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# 3<sup>rd</sup> IRT INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

INTEGRATED RELATIONAL TOURISM  
TERRITORIES AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

Helwan - Egypt 24 | 25 | 26 October 2009

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

*edited by*  
*Ferdinando Trapani*  
*Giovanni Ruggieri*



**IL TERRITORIO DELLE RELAZIONI UMANE**  
Book series directed by Leonardo Urbani



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## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS VOLUME I

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Ferdinando Trapani  
Giovanni Ruggieri



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***The authors***

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***Scientific Committee***

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## Forms of Permanence and Permanence of Form

Nicola Giuliano Leone

The most incredible thing of our age is that by now societies move continuously for so many reasons and in so many ways, due to commuting, work, business, affection, memories and tourism. Any excuse, any form of attraction is good to move, while the territory is substantially fixed and rooted in its political regions, climate, history, cultures, cooking and products that in spite of everything are still agricultural. Sicily is Sicily, Egypt is Egypt, but who are the Egyptians and the Sicilians? The forms of permanence have increased in so many ways, whereas the permanence of form is more and more rooted in the lands to which it belongs, creating some inevitable entrenchment of traditions, stories and complex attractions that still manage to prop up these communities shaken by a mobility generated by some inertial uprooting, but where in the end everyone, even though moving, brings along that ancient permanence that the history of peoples has consolidated into forms.

Talking about permanence means debating about how the communities occupy space and time. The birth of tourism, starting from the first great opportunities for mass movements, confirms and highlights that the traditional way of intending the permanence as mostly connected to forms of agricultural society no longer exists. The model of urban society has changed the relationship with the territory. The urban modes, which at the origin of our contemporaneity were founded basically on industrial work and later on tertiary work in Western countries, took a more and more consistent form starting from the second half of the last century. The tourism, even if it represents a new form of enterprise among the modern human activities, fits in the new forms of permanence in a surprising way.

The conference of Cairo, outlining past and present relationships towards future perspectives, has demonstrated this argument by taking upon itself a particular dimension that emerges from the issue of tourism.

The issue concerns which form of permanence can be generated from the tourism considered as a new principle of exchange among communities where new economic and cultural dimensions are consolidating with respect to territories that tend to be more and more concerned about being identity and stable, whereas the populations tend more and more to move.

Any form of living the territory is characterized by widespread permanent urban settlements, and the city is considered as a great and powerful infrastructure of exchange rather than simply a place. This dimension actually generates an idea of centrality connected to the infrastructural dimension where the more services and consumer goods are offered, the more people are happily urbanized. Of course, in order to bear these dimensions, the large concentrations – that is to say the great dimension of population gathered or that may be gathered in a place – need to be enhanced. The threshold to generate these conditions is over 5 millions of inhabitants. In Italy, for instance, none of the cities has reached this threshold, but it can be reached if including the regional populations that are more or less movable as regards consumption. This way, a model of city founded on infrastructures that are for boosting the concentration emerges. Great lines of mobility and concentration of supermarkets in the interconnectable areas become the idea of a city founded on dimensions of services where permanence blends with mobility. This boosts forms of urbanization that are no longer permanent, but rather strictly connected to the possibility of making use of forms of mobility.

The tourism is part of these forms of mobility but at the same time it occupies forms of permanence that go beyond the measure of the concentration, because the demand for tourism actually opposes the current trend if compared to the consumerism typical of large concentrations.

In this context of widespread mobility it is not easy to say what riches the cities live on nowadays, also because the idea of cities enriched with the values of the country, that is to say the territory that was under their control, no longer exists. The old relationship between city and country, which was a characteristic of



classical economics and led to several considerations during the last two centuries, no longer exists. The urban living, thanks to the evolution in technology, has influenced the customs of the habitat, and the city plays a role of accumulation of functions as well as being the place of the official production of thought. It is a great turning point.

Not haphazardly, new interpretative forms enhance the principles of knowledge and the knowledge intends to overcome the worries caused by the mysteries of nature through the building of certainties that use scientific methods and results.

The complexity of the role played by the cities entirely emerges through the transformations that the society has undergone due to the changes in the techniques that are useful to produce wealth. The great commotion caused by the increase in production capacities is at the root of the new role played by the cities.

The reasons of this evolution have been numerous. The period of the great national and international exhibitions highlights this role and in a certain way it lays down the new rules of prestige of a city that are basically founded on the role it plays in bolstering the market. In fact, the city does not compromise itself with the production defined by the material work. Already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the city tended to define its functions through the roles of management and market. This mechanism tends to change nowadays, because the administrative and political functions have reduced.

Today, three main factors seem to determine the wealth of the cities and thus of the territories and of the populations settled in the various habitats: the first factor is the capacity of setting up production processes that can be used to do research as well as elaborating productive formula with innovative potentialities. The second factor is the capacity of organizing in order to enable the city to shift the production also to places that are different from those where the research has been done. The third factor is the distribution of wellbeing depending on the consumption, thus on the concentration of population.

In this sense the role of the city tends to change in order not to belong only to a political administrative dimension, but rather to link itself to this capacity of closing the circle of relationships among the invention of a product, its realization, the exportation of the production and the concentration of large consumer markets.

Other targets are getting closer and so it is necessary to review the principles of reference of town planning. Town planning has never been a simple technique of planning. The general framework, where new considerations are required, leads towards the hypothesis of a radical change in the relationships that used to inspire the economies of some years ago. In these years the economical growth has made use of an articulation of work that has upset the old parameters through which people tried to comprehend reality. An increase in the mobility and a productive division on a planetary scale have stressed the differences between rich countries and poor countries, bringing about a different way of producing wealth. The city – not only that defined by a simple concentration of houses, goods and services, but rather that considered as a place where people inhabit with a new possibility of access to consumer goods and services that are widespread in the territory – has determined a new way of closing the circle of production and consumption by determining a general increase in the demand for technology.

Therefore, the city opens and closes the cycle. It opens the cycle because first of all it makes the production start off through the research of products justified by high technologies or however by some awareness helped by the technology. Moreover, it produces the accreditation of the products also through the guided creation of a demand for superior needs that correspond to a dimension of living that in every place is actually the result of the urban dimension. Finally, the city distributes and leads to the market the various goods in proportion to the critical mass defined by the potential demand for products. The material production of goods, which is the object of this process, takes shape in various ways and the secondary activities, which are the heaviest, spreads in the world representing the new real country.

This model reaches its autonomy by exporting and guiding the work at a distance as well as taking it again within the limits of the market.

This way research and market meet each other in the city, determining more and more contradictions out of this circle and producing accumulations of wealth that once were unimaginable because founded on the shift of the dirty work out of the perimeter of wellbeing defined by the life in the city.

In brief, the model can be described through the following short sentences: a territory is made up of humans and things. The life of a territory is fostered by economies. These economies create one or more circles. These circles are composed of research, product and consumption. The development of communication and technologies has determined a dimension where the circle may act also at considerable distances. Also the control of the product is an effect of high technology. Technology is research. The circle originates from where the research develops and it tends to close on markets, producing economies through the same hands that have generated it. The flows determined by the circles vitalize the territories and let them survive. In the economies, that is to say in healthy territories, a particular dimension emerges, where every centre produces one or more circles, then takes part in other circles by means of the consumption or the production and lives on this. In degraded territories the economies are based only on the consumption of products generated by others or the territories participate to the creation of a product or of some of its components without controlling the final product and in particular the market.

When the agriculture used to impose a rootedness in the territories and every centre used to control a system of agricultural products, the circles were sometimes smaller but however they gave to each reality those reasons of economical centrality that let it maintain a centrality, that is the truth of a human settlement through an interdependence with other realities that had its own autonomy.

Nowadays not all the centres produce circles. The contradictions increase by bolstering forcedly a market that tends to run out in the profits of who has determined its nature.

In this framework the territories take the risk to become poles of a net to which they belong only as expressions of the consumption or as producers of a component whose position within the production process they do not control, thus strictly depending from strong systems. This way the territory, in its geographical collocation and in the composition of natural and anthropic elements that belong to it, may participate in a significant way to the determination of a system of potentialities that can be useful for the production of circles, bringing along flows that are more or less big and capable of bolstering local economies.

It is relevant that the issue of the three values linked to the circles is very particular because they actually express different conditions as concerns quality and nature of human settlements.

The first value is the research, which is strongly conditioned by the possession of instruments that bear the risk of the research and can be summarized in various aspects such as education, culture and science, which in the end are all based on the technology. Research and technology walk together by now and this dimension becomes more and more a factor of urbanity. Technology has been for a long time a synonymous of city. The city attracts because it expresses technology. The research produces and exports technology breaking it up in order to control its product. The second value is the product. If controlled at a distance, it can take advantage of technology, but, unlike the research, this technology is more exportable, more canalized to a single target. In a certain way the product can be object of a territorial organization. Its reproduction is more or less easily exportable. It meets separable technologies that, controlled at a distance by the research, in fact become new colonial operations. The possession of technology may determine the possession of sections of production without involving in every single place entire productive systems that instead are controlled by the urban polarities. The third value is the market, which is controlled by who has started the mechanism through the research. However, it brings along a value that is completely new compared to the past. The market has put in evidence the issue of the number, of the demographic weight. Large markets derive from large concentrations of population, from a high demography. The large metropolitan capital cities concentrate large markets and determine a more targeted economical organization. When a territory, due to historical reasons, does not own a single large urban concentration, the modern mobility manages to create these conditions by shifting the consumers up to reaching useful thresholds whose dimensions are suited to appropriate localizations.

In general, the cities and the territories of Southern Italy and of the South of the world suffer from conditions of significant marginality. In a certain way some agricultural productions and some agro-alimentary products still guarantee the capacity of creating larger or less large circles where also the dimension of the touristic activities fits in. Other productive factors, mainly not centred on local resources, contribute to sustain urban settlements, but in general a whole of geographical factors together with the reduced number of population influence in a negative way.

There are some cities, usually situated in the areas with the highest capacity of producing research and technology, where capacities that are able to start several processes of economical boost have emerged. Generally speaking, these cities express large centralities and tend to be great poles of attraction. Even if they do not produce goods materially, actually they produce everything they think indirectly, because they make it produce in other cities or other territories. There are some cities that produce and control a lot of circles and in general can export also the material construction of a product simply by transferring the technology that is able to produce parts of products that will be assembled later in another place. These cities determine also the markets, that is they control their effects, their modalities of management. They cannot lose the markets because otherwise they lose the returns of the economies that they have generated. Generally speaking, these can be defined "thinking cities".

There are other cities that, on the contrary, construct products or components of products. They can be defined "dependent cities" of first level, that is cities or territories that enter into a direct relationship with the dynamics of "thinking cities" but however they do not express autonomy in the production. These cities are usually situated in territories that are poorer not in natural resources but rather in technology, and where labour and work are generally cheaper. Nearly always these areas do not have large flows of consumption, because their inhabitants do not have great economic capacities.

Finally, there are some cities that are mainly destined to functions of consumption.

They are essentially "dependent cities" that live only on the various revenues that manage to bear functions of commercialization for several reasons, because they are connected to other urban areas or for reasons of survival and strength of weak territories. These settlements may be at risk of extinction and they often survive only thanks to forms of welfare interventions.

Some places maintain a dimension of centrality due to some significant roles mostly generated by presences that are not strictly linked to the dimension of the production or of the markets; they also create a whole series of values that are typical of very complex societies, which are based on various systems of values.

The settlement systems defined by poles that offer administrative centralities or by strong university settlement or by places with a particular touristic relevance demonstrate that this model uses attractive potentials that are different from the traditional system of producing objects. The production can be made of much more complex things, because the circuit of valorisation of flows through the mechanism of the circles that animate and sustain the new way of being and surviving of the city can generate countless settlement models that move and live at a larger territorial scale where also a net of little centres can produce on its own, as long as they have a kind of capacity of creating a large or a small circle that however closes; this way some economies that are entirely ruled through an original product go back to the original source.

This reality lives on the values expressed by the new urban dimension that is determined by the possession on the part of the city of a territorial scale that in the past was not so evident. This determines a necessity of communication that is unimaginable compared to a recent past. However, this necessity does not sustain the cities. They cannot live only on the communication, even if it is necessary for the survival of the new model.

This way two movements intertwine: the first is fostered by the circles and moves the material goods in a complex dependence among research, product and market, while the second requires linear relationships on which the relations of the communication that acts by means of poles and segments are founded.

The communication creates a net among the poles, while the economies vitalize by means of circuits.

Lines and circles define a new modernity in which nets of large cities, small centres and inhabited territories live a life that is more and more interconnected. In order to let all this survive, it is necessary that the circles reach a threshold of values in the exchanges that is able to bear, even though in the different dimensions that sometimes they influence, those capacities of concentration and interactions that only the urban dimension can express.

These days, the challenge consists in managing to create a city using this territorial dimension made of leaps, differences and separated aggregations, which are created by little events or by great opportunities. Maybe the cities should try to produce new opportunities of mending, and, instead of adding through the colonization of new territories, they should try to improve the use of what already exists but has been abandoned because of a craving for novelty that does not always exist. These dimensions of internal mending rather than external addition should aim at creating new opportunities in order to set in motion new circles or to restore already existing or announced circles that are able to vitalize the economies that the human settlement may express.

In this sense every settlement should and may aim at defining one or more circles also on bases that are founded on the analyzes of the resources that belong to the territory, on the basis of its geographical position, natural qualities and history, in order to play a role of bolstering the exchange capacities. In this system it is not relevant if each circle will break even; the most important thing is that it connects to wider dimensions in order to allow recognisability and a capacity of having relationships with others in a game that is both of autonomy and of interdependence.

This could allow to correct a system that tends to subdue countless cities and countries to its targets, concentrating the returns of the resources on few polarities. It is necessary to correct these excesses of egoism that export contradictions and eventually devour resources, generating self-destruction. Each centre needs to act as a driving force of a reason that can be useful for its own vitality.

For all the reasons mentioned above, it can be said that the tourism, considered as the construction of economical resources that are rooted in the territory and thus are relational, can become an opportunity to indicate how it is possible to make a change and take again that still-existing road that considers the permanence of the form - even if the forms of permanence generate mobility - as the base of real economies, as Leonardo Urbani states.

The basic issue is that in the future it will be necessary to make some effort in order to demonstrate that "weddings can be celebrated also with dried figs"<sup>1</sup> and not only with the "frills of the supermarkets", and sometimes they come out better in this way. The conference of Cairo debates about it because, with regard to the tangible questions (the dried figs), it tries to find a future for the intangible issues (the weddings).

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<sup>1</sup> This is a common Italian saying. It means that things can turn out well even without spending a lot of money.



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