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Invited Essay  
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## THE REGIONAL CYCLE NETWORK FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF CALABRIAN ASSETS

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### HIGHLIGHTS

- The basic idea is to support the construction of a soft mobility network of urban heritage that are able to undo the imbalances in terms of accessibility/usability, promotion and enhancement. Write here your paper highlights, write here your paper highlights.
- Nowadays, due to a different cultural approach, and under the influence of innovative urban policies, we are able to save and restore the territory through strategies and projects that succeed in reintroducing a quality of space and cultural facilities based mainly in facilitating the connections and enjoyment of these assets.

### ABSTRACT

The proposed theme concerns the possibility of integrating a new system of mobility to the enhancement of the historic, environmental heritage and landscape of the Calabria region. This necessity comes from an implicit need, which is to enhance and to promote a cultural and social use for the resources present in the territory and flows from new instances of a quality tourism that in Calabria, as well as in many other southern cities, require a careful search of new cultural desires with new destinations, which led to the discovery of products more rich of meaning and content, of authenticity, of identity. To promote a strategy that seeks the tools to activate the process of valorization of the urban asset of Reggio's territory seems like a winning project. Today, under the pressure of territory government tools innovative and thanks to a different cultural approach, we are in the condition in which it is possible the recovery and restoration of the territory through the identification of strategies and projects that are able to introduce quality of connective space and cultural kind of services based mainly on soft mobility and the fruition of this asset.

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## 1. A NEW CULTURE FOR LARGE AREA PLANS

The need to encourage and promote the soft mobility, as access system to the local public transport system, both as a standalone transport system, especially with regard to the tourist value and accessibility to protected areas of the region, is the goal that emerges strongly between actions and measures for the system of the Calabrian mobility by the Regional Territorial Framework to landscape value of Calabria (QTRP, already adopted by resolution of the Regional Council n. 300 of 22 April 2013, date with D.G.R. n. 512 11/12/2015 and subsequently amended by the decision of 10.02.2016 of the Council Commission IV "Asset and land-use and environmental protection" was approved by the Regional Council under resolution no. 134 of August 1, 2016), and, above all, by the new Regional Transport Plan of the Calabria Region, recently adopted (Resolution no. 503 of the meeting of 12.06.2016, Adoption of the draft Regional Transport Plan - Master Plan and taking note of the relevant documents required by the Strategic Environmental Assessment procedure / impact assessment -transmission to the Council for approval-, published on BUR No. 2 of 5 January 2007).

The main objective is to trigger strategic transformation processes, characterized by a strict preservation of the individuality and a proper redesign of the existing, in the belief that the Calabrian territory, for their peculiar landscape, characterized by a blend of a coast line and an impressive mountain natural heritage importance, deserves an ambitious project (Zagari, 2003).



**Figure 1:** Reggio Calabria, seaside. *Source: photo by A. Taccone, 2016*

Calabria has lived in the 70s a period of development due to economic growth that led to an improper use of resources, especially its coast, where the pressing demand for building found its scope in both urban areas in those hitherto undeveloped. The result is a framework that identifies the small scale



environments now compromised and stretches of coastline that still retain features and landscapes visible and valuable, while the large-scale landscape has maintained the characteristic of uniqueness though often interrupted by episodic characters.



(a)

(b)

**Figure 2:** (a) Costa Viola Landscape. Source: photo by A. Taccone, 2015- (b) Devil bridge near Civita (CS). Source: photo by A. Taccone, 2006

In particular, this territory is geographically well defined and particularly fraught with emergencies that individually constitute elements of value but as a whole, if designed and connected as a system, can express, through an integrated design, excellent potential for cultural development, identity and economic (Bianchi, 2006). It consists of a settlement system that hinges on the coastal centers and develops relationships with mountain's centers and presents a complex network of conspicuous places such as: the places of memory, represented by the system of fortifications of the coastal towers and castles as well as from archaeological sites; the production sites that make up a unique network in the relations with the territory and have established over time with the environment a balanced system to use the resources today must not be lost, but who needs interventions to achieve forms of development sustainable; tourism places, affecting the entire scope; the system of environmental and natural resources organized into a set of conspicuous places such as rocky coastal system, the marine ecosystem and the beaches system (Fallanca, 2016).



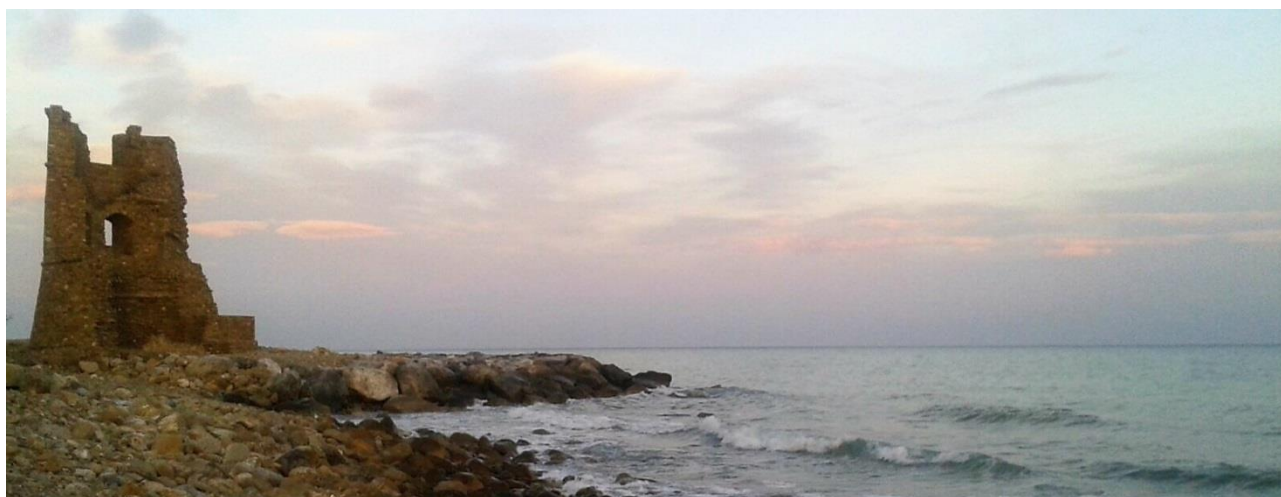
**Figure 3:** SIC of Saline Joniche. Source: photo by A. Taccone, 2015

It is landscapes looking for of balance between nature protection, development of tourism and urban development of the city and this has meant that the processes of urbanization will be more and more concentrated along the coasts that today appear as an urban continuum made up of ports , seaside settlements and cities of different sizes. It is a unique territorial system where the remaining natural and semi-natural areas are presented as hinges, sometimes connect and sometimes separation between urban areas.

Integrated management of the landscape is essential for the harmonization of short- and long-term development objectives. Tools such as large area plans may in this case be used to achieve coordinated actions between the different levels of government.

## 2. REGIONAL CYCLING NETWORK

We are living an era of strong international competition and the urban asset present in the cities is increasingly becoming a driving force for the economic and local cultural development in a awareness in which it aggregates and integrates resources and services within areas characterized by strong territorial and recognizable identities, in overcoming the fragmentation of the offer. In this context, Calabria Region, as well as other European cities (Sgobbo, 2016), in programming the incentives offered by EU policies towards the development aimed at enhancing the cultural and landscape asset, is ever more spreading the use of new strategies for a local development to integrate the cultural sector and those connected to it, such as tourism, pursued through a territorial specialization and urban policies where the parts of the city become the privileged place for the establishment of cultural facilities or logistics. This arises from the need to put in a network the high concentration of cultural and environmental resources of value with the quality and the concentration of cultural and tourist services, dedicated to users (Carrà, 2014).



**Figure 4:** Amendolara (CS), Torre Spaccata. *Source: photo by G. Termine, 2016*

However, the first projects of culture of sustainable mobility diffusion, yet they do not create a genuine integration in the local development policies and concern, in general, interventions aimed at reducing pollution or at the regulation of city center access to reduce the burden of traffic. It deals with interventions different from each other and hardly connected in a network point of view, but that have contributed to the awareness of these forms of organization of the territory, attracting considerable



interest and attention from the economic, social and territorial institutions towards the prospects of a possible and significant capacity for self-organization of the local contexts.

This is to process large-scale strategies that can enhance the quality of these landscape components, such as precious crops and the particular morphology of the territory aimed at safeguarding -like the terraces of the Costa Viola, the system of gullies and olive trees of Gioia Tauro-, but also the interventions of urban scale such as rehabilitation of historic urban centers along the coast, interventions aimed to primary mobility with public paths and trails for recreation, walking and cycling paths, green plans, color plans, etc. . We have seen how some interventions have allowed the redevelopment of public space and building a sense of identity as well as urban center. So we have to address the sense of designing interventions that are able to restore the public functions, mainly functions as those dedicated to culture and communication, required by progress of the community.



**Figure 5:** (a) Parco Archeologico di Sibari (CS). Source: photo by G. Termine, 2017 - (b) Cetraro (CS), Volta della chiesa Matrice. Source: photo by G. Termine, 2017

Nowadays, due to a different cultural approach, and under the influence of innovative urban policies, we are able to save and restore the territory through strategies and projects that succeed in reintroducing a quality of space and cultural facilities based mainly in facilitating the connections and enjoyment of these assets (Sgobbo & Moccia, 2016). The new urban plans (QTRP and PRT) announcing the abandon of unsustainable intervention models toward a sustainable economy based on safety and promotion of the local resources and still intact landscape values that require a well-structured plan of intervention aimed at recompose and requalify the physiognomic of the urban system in general, able to sort out the continuity of nature, the reorganization and restoration of urban settlements.

The construction of the Regional network of slow mobility proposed by these plans, should "*structure a system of paths, through the recovery and redevelopment of hiking trails, disused railway lines (and no longer be reactivated), minor rural roads and historic trails, the construction of cycle paths, horse trails and long-distance routes, to be integrated with aspects of multipurpose network*" (This is a strategic

project of the QTRP, whose objective is the definition of a Territorial Matrix that can create the support reinforcement of development choices through 5 networks: Regional Ecological; historical and cultural; -perceptive fruition; mobility; security) *and the main nodes of the regional and local mobility*" (PRT of Calabrian Region, 2016). One of the projects identified concerns the construction of a regional cycle route (path or bike lane) to be carried out using the routes CY.RO.N.MED (Cycle Route Network of the Mediterranean, Cyronmed, is an INTERREG III B project aiming at determine cycle routes, analyze existing and potential cycle infrastructures and report and map them in a suitable scale in order to realize, throughout a feasibility study, the Cycle route network of the Mediterranean) priority of the project and integrated by other regional itineraries designed as part of the re-use of abandoned railways, roads rural, historical paths, hiking trails, etc. (Sforza, 2008). These cycling routes will connect with each other the areas of greatest attractiveness and promote the exchange of different modes of transport, mainly public.



**Figure 6:** Ginestre lake, near Gambarie (RC). Source: photo by A. Taccone, 2016

### 3. THE SOFT MOBILITY FOR THE TERRITORY

The basic idea is to support the construction of a soft mobility network of urban heritage that are able to undo the imbalances in terms of accessibility/usability, promotion and enhancement (Critelli, Taccone, 2012). It is now time that the idea that all human functions and activities becomes necessary to improve public transport and mobility. The center is above the center of culture and tourism in the city, with its fine buildings, monuments, archeology, as well as the rediscovery of the sea thanks to the development of the promenade. In fact, the element can be able to connect and operate otherwise uneven spaces can be represented exactly by this, or rather from the coastal cycling network, that runs along a linear space, where it is privileged and emphasized the themes of the course and going (Fallanca, 2013). Links with other networks cycling, mountain and liaison, will be more or less radical transformations made through the construction of new space or connections (routes and itineraries for leisure time, with walking and cycling routes) that become elements of connection between the parts of the territory, tends to attribute or return conditions of higher urban quality, in accordance with the principles of environmental sustainability.





**Figure 7:** Reggio Calabria waterfront. *Source: photo by A. Taccone, 2013*

The proposal for a soft mobility project for the use of urban heritage in the whole Calabrian territory requires evaluations of balances that govern the city and its functions that necessarily involve the introduction of the concept of quality. The new spaces must be in line with the new cultural consciousness expressed by the territory and aimed at cultural development through the creation of eco-museums, to nature trails, areas of experimental teaching, etc ..., which could allow the development of strategies for the promotion of the "heritage urban" in view of a general process of development, in a balance between economic competitiveness and environmental compatibility, in which the binding of the inhabitants with their resources plays a key role (Moccia & Sgobbo, 2013).

The cycling network can be considered a true territorial unified strategy aimed at ensuring the connection between urban centers, the system of beaches, mountain areas and public spaces, because the network thus understood physically as well as visually connecting pre-existing territorial signs and puts in connection with the cultural historical presence with all other human activities

These networks, in addition to affecting on balanced and spatial dislocation of functions, become elements generators of new places, new public spaces that can transmit meanings of belonging in order to form a new collective identity. It could therefore be from the exploitation of parts "emerging" in the territory to get a re-assignment identity of the areas that do not have recognizable features. The culture of the place and the quality of urban life should be understood as a reference to "key" to every human activity, to be taken as guidelines that can combine all the evolutions of the "big choices" for the territory.

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