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MY LONG WAY TOWARDS METROPOLIZATION

by Giuseppe Campos Venuti

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Since half of a century I have been involved in large-scale issues, in order to become acquainted with the phenomena that needed the plans' application. My first approach has started with the Roman intermunicipal planning, that could propose a metropolitan growth. This would be an alternative solution to the Capital's plan, which was being planned separately from its territorial context.

Immediately afterwards I had to measure my strength against Bologna's intermunicipal planning. This would have to face the chief town' development, including the need to decentralize to the outskirts those activities that would have otherwise spoiled the city centre.

Modena and Reggio Emilia's plans, as well as unforgettable Mr Osvaldo Piacentini, drove me to become responsible for the country's great territorial changes. Thus I proposed an infrastructurization of a "Third Italy" that was arising, which would direct to transversal development at the foot of the Alpes and of the Apennines. Such development was going unheeded, but it would get the new municipal plans' morphological framework.

I was then forced to face and solve the mistakes that had been made with the great road infrastructures, growing indifferent to cities and territory.

I unsuccessfully backed a solution for the Adriatic Motorway that would not worsen the summer traffic congestion, I succeeded instead to plan an urban development for the city of Ancona that would stretch inland and not along its maritime coast.

Many years later I tried to find a solution for the Province of Pesaro to move the motorway away from the coast.

During the dispute "Project against Plan" I found myself in Madrid. I backed an urban social rebalance policy between the rich North-West (provided with every service) and a South-East that was mortified by the lack of social infrastructures.

Such strategy was far from being an alternative solution to the city plans of Barcelona, aiming to revitalize the northern coastal strip that had been obstructed by old factories no longer in use.

On this very basis I rejected the contrast between project and plan and replaced a rigid plan, hence unattainable, with a flexible one that could be implemented in the future.

I reacted to the prevailing topic of "urban changes" by focussing the attention on "territorial changes", whose strategic meaning – due to the metropolization's growth - is becoming ever more evident. I have actually tested this as I went back to work in the flat country of Bologna, where "country cities" arise from municipalities-districts that try to redress and conform themselves to the chief town according to an urban plan.

I went as far as the South of Italy. Nine municipalities and their chief town in the area around Potenza needed a territorial organization.

Even in Rome I realized that in this vast municipality, larger than Milan or Naples, spontaneous decentralized settlements have arisen - 17 towns with over 100.000 inhabitants that ask for a strategic choice regarding New Centres. These are essential to provide an identity to the city's various autonomous urban bodies that have arisen with the Municipal Administration.

Various forms of metropolization

In addition to the one of the city of Rome, some forms of metropolization conform to the classic radiocentric model of some municipalities revolving round their chief town: there is a balance between centre and outskirts.

Other forms of metropolization scatter the settlement growth irregularly and look for new forms and locations to rebalance the environment. Such strategy could rely on rail transport and on excellent rail communication systems such as the German S-Bahn, which uses the already existing national railway system for the city service.

These forms of metropolization suggest to boost large-scale future planning for a successful and improved territorial management.