

Chapter 2

A Quantitative Methodological Approach for the Definition of the Urban Systems of Benevento and Salerno

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this chapter is to define two urban systems in the Campania region: The urban system of Salerno and that of Benevento. An analytical-descriptive method has been employed based on the geographical-territorial analysis of the urban fabric; clusters of indicators (indicators of urbanity) have also been used in order to reach, through the study of the relative thematic cartographies, a definition of urban space.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The aim of this paper is to reach a definition of two urban systems in the Campania region: the urban system of Salerno and that of Benevento¹.

Ever since the origin of the study of cities, geographers, together with other scholars of territorial disciplines, have focused on defining the territorial unit of analysis. Over time, and depending on the regions examined, the very definition of 'city' has varied considerably (Toschi, 1966),

but a key element has always been the fact that a city is defined by the existing relationship between the urban and the rural.

From the end of the seventies, a good many researchers have concentrated on defining models of development of the city, or models that represented the urban life cycle, with the purpose of explaining the halt in demographic and manufacturing growth - that had begun at that time - of the great urban areas in the United States and in Europe (Norton, 1979; Hall and Hay, 1980; van den Berg et al., 1982).

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The considerable modifications undergone by existing cities and which occurred throughout the last century have placed the complexity of the urban phenomenon at the centre of attention. Phenomena such as the expansion of cities into spaces adjoining the traditional ones, the development along transport routes, the growth and development of suburbs, industrial decentralization together with the urban sprawl, have led to a need to redefine the physical space of the city.

From 1981 to 1991 a foundational study was carried out on Local Job Systems (SLL) by Istat-Irpet. The novelty of this study lay in the identification of new units of survey made up of several adjacent municipalities, on the basis of daily work-related commuting. Other noteworthy studies (Bonavero, Dematteis, 1997) have further investigated the evolution and transformation of urban development by identifying, within the cities, the strategic territorial dimension needed to attain the objectives of social and economic cohesion and competitiveness.

Other reference studies are, certainly, the work of geographers Murphy and Vance who proposed descriptive measures for delimiting the boundaries of Central Business District, leading to a descriptive model (Murphy et al., 1955) or the one of Scaramellini on the processes of economic growth and urban polarization (Scaramellini, 1991) or, more recently, the one of Bartaletti on urban metropolitan areas (Bartaletti, 2000).

As regards urban development, a number of studies have focused their attention either on a single function or urban functional aspect, on several urban functions framed within a single analytical dimension, or, finally, on a plurality of functions and analytical dimensions (Bonavero, 1999).

A new research approach to the urban phenomenon therefore no longer identifies cities as closed, hierarchically-ordained units, each with its own circle of influence, but as partial aggregations of specific correlated and interdependent activities; in this manner the ‘homogenization’ policies

applied to the characteristics of the central areas are abandoned in favour of the exploitation of the specific vocations of each area; spatial-separation policies, such as zoning, are supplanted by the settlement principle of urban mix (*mixité urbaine*), with a multi-functional yet balanced offer of offices, housing, trades and services at different levels; there is, furthermore, a new awareness of the problems connected to urban form as a necessary complement to the overall design of a functional structure, with an eye to re-establishing the identity and the morphological characteristics of the urban fabric.

Indeed, the functional organization of a city generally goes beyond its administrative borders, and this for a number of important aspects such as mobility, administrative and economic decentralization, sustainability, and the urban space takes on a number of characteristics which render a study on the scale of the urban region indispensable. In this way a new geography can be traced, that of the widespread city, taken to be an organism that carries out a variety of urban functions in relation to its context.

For some time now, the European Community has focused its attention on urban systems in order to give life and support to sub-national, mid-range territorial areas, of the regional type, within which the systems of cities could reach the highest technological performances and capture the positive effects of innovations.

A number of planning schemes and city development policies have been launched over the years such as those implemented by the Campania Region in the areas of “Urban Systems – City” (FAS 2005) and “Town - Urban systems” (FAS 2006-2009). Such schemes can also be found in the National Strategic Framework under “Competitiveness and attractiveness of cities and urban systems” (FAS 2007-2013).

The difficulties encountered by this study, and likewise, the difficulties in implementing city development policies stem therefore from the differences between the administrative cor-

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