea Antiusura – Antiracket
Ordine degli Architetti di Agrigento
Legambiente circolo "Rabat" di Agrigento
R.N.I. Maccalubbe di Aragona – Ente gestore Legambiente CRS
Parco Archeologico Valle dei Templi
Consorzio "Le gialle valli dello zolfo"

Apart from the establishment of the institutional partenariat, the main results obtained by the project can be resumed as follows:

- the wide range of activities carried on in the project prepared the cultural background for participation;
- the community had an opportunity to discuss about the main challenges for its future and prepare the terrain for the identification of a vision;
- the project group elaborated a «proposal for the strategic plan of the wide area including the small tows of Favara, Aragona, Comitini, Joppolo Giancaxio, Porto Empedocle and Raffadali».

Answering to a solicitation of the Regional Government of Sicily, the proposal has been submitted for funding and obtained positive evaluation.

In december 2008 the process entered in a new phase. A project group set up by internal resources and external consultants was established with the aim to complete the process and write the Strategic Plan.

The work group included the following actors:

Between December 2008 and early March 2009 the work group had a number of meetings to co-ordinate different perspectives and methods, met the majors and managers of the involved municipal administrations and met the institutional partners to present the working plan, explain the method adopted and receive inputs.

From April to June 2009, the work group had 6 thematic meetings with public and private actors, as it is reported in the following table:

Opening Conference		Favara	07.04.2009
I Thematic table	Development of local productions	Porto Empedocle	30.04.2009
II Thematic table	Urban development and accessibility	Aragona	13.05.2009
III Thematic table	Development of business and production system	Joppolo Giancaxio	22.05.2009
IV Thematic table	Life quality and human capital	Comitini	09.06 2009
V Thematic table	Planning and development	Raffadali	12.06.2009
VI Thematic table	Art and culture for the development of the territory	Realmonte	19.06.2009

A number of public and private actors participated in the meetings spreading the partenariat and contributing (through open debate) to the acquisition of information from different perspective, and to the identification of the strategic lines to be pursued through the plan.

In the meantime, the collection and desk analysis of information and data proceeded as a parallel activity, and , furthermore, the work group met on an individual basis a number of actors from different sectors to discuss deeply on a «face to face» basis some critical issues, and receive contributions and ideas.

On mid July, the work group presented the «Intermediate Document» containing the results of the desk and field analysis, the proposal of «strategic vision», and the proposal of strategic lines.

The purpose of this document is to favor a serene and concrete debate on the vision and the strategic lines, proposed by the work group, and to stimulate proposals from the community about the lines of action and the projects to include in the plan. This is not a defined document, but it delineates the skeleton of the strategic plan.

As it is natural at the present stage of the work, some topics need further deepening, that call for wide participation from the community in the next future.

The intermediate document consists of three parts.

The first part contains the analysis. After a short introduction about the history of the area and its geography, it deals with the territorial, environmentale and socio-economic analysis. A swot analysis concludes this part of the document.

The second part reports the activities for the organisation of the work group and the field activities consisting in public meetings, thematic tables and individual meetings. A synthesis of the demand for life quality emerging from the actors of the area concludes this part.

Finally, the third part of the document contains the synthesis, meaning the elements of the vision and the proposal of strategic lines and objectives, with a first indication of lines of action.

The next steps of the process towards the final document will pass through a number of meetings under the form of technical forums. In the following table are reported the topics of discussion of such forums.

Topic
Exploitation of the system of traditional high quality agro-food productions
Urban development and accessibility
The territory as a patrimony for the future
Quality of life and human capital
Politics for young citizens
Art and culture for development
The discrit of energy
The sovra-municipal services: waste and water
The System od Integrated Relational Tourisme
The public administration at the service of development

In the next paragraph of the article we will introduce the Vision and the Strategic Lines proposed in the «intermediate document», with peculiar concern for those involving the Integrated Relational Tourisme.

THE VISION AND THE STRATEGIC LINES

The vision emerging for the future development of the area is synthesised in the following scheme .
The vision, has been articulated in two sets of strategic lines:
1. the lines of development;
2. the conditions for development.

The strategic lines of development:
a. Exploitation of local enterprises through vertical and horizontal integration and internationalization, in continuity with previous initiatives.
b. Integrate projects of rural and agricultural development, together with the expansion of tourist offer of the rural areas.
c. Defense and exploitation of the cultural (tangible and intangible) heritage to settle an offer complementary and integrative to that of the «Valley of Temples».
d. Use of the theoretical model of Integrated Relational Tourism inspired to the principles of capillarity and subsidiariety, and devoted to:
• Ri-connect the territory to the economies and the activities of production (primary, secondary and tertiary);
• ri-compose local communities;
• ri-contestualize local cultures.

The strategic lines for development
a. Innovative politics of rationalization of the territorial accessibility and connection of the territories included in the plan to the rest of the regional, national and international centralisms.
b. Arrangements for the concentration of local financial forces: closed-end funds and microcredit to strengthen and support the culture of enterprise and to develop the capital of trust and responsibility to face the entrepreneurial risk at local level.
c. The "joint and several city", concentrating all the qualifying activities of the public administration.
d. The city of young citizens.
e. Security for individual citizens and enterprises.

THE IRT APPLICATION EMERGING FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN

As is has been said in a previous part of the present article, IRT can contribute to activate the micro-centralities of the area in close connection to agriculture, craftsmanship, small industrial enterprises and family businesses and all the other existing activities.

Public and private actors are working out a strategic planning aiming at the creation of synergies among:

- · Integrated projects of agricultural development, together to the expansion and the retraining of the tourist offer of the rural territories.
- · Politics of development and search in the sectors: energy, refusals, water for civil and industrial and agricultural use, together to the politics of guardianship of the local naturalistic resources and the preventive management of the risk idrogeologico and seismic.
- · Politics of guardianship and exploitation of the cultural goods intending complementarize such actions with those that will be implemented by the Valley of the Temples.

These projects as a whole are in line with the very basic philosophy of IRT.

To this aim it is necessary to endeavour the opportune initiatives to promote politics of district, with the purpose to strengthen the organizational ability of the local system and to create the conditions of context favourable for the activation of common actions devoted to technological innovation, the realization of district services and of services for the promotion and the internazionalization of local enterprises.

In its final version, the strategic plan will have to define subjects and actions for the transition from an economy of the area essentially based on micro enterprises and single initiatives, very often laking of any integration, to forms of cooperation and collaboration – both horizontally and vertically – creating relational networks among operators and with public actors at different levels.

The promotion of a new rurality

The territory expresses some vocations that needs to be exploited as resources for development.

It is necessary to promote the exploitation of those quality products with an higher value added, and product innovation, making investments to improve production techniques and processes, to incentivate research and innovations, to promote politics for the creation of districts and foster co-operation for the commercialization and promotion of such products.

The effective strategic repositioning of agro-food industry requires the recognizment of the need to promote a new rurality, that is rurality intended rather than in its traditional agricoltural context, as a set of places merely devoted to agricoltural production, also in the identification of its modern dimensions of sustainability and multifunctionality.

The valorization of the multifunctional role of the primary sector, in its twice function offer – productive and environmental – makes necessary to coniugate the modern needs of development and valorization of territorial tipicism and the objectives of quality and of safeguard of ecological-environment and of landscape and the subsequent touristic exploitation.

The process of «rediscovery» and regeneration of the modern rurality will be made reality through the compenetration and interaction among heterogeneous activities, where the different components blend and contribute to the realization of development projects with a prevalent territorial connotation.

Multifunctionality does not mean a mere set of heterogeneous activities aiming at a diversification of revenues, it rather represents the consequence and the result of a project pursuing a range of integrated objectives.

The set of products that agricolture can and has to offer to consumers grows over time, so increasing the participation of farmers to the offer of services for leisure, green and rural tourisme, environment, so contributing to the construction and safeguard of rural landscape.

Similar philosophy has to be applied to artisancraft activities and to the requalification of historical centres of the towns and of sulphur mines and other archeological sites.

In this line, the integrated project «the routes of sulphur» is based on a prcise cultural itinerary centered on mines resources for the complementarization of the turistic offer of the «Valley». The itinerary passes through all the town interested by the strategic plan, and includes also the «Mosè Village» and the accessibility to the Valley.

CONCLUSIONS

The paper presents a case study concerning the development of IRT approach through Governance and Territorial Strategic Planning in underdeveloped areas. It shows that participative processes and strategic planning help the main stakeholders of an area to look for the «talents» of the area and rediscver microcentralities that deserve interest and attention.

Through the case study we presented the process through which stakeholders reach consensus about the future of the area and consider its touristic development under a different persepective, that drives to the idea of IRT.

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Planning and Territorial Use

THE DEMAND OF TOURISTS FOR HELICOPTER TRANSPORT IN AREAS WITH POOR ACCESSIBILITY

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Abstract

The transport system (infrastructures and services) can play a strategic role for the development of tourism in those areas that have a high level of tourist appeal but a poor accessibility. The aim of this research is to analyse the potential tourist demand for fast transfer services by helicopter, to reach attractive and not very accessible areas such as, for example, minor islands.

Our study is applied to Sicily, in the south of Italy, which is characterized by cultural and naturalistic beauties as well as "weak" rail and road infrastructures and is surrounded by many nice minor islands. In particular, we refer to some very important regional tourist centres: Palermo, Taormina, which are also near to the two major Sicilian airports, and the Eolie Islands.

In detail, we developed a demand model for simulating the transport mode choice behaviour of tourists moving from Palermo and Taormina to Lipari (one of the Eolie Islands) of tourists with high willingness-to-pay for travel time savings (individuals choosing superior hotels) and a mode choice set consisting of two alternatives, hydrofoil and helicopter; we considered the following explanatory variables: one-way journey time (hours), one-way journey cost per passenger (euros), household yearly income. This model is based on random utility theory and assumes taste heterogeneity with respect to the travel time parameter (mixed logit). The observations employed to estimate this travel demand model derives from a stated preference survey involving a sample of first class hotels in Palermo, Taormina and the Island of Lipari. The estimated mixed logit model presents proper signs, good statistical significance for its attributes and considerable goodness of fit.

Using the estimated parameters, we obtained travel time saving valuations and predicted choice probabilities for the sampled individuals, finding out that the choice probability for helicopter rises significantly as the household income increases.

Key words: Helicopter, tourist development, demand model, stated preference survey

INTRODUCTION

This paper describes a work in progress to study the role of innovative forms of passenger public transport in favouring mobility of tourists within contexts where transport services are inadequate. In particular, the research focuses on the Sicilian region, in the south of Italy, which is characterized by cultural and naturalistic beauties as well as "weak" rail and road infrastructures and is surrounded by many attractive minor islands. Our aim is to investigate the feasibility of helicopter regular transport services for connecting the main regional tourist centres, with particular reference to Palermo, Taormina, which are also near to the two major Sicilian airports, and the Eolie Islands. The corresponding origin-destination pairs could justify the use of helicopter, since they are characterized by a high travel demand of tourists moving from airports to their destination or just making a daily tour.

The paper is articulated as follows: the first part describes the demand-supply system of tourism in Sicily, with particular respect to the Eolie Islands; the second part concerns management and technical aspects of helicopter transport; the third part focuses on modelling the demand for helicopter transport of passengers in Sicily: survey of literature, data collection method, modelling results and some related comments; the final part provides some final remarks and identifies the future steps of the research.

ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGIONAL SYSTEM OF TOURISM

Sicily is a region with great artistic, archaeological and naturalistic amenities (Fig. 1), which offers a still preserved landscape. Within the Sicilian territory, the resources which have been recognized as archaeological, artistic and naturalistic "treasures" are 340 and are distributed as shown in Fig. 2.
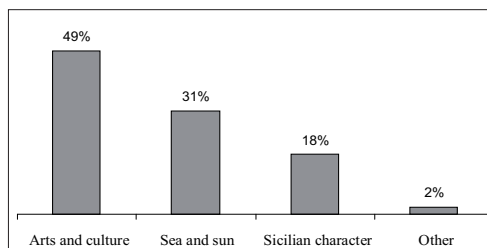

Fig. 1 - Factors attracting tourists in Sicily - Source: Sicilian Region, 2007
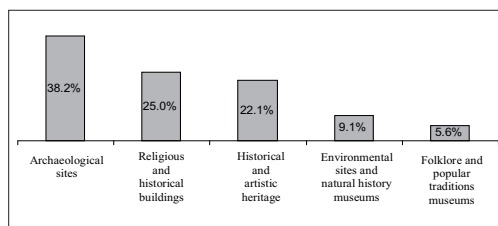
Fig. 2 Cultural heritage in Sicily - Source: Sicilian Region, 2003

With respect to tourist presences (total amount of overnight stays in hotels per annum), Sicily is the eighth region in Italy and the second in Southern Italy (Fig. 3). Data on tourist density (yearly arrivals of tourists per square kilometer) highlight that Sicily is under the national average (140 against 247 arrivals per km^2) and lies in thirteenth position (Fig. 4). The most attractive Sicilian provinces, in terms of yearly presences of tourists (Fig. 5), are Palermo and Messina, where two important tourist areas are Taormina and the Eolie Islands.

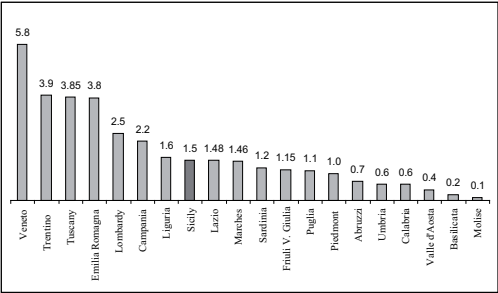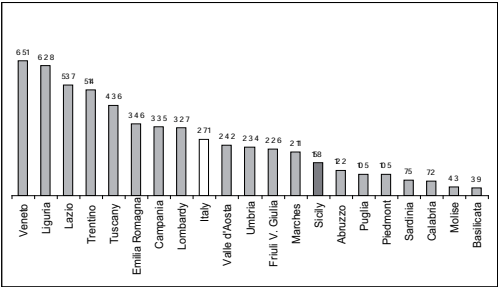Fig. 3 - Tourist presences (millions) in the national context per annum - Source: Sicilian Region, 2003

Fig. 4 - Arrivals of tourists per km^2 per annum - Source: Sicilian Region, 2003
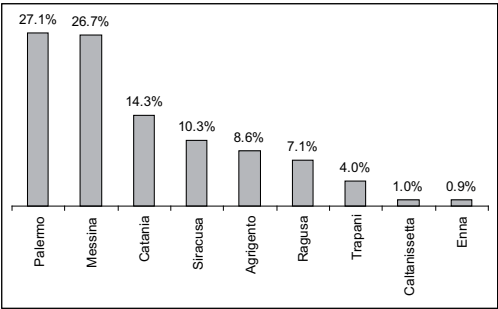

Fig. 5 - Presences of tourists (%) in Sicilian provinces per annum - Source: Sicilian Region, 2008

EOLIE ISLANDS

The Eolie Islands are a volcanic archipelago in the Tyrrhenian Sea, in the north of Sicily. The Eolie Islands are seven: Lipari, Vulcano, Salina, Panarea, Stromboli, Filicudi and Alicudi. They are considered by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites.

Lipari is the main island and generally offers the widest selection of accomodations, restaurants, shops and tourist facilities. Lipari is also the oldest island; its lidos are covered with the finest white sand, actually the final product of black lava; moreover, it is famous for its acropolis from the Neolithic Era.

Panarea is perhaps the most picturesque, with its stark white houses and brilliant yellow ginestra bushes; it is preferred by celebrities and young people for its naturalistic beauty and nightlife.

Table 1 shows the tourist supply in the Eolie Islands, while tables 2 and 3 provide, respectively, the arrivals and the presences of tourists in the Eolie Islands in the 2007-2008 period.

Tab.1 - Tourist supply in the Eolie Islands

	Hotels 5 stars	Hotels 4 stars	Hotels 3 stars	Hotels 2 stars	Hotels 1 star	Residences	Total
Hotels	4	19	38	9	7	13	90
Beds	426	1,217	1,737	227	137	418	4,162

Source: Provincial Tourist Agency of Messina, 2008

Tab.2 - Flows of tourists arriving in the Eolie Islands' hotels in 2007-2008

	Hotels 5 stars	Hotels 4 stars	Hotels 3 stars	Hotels 2 stars	Hotels 1 star	Residences	Total
Sicily	2,211	9,960	24,545	1,699	1,051	4,975	44,441
Italy	6,293	16,077	38,599	3,578	1,047	6,403	71,997
Foreign Countries	3,793	20,456	34,370	7,031	505	4,525	70,680
Total	12,297	46,493	97,514	12,308	2,603	15,903	187,118

Source: Provincial Tourist Agency of Messina, 2008

Tab.3 - Presences of tourists in the Eolie Islands' hotels in 2007-2008

	Hotels 5 stars	Hotels 4 stars	Hotels 3 stars	Hotels 2 stars	Hotels 1 star	Residences	Total
Sicily	6,847	28,442	65,328	4,485	3,065	16,660	124,827
Italy	36,591	84,280	194,137	17,513	4,712	38,590	375,823
Foreign Countries	14,038	79,517	102,242	19,745	1,336	19,258	236,136
Total	57,476	192,239	361,707	41,743	9,113	74,508	736,786

Source: Provincial Tourist Agency of Messina, 2008

HELICOPTER TRANSPORT: MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Over the last years, the use of helicopter for passenger transport has played an increasingly important role (mainly in Europe and North America), because of the growing congestion of traditional transport infrastructures and the rise in value of time for people. Helicopter can fly at low altitudes via its own routes without interferences with other transport modes. So, the diffusion of helicopter transport services could contribute to reducing the congestion of airports and the travel times for short and mid-haul trips, with low environmental impact. Moreover, helicopter is the only aircraft able of vertical take off and landing, which makes it very suitable for reaching areas with low accessibility such as minor islands.

On the basis of a worldwide survey, we can distinguish two categories of helicopter passenger transport service: transport on demand and public scheduled transport.

In the first case, in general, helicopter is used for moving inside very congested areas: San Paolo in Brazil is a typical example of big city with a road system that can't satisfy the high mobility demand of leisure and business travelers.

As regards public scheduled helicopter transport, throughout the world, there are few consolidated experiences. In Europe, for instance, Heli Air Monaco operates line services between Nizza airport and Monaco (Montecarlo): the distance is approximately 15 km and the ticket price is about 105 euros.

An interesting example of the competitiveness of helicopter for linking international airports with the corresponding metropolitan areas is the case of US Helicopters Company that connects JF Kennedy airport with Manhattan: the transfer time is about 10 minutes and the users pay a surcharge (25 dollars) on the air flight ticket.

Recently, there has been a development of helicopter line service to get to those tourist areas that can be reached spending a lot of time because tourists have to use a combination of different transport alternatives. An example is Helisureste company that connects through scheduled services Spain (Malaga) with Africa (Ceuta). The air distance between the two cities is about 120 km (flight time of 30 minutes) and there are different fares: 67 euros for residents and 135 euros for the others. Another similar experience is the connection between Helsinki and Tallin (the distance is about 80 km and the ticket price is ≥ 50 euros), carried out by Copter line CO, or the Vancouver Island-Victoria link by Helijet (time flight of 35 minutes and fare ranging from 75 dollars for students to 245 dollars for business class).

In particular contexts where low mobility demand doesn't justify substantial investments in new infrastructures, people often have the possibility of using social transport services that benefit from the public financial support. A typical case is related to the connections with minor islands. In Italy, Alidaunia operates helicopter line transport between Foggia and Tremiti Islands and Puglia region pays for the resident population (the ticket price is 25 euros for residents and 50 euros for the others).

We estimated the operating costs of helicopter service considering the following cost drivers: fuel and oil consumption, maintenance, depreciation, insurance, crew, administration.

In particular, we evaluated costs for three categories of helicopter, each characterized by a specific combination of capacity (number of seats) and maximum speed that is suitable for a regular transport service over short-medium distances (see Table 4).

Tab. 4 - Technical and economical features of the helicopter categories under consideration

Helicopter type	Number of seats	Maximum speed (Km per hour)
Light twin turbine	6	250
Medium twin turbine	14	270
Heavy twin turbine	25	280

Fuel/oil consumption and maintenance costs were valued on the basis of a dataset from Concklin & de Decker (2007) and assuming 1,800 fight hours per annum. As concerns depreciation, estimation was carried out based on the average purchase cost for each helicopter type (source: world-wide survey by the authors) and assuming a residual value equal to a third of the purchase cost, a 7-10 year service life, a 7% yearly loan interest and 1,800 flight hours per annum. The insurance cost was supposed to be the 5% of the purchase one. The hourly crew cost was determined based on the labor cost for helicopter pilots (source: Rotor & Wing, 2006) assuming 1,600 working hours per annum and a standard requirement parameter of 2.5 crews per helicopter (each crew consisting of at least two pilots). So, the total hourly cost was calculated adding up all costs and increasing the resulting value by a 10% rate, to allow for administration charges (see Table 5).

Tab. 5 - Total hourly costs for the three categories of helicopter

Helicopter type	Total costs (Euro/h)
Light twin turbine	1,415
Medium twin turbine	2,118
Heavy twin turbine	3,393

MODELLING THE DEMAND FOR HELICOPTER TRANSPORT IN SICILY

This section describes the various steps carried out to build a demand model for simulating the transport mode choice behaviour of tourists visiting Sicily, when the helicopter alternative is available.

In particular, we focused on trips from Palermo and Taormina[1] to Lipari[2], one of the Eolie Islands, of tourists with high willingness-to-pay for travel time savings (individuals choosing superior hotels) and a mode choice set consisting of two alternatives, hydrofoil and helicopter.

Fig. 6 – The study area

The observations employed to develop the travel demand model derives from a stated preference survey involving a sample of tourists visiting Palermo, Taormina and the Island of Lipari. We submitted to each respondent a questionnaire composed of three sections:

- the first section contains a description of the helicopter transport service proposed for tourist transfers inside Sicily;
- the second part is a stated preference experiment providing five choice games per respondent, based on the following explanatory variables: one-way journey time (hours) and one-way journey cost per passenger (euros);
- the third part requires information about the decision-maker: age, household income, the number of family members who usually travel with the respondent, the duration of the stay, etc.

In detail, we processed 573 choice observations[3], considering the following explanatory variables: one-way journey time (hours)[3], one-way journey cost per passenger[4] (euros), household yearly income. The model, therefore, explicitly does not allow for persons who currently do not travel to the Eolie Islands and might consider this destination more attractive if transport services improved.

In particular, to account for the non-systematic taste heterogeneity of the sample, we developed a *mixed logit* model, precisely a *random parameter logit*. This was estimated by NLogit 4.0 econometric software, applying the simulation method based on the Halton draws that, as some authors demonstrate (e.g. Train, 1999 and Bhat, 1999), is more effective in terms of simulation variance and more efficient in terms of computation times than the alternative approach using random draws from the specified distributions of the stochastic parameters.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND SURVEY OF LITERATURE

This study rests on the literature about transport demand modelling, with respect to mode choice simulation through random utility models. The random utility theory is the econometric tool for the demand function estimation in a context of discrete choices (Domencich and McFadden, 1975; Ben-Akiva and Lerman, 1985).

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1 *Which are also near to the most important regional airports.*
2 *And vice versa.*
3 *Some respondents did not consider all choice cards in carrying out the SP exercise.*
4 *It takes into account trips to/from the port and the heliport.*

Quite recently, an important progress has occurred within the field of discrete choice analysis that has led to a more advanced method, particularly suited for "capturing" the complexity of individual choice behaviour: the *mixed logit* model, which assumes a random nature for attribute parameters[5]. This is a very flexible model that can approximate any random utility model with complete precision (McFadden and Train, 2000) and can allow for taste heterogeneity (*random parameter logit*), correlation across alternatives (*error component logit*), alternative specific variances, correlation in unobserved factors over time/choice situations (the latter being particularly useful when employing stated preference data).

In a discrete choice model, the perceived utility of decision-maker n, from alternative j, in relation to choice situation t, can be represented by the following linear-in-the parameters specification:

$$U_{njt} = \boldsymbol{\beta_n} \boldsymbol{X_{njt}} + \varepsilon_{njt} \qquad (1)$$

where:

$\boldsymbol{X_{njt}}$ is the vector of independent, non stochastic, observed variables. It includes attributes of the alternatives, socio-economic characteristics of the respondent and descriptors of the decision context;

$\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$ is the vector of coefficients, unobserved for each individual;

ε_{njt} is the error term with zero mean; it represents unobserved effects and is assumed to be i.i.d. extreme value type I (Gumbel distribution) distributed and independent of $\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$ and X_{njt}.

In order to allow for the presence of unobserved preference heterogeneity, in specifying the utility of alternative j, expressed in equation (1), the basic assumption is that the coefficient vector $\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$ varies in the population with density $f(\boldsymbol{\beta_n}|\boldsymbol{\theta})$, where $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ are the true parameters of the corresponding random distribution (e.g. the mean and the covariance matrix). Several distributions can be assumed (normal, lognormal, triangular, uniform, etc.).

Conditional on $\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$, the probability that a respondent chooses alternative j in choice situation t is expressed by a standard *logit* formula:

$$L_{njt}(\hat{\boldsymbol{a}}_n) = \frac{\exp(\hat{\boldsymbol{a}}_n' X_{njt})}{\sum_{i=1}^{J} \exp(\hat{\boldsymbol{a}}_n' X_{nit})} \quad [6] \qquad (2)$$

Since $\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$ is not given, the unconditional choice probability is the conditional probability, $(L_{njt}(\boldsymbol{\beta_n}))$, integrated over all the possible values of $\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$, weighted by density $f(\boldsymbol{\beta_n}|\boldsymbol{\theta})$:

$$P_{njt} = \int L_{njt}(\hat{\boldsymbol{a}}_n) f(\hat{\boldsymbol{a}}_n|\grave{\boldsymbol{e}}) d\hat{\boldsymbol{a}}_n \qquad (3)$$

this is referred to as the random parameter logit model.

As probabilities in (3) do not have a closed form, they must be approximated by simulation, drawing repeatedly from the distribution of $\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$ and calculating the mean of the resulting choice probabilities; based on this approach, it is possible to obtain the simulated log-likelihood of each individual choice and, hence, the maximum simulated likelihood estimator of parameters $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ that characterise the distribution of $\boldsymbol{\beta_n}$.

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5 *An excellent reference for this group of models is Train (2003). Recent applications can be found in Ben-Akiva and Bolduc (1996), Munizaga et al. (1997), McFadden and Train (2000) and Train (1998).*
6 *The variance of ε_{njt} may not be identified separately from β_n, so it is normalized to set the scale of utility.*

THE MIXED LOGIT MODEL

According to our a priori expectations, we assumed taste heterogeneity with regard to the travel time coefficient. We initially estimated a *mixed logit* model with the journey time parameter being normally distributed, in which we also allowed the mean of the random journey time coefficient to be dependent on a decision maker-related variable that is the household yearly income (*HI*). Formulas 4 and 5 refer to the specification of utility functions; Table 6 shows the estimation outcomes.

$$U_{Hydrofoil}^{is} = \left(\beta_T + \delta_T \cdot H^i + \sigma_T \cdot \upsilon_T^i\right) Time_{Hydrofoil} + \beta_C \cdot Cost_{Hydrofoil}^s + \varepsilon_{Hydrofoil}^{is} \tag{4}$$

$$U_{Helicopter}^{is} = \beta_{Helicopter} + \left(\beta_T + \delta_T \cdot H^i + \sigma_T \cdot \upsilon_T^i\right) Time_{Helicopter} + \beta_C \cdot Cost_{Helicopter}^s + \varepsilon_{Helicopter}^{is} \tag{5}$$

For a certain choice situation *s*, a decision-maker *i* and a generic alternative *j*, the following symbols are defined:

U_j^{is}	perceived utility;
$Time_j$	one-way journey time (hours);
HIi	household income per annum for respondent i (1= less than 75,000 €; 2= greater than 75,000 € and less than 150,000 €; 3= greater than 150,000 €);
υ_T^i	the source of heterogeneity for the travel time parameter, which does not vary across the observations drawn from the same sampled individual;
$Cost_j^s$	one-way journey cost per passenger (euros);
β_j	alternative specific constant coefficient for mode j;
$\beta_T,\ \delta_T,\ \sigma_T$	parameters determining the random distribution of travel time coefficient;
β_C	cost coefficient;
ε_j^{is}	random part.

household income per annum for respondent i (1= less than 75,000 €; 2= greater than 75,000 € and less than 150,000 €; 3= greater than 150,000 €);